

BEAR WITNESS. KEEP WATCH. BUILD PEACE.

What it means to take part in the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel



26-year-old Mohammad Bashiti shows his home, which has just been partially demolished, in the Shu'fat village in Jerusalem to Ecumenical Accompaniers. As building permits are notoriously difficult, in some cases impossible, for Palestinians to obtain, demolition of houses stated not to have the relevant permits is common in the area. This time, the family lost their living room, two bathrooms, and kitchen. (WCC-EAPPI/A.Hillert)

LIFE UNDER OCCUPATION

These are some of the ways the occupation is harming communities

SETTLEMENTS

- The number of settlements in the West Bank continues to grow. While illegal under international law, these settlements have the support of the Israeli government.
- Settlements, and the thick security perimeter that encase them, restrict Palestinian people's access to their land and ability to move freely.

RESTRICTED FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

- Israel places crippling restrictions on the movement of Palestinian people in the West Bank, including around illegal settlements and through imposing lengthy wait times at military checkpoints.
- This forces people to take time consuming detours, restricts their access to work, and makes some farms unviable because farmers can't reach them during planting and harvesting seasons.

HOME DEMOLITIONS

- Israeli security forces demolish Palestinian homes for infractions of building codes, despite the near impossibility for them to obtain building permits. Often with limited warning and no alternative accommodation provided, leaving people homeless.

VIOLENT HARASSMENT

- Palestinian adults and children are often harassed, and sometimes assaulted, by settlers as they go to their fields or to school. And the perpetrators of these acts rarely face consequences.



View of the separation barrier running through Bethlehem. (WCC-EAPPI/A.Hillert)

EAPPI: WORKING TOWARDS A JUST PEACE

The World Council of Churches founded EAPPI in response to a call from the local Heads of Churches in Jerusalem. Their vision was a just peace, where all people in Palestine and Israel could live with freedom, dignity and security based on international law and human rights.

After extensive preparation and learning, Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs) live in Palestinian communities to provide a protective presence in those communities alongside a team of people from other countries.

When EAs return home, their focus shifts to advocacy. They share their first-hand experiences to inform people of the realities of the occupation and campaign for a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict based on international law and UN resolutions.

“The settlers take a big part of the land and water...We feel scared and afraid in our land. That’s our feeling, from the settlers, from the army, from Israel.”

-YASSER, 70, SOUTH HEBRON HILLS.



40-year-old Deab Abu Malik herds his sheep in the Jordan Valley. Ecumenical Accompaniers accompany shepherds in many parts of the West Bank, providing an international presence known to have a mitigating effect on confrontations between Israeli settlers and the Palestinians. (WCC-EAPPI/A.Hillert)

HOW IT WORKS

The key principles of EAPPI's Accompaniment model:

PROTECTIVE PRESENCE

- EAs accompany Palestinian people and communities who are acutely affected by the occupation (farmers, school children, people crossing checkpoints).

MONITORING OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

- When presence cannot completely halt human rights violations, we are there to monitor and report these abuses.

STANDING WITH CHURCHES AND LOCAL PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS

- EAs highlight and participate in the activities of local churches and Palestinian and Israeli groups working for justice and peace.

ADVOCACY

- The goal of the program is a just peace and end to the occupation. EAs campaign for public policy change, meet with members of Congress, write articles about their experiences in Palestine/Israel, carry out speaking engagements in their home communities, and engage with grassroots advocacy initiatives in their community.

PRINCIPLED IMPARTIALITY

- We are not pro-Palestinian or pro-Israeli. We are pro-human rights and international humanitarian law.

NONVIOLENCE

- We believe nonviolence is the only way to a true and lasting solution to conflict. Our actions are nonviolent and we support all people working non-violently for peace in Palestine and Israel.



School run in the South Hebron Hills, An EA accompanies children on their way to school in the South Hebron Hills. (EAPPI/R. Pond)

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

You can support this life-changing work in a variety of ways.

BECOME AN EA

If you believe you have what it takes, we want to hear from you. Apply to become an Ecumenical Accompanier by emailing eappi-us@cwsglobal.org.

SPONSOR AN EA

The cost of participation is about \$13,000 to cover the cost of the EA as well as management of the program in Palestine/Israel. This cost is by covered grants, the EAs, and the generosity of people like you. Donations are tax deductible. Visit <https://eappi.us/support>.

SPREAD THE WORD

The program needs determined people who are passionate about human rights and the ability to be calm in challenging situations. If you know a suitable person for this role, please give them this pamphlet.

SUPPORT THE EAPPI-US

EAPPI-US is the national body through which EA candidates from the United States apply, are oriented, and participate in the EAPPI. EAPPI-US is comprised of U.S. denominations and Church World Service, and welcomes engagement from a wide range of churches, agencies and individuals. Please consider supporting this important program with a tax deductible donation to CWS. Visit <https://eappi.us/support>.



A Palestinian woman gathers olives during the olive harvest in the Northern West Bank. (EAPPI/K.Brown)

“We will not give up even though we face dangers. Soldiers come to my school to find children they think were throwing rocks. They come into our classrooms, I have had to physically get in the way of soldiers dragging children into the military trucks. In that moment, I am their teacher, their mother, their guardian. The children have high levels of trauma. They are afraid to come to school, to walk on the streets. The attendance rate is dangerously low. They are behind. There are no funds for recreational activities and we must have a permit from Israel to even build a swing. We cannot give them anything. Where do we put all this built up frustration? But I believe education is all these children have.”

-NADEEN, HEADMISTRESS OF THE TUQU' GIRLS SCHOOL IN BETHLEHEM

The EAPPI-US Steering Committee has representatives from the following denominations:

**Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)**

**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

United Church of Christ

United Methodist Church

To apply, please email
eappi-us@cwsglobal.org

Discover more about the
EAPPI program at
<https://eappi.us>



Nadeen, 42, headmistress of the Tuqu' girls school, in Bethlehem, sits in her office overlooking the school's compound and a valley of settlements. (EAPPI/N.D'Souza)