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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**UCC leaders issue prophetic call to end genocide against Palestinians**

The executive leaders of the United Church of Christ have [issued a statement](https://app.meltwater.com/icm-web/ucc.org/a-prophetic-call-for-justice-and-peace-in-palestine) calling for people of faith to speak out to stop the genocide against Palestinians.

Emphasizing the UCC’s identity as a Just Peace Church with centuries of presence and strong, mutual partners in the Middle East, the leaders call for “an end to this genocide,” “an end to Israel’s war in the Middle East, and “the return of all Israeli hostages and Palestinian detainees.”

The leaders additionally call for U.S. policymakers and governments of all nations to end the sale of weapons to Israel and withhold all military aid, and for the United Nations General Assembly to “take clear and decisive action” supporting the [Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice](https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-statement-icj-advisory-opinion-unlawful-occupation-23june2024/#:~:text=The%20Committee%20Bureau%20welcomes%20the,occupation%20of%20the%20Palestinian%20territory%20() stating that Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land is illegal. They write that “root causes and historical claims” of the violence must be addressed to create “a just and lasting peace.”

The statement – signed by Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson, General Minister and President/Chief Executive Officer; Rev. Shari Prestemon, Acting Associate General Minister and Co-Executive for Global Ministries; and Rev. Dr. Bentley DeBardelaben-Phillips, Transitional Executive – poses a particular call for people of Christian faith to speak out.

“Where is the threshold at which the world will say ‘enough’ as we watch children dying of starvation because the delivery of humanitarian aid is being prevented and is stopped or destroyed, and not allowed to get to them?” they ask.

This prophetic call comes as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu prepares to address a joint meeting of the United States Congress – an event which [some senators will boycott](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/24/us/politics/netanyahu-congress-democrats.html) and [thousands are protesting](https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2024/07/24/dc-protest-netanyahu-visit-israel-gaza-war/). Hundreds were arrested during a [sit-in at a congressional office building](https://apnews.com/article/israel-netanyahu-gaza-war-protest-congress-ea95b56f33258d749d0dae7f50b875fd) on Tuesday.

Response is urgent, the UCC leaders say.

“As people of faith, and as a Just Peace Church, we cannot claim peace as our prayer if we are not willing to boldly name the injustices we see. We call upon all to be courageous peacemakers in this moment.”

[Find the full statement here](https://app.meltwater.com/icm-web/ucc.org/a-prophetic-call-for-justice-and-peace-in-palestine).

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*The United Church of Christ, a mainline Protestant denomination, has 750,000 members and more than 4,700 congregations nationwide. Headquartered in Cleveland, it is a church of many firsts: the first mainline denomination to ordain a woman, the first to ordain an openly gay man and the first predominantly white denomination to ordain an African American.*