

Wider Church Ministry Report to Annual Meeting, September 2023

Most of the work of WCM has taken place within our two working groups.

CPC Palestine Israel Network

During the past year the PIN group has focused on participating in the ecumenical Apartheid-Free Congregations movement and preparing the attached resolution of witness.

Ainsworth UCC hosted a series of events to explore the question: "Has Israel Become an Apartheid State?"

Mark Braverman sermon: "Jesus was always talking about Apartheid"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYPSI2jaUSs&t=64s>

Mark Braverman Q&A "Has the State of Israel become an Apartheid?"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TlfcBE4_O8

"Has the State of Israel become an Apartheid? What's Up on the Ground?"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZXljnwnzKM>
Mondoweiss film <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LumgWaM72nU>

"Has the State of Israel become an Apartheid State? What can we do?"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdM9sknhrXU&t=1801s>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLQQGa0LmAQ>

On the basis of their engagement with the national movement, the CPC PIN drafted a "Resolution of Witness Declaring Israel an Apartheid State and the Central Pacific Conference Apartheid-Free" which we respectfully submit for the consideration of the Annual Gathering

PHILIPPINE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

In late February Ann Muir served as part of a delegation to the Philippines, organized by the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP) and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), for people of faith from across the globe. On-the-ground support was provided by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. She had the opportunity to meet with faith leaders and frontline community members to verify and document human rights abuses being committed now under the Marcos II Regime, and to strengthen our solidarity with faith partners in the Philippines.

Since her return she has been partnering with representatives from ICHRP to preach and teach at churches across the conference. She noted in her report to WCM:

Under the Marcos II administration, the rampant human rights violations under the Duterte regime have continued. Additionally, the economic hardship and crushing poverty experienced by many Filipino families has only worsened as the global economic crisis has caused inflationary prices, and ongoing natural calamities continue to ravage the Philippines. The stories that we heard and documented were heart wrenching. Those exposing the cruelty and indifference of the administration in the face of this hardship, including faith leaders, have been intimidated and targeted with arrest and even death. We were sent out in groups of three or four with support persons to hold fact finding interviews, document the stories, gather the pertinent evidence documents, and write and submit detailed reports to those who can carry the cases into the legal system. It was a difficult task, both emotionally and physically.

In November Ann will travel as a representative of WCM to the Global Assembly in Bangkok, Thailand.

As a direct result of Ann's work and witness and our partnership with ICHRP, the WCM team requested that the Philippine Solidarity Committee draft a resolution of Witness in support of HR 1433, commonly known as the Philippine Human Rights Act. We submit the attached resolution for the consideration of the CPC Annual Gathering.

SCOPE OF OUR MINISTRY

For several years, the WCM team's energy has been focused on justice in Palestine and the Philippines. We look forward to continuing a conversation about the scope and impact of our work and imagining together with new team members how we can best serve the conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Randall-Bodman