



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

L'ÉGLISE UNIE DU CANADA

October 13, 2023

Siblings in Christ,

I reach out to you today as leaders in communities of faith, extending my heartfelt gratitude and accompaniment as you serve in this very challenging time. As the situation in Palestine and Israel has escalated, there is such a pain and heaviness. We hold deep concern for partners in the region and are also mindful of those across our country—our neighbours with relatives in Palestine and Israel whose grief and worry is surely overwhelming.

Your local authorities may have raised concerns about possible threats to religious communities in Canada. Perhaps there are ways your community might reach out to your neighbours in faith in these times of fear and fearmongering.

While being particularly concerned for the risks to our religious siblings, it may also be prudent to be attentive to security in the broader community, including our communities of faith.

We join you in the prayers you are uplifting for those in your communities, and for those in the region, for the violence to end, for just peace, for all those who are grieving and afraid.

I have met with Regional Executive Ministers and they invite you to reach out to them should you have concerns of any kind as you lead in these difficult times.

I continue to hold to the Hope that is the bedrock of my faith. May we always help each other so to do.

In Christ,

Michael Blair