

Friends of Sabeel—North America

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NEWSLETTER
OCTOBER 2006

Get Involved!

- Kansas City, KS
Sabeel Conference
October 20-21
- Jerusalem, Bethlehem,
Galilee, Nazareth—
6th International
Sabeel Conference
November 2-9
- Birmingham, AL
Sabeel Conference
February 9-10
- Cleveland, OH
Sabeel Conference
February 16-17
- More Sabeel Conferences in
2007—dates and locations
to be announced . . .

Updates. www.fosna.org

An Ecumenical Faith Stance Against Global Empire

This is a statement of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches available on our website. It is a hopeful document by faith communities "seeking to discern the signs of the times in the context of the global reality in order to take faith stances and actions." A number of theological, interfaith, academic and political discussions have taken up this problem. www.fosna.org



Message from the Chair:

The first **Friends of Sabeel Leadership Retreat and Strategy Meeting** took place in Portland, Oregon, August 23-27. Over 90 key leaders of the Sabeel movement in the U.S. participated, as well as Naim Ateek and

Cathy Nichols from the Sabeel Jerusalem office. It was a gathering to discuss the major accomplishments of the past and the challenges of the future. The outcome far exceeded our best hopes to bring about a unified vision and renewed commitment to Sabeel's principles for a just peace in the Holy Land. The meeting brought together some of our most talented, committed people for wide-ranging discussions on the direction and growth of the Sabeel movement. I am pleased to provide this brief report (on the right). These are the main decisions that came out of the leadership meeting. You may email any questions to: friends@fosna.org

This short newsletter will update you on our events and development. I continue to travel around the U.S. to meet with local groups, encouraging them in work toward organizing a Sabeel regional educational conference. The interest is high all around the country. Your support, your local work to educate the churches, and your prayers, make all this possible. We are all grateful.

The Rev. Canon Richard K. Toll,
Chair, Friends of Sabeel—North America

REPORT: Friends of Sabeel— North America Leadership Retreat & Strategy Meeting

August 23-27, 2006—Portland, Oregon

Steering Comm. Goals/Objectives

- Increase funding and staffing.
- Strengthen local groups/conferences.
- Develop education and marketing tools.
- Promote alternative travel.

Development: Fundraising & Staffing

- Strengthen, empower, and expand FOSNA communities and conferences.
- Increase main office staffing to support local groups & conference work.

Alternative Travel

- Maintain a comprehensive "alternative pilgrimage" page on website.
- Network with existing alternative travel organizations.
- Approach colleges and universities to encourage alternative travel related to courses of study.
- Provide scholarships for seminarians and other students to travel to Palestine.

World Café Dialog/Knowledge Sharing

Question: What goals need most attention?
Answers: Funding; Educational Materials; Professional Public Relations; Coalition Building; Local Group Development; Divestment Work; Alternative Travel.

The Forgotten Faithful

A Window into the Life and Witness
of Christians in the Holy Land

Pilgrimage and Witness: Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah and villages, West Bank and the Sea of Galilee.

Through lectures, workshops, worship, and excursions in the Holy Land, the Sabeel 6th International Conference will provide a unique opportunity to encounter the realities of Christians in Palestine and Israel. **History** Consider the 2000 year presence of Christians in the Holy Land. **Present Realities** Critically examine the impact of the Israeli occupation on the political, social, economic, and religious conditions of Palestinian Christians. **Personal Stories** Hear from Christians about their challenges and aspirations. **Christian-Muslim Relations** Understand the relationships of Christians with their Muslim sisters and brothers **Partnership and Bridge Building** Develop practical tools and ideas to support and empower Christians in Palestine and Israel.

For program and registration information: www.sabeel.org

6th International Sabeel Conference November 2-9, 2006 in Palestine-Israel

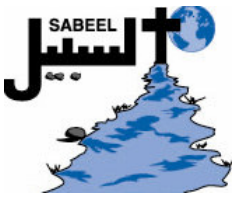


Ending the Silence: Voices from the Holy Land

Sabeel Conference—Kansas City, KS
Fri. & Sat.: October 20 & 21, 2006

Rarely does a conference on peace and justice issues come to Kansas City with this caliber of speakers and topics Citizens for Justice in the Middle East will join Friends of Sabeel—North America and Justice, Peace and the Environment Committee at Village Presbyterian Church for this regional conference to inform community members about current realities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. **SPEAKERS:** Rev. Dr. Fahed Abu-Akel; Dr. Mubarak Awad; Anna Baltzer; Phyllis Bennis; Cindy and Craig Corrie; Dr. Jeff Halper; Rick Hellman; Jonathan Kuttub; Rabbi Mark Levin; Rev. Sandra Olewine; Refuser Solidarity; Rev. Don Wagner; Rev. James M. Wall.

Program and Registration information at: www.fosna.org
Or contact: Janet Baker, Chair of the Justice, Peace, and Environment Committee, (913) 649-9439, jannbak@aol.com Andrea Whitmore, Chair of Citizens for Justice in the Middle East, (913) 236-9825; Email: whitmoreandy@hotmail.com



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From the **Friends of Sabeel Development Committee**

New tax legislation regarding Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) passed into law in August, providing an opportunity to make a significant gift to Friends of Sabeel without including the gift in your taxable income. **The Pension Protection Act of 2006** allows direct transfers of up to \$100,000 to FOSNA. Requirements are: (1) You must be 70 1/2 years old; (2) the gift must be outright and the funds must be transferred directly to FOSNA; (3) the provision is effective only through December 31, 2007; (4) the charitable distribution counts toward your minimum distribution requirement. You will not be eligible for a federal income tax deduction, but you will see your gift's impact immediately by giving to Friends of Sabeel. If you wish more information, please consult your accountant. Thank you for considering Sabeel in your planned giving.



Making a Difference in Palestine, Israel and the Middle East

Sabeel Conference—Cleveland, Ohio
Fri. & Sat.: February 16 & 17, 2007

Congressman Dennis Kucinich is part of the line up of speakers for a conference to be held in Cleveland.

Kucinich recently returned from Palestine-Israel with some new insights. Sabeel took part in the discussions during his visit. Others scheduled to speak in Cleveland are: Naim Ateek (Director of Sabeel Jerusalem); Brother

David Carroll (the Vatican's advisor to the U.N.); Afif Safieh (Palestinian Ambassador to the U.S. and Former Ambassador to the Vatican and the U.K.); Isam Zaiem (Council on American Islamic Relations); Mitchell Plitnick (Director, Jewish Voice for Peace); Jeff Halper (2006 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee and director of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions); A. Rashied Omar (Scholar of Islamic Studies, Kroc Institute, Notre Dame University—invited); Dave Robinson (Director, Pax Christi USA); Updates at fosna.org



FROM THE DESK OF
THE REV. CANON RICHARD K. TOLL

Dear Friend of Sabeel,

You will receive a gift from us in your Christmas appeal this year, a film on DVD entitled "Sacred Space Denied: Bethlehem and The Wall". The film tells another Christmas story, not the one about the birth of Christ in the little town of Bethlehem on a beautiful silent night, but the story of a people imprisoned by concrete walls and barbed wire, and of an ancient homeland—Palestine—being destroyed by bombs and bulldozers. We are working with the producer, Peter Nagle, to get this film out to as many people and churches as possible before Christmas and we need your help now to cover the reproduction costs. We plan to mail the film to 6,000 people and organizations for Christmas. Will you help us accomplish this by making a donation today? A donation form and envelope are enclosed.

Thank you for your support.

Dick