

PROPHETIC VOICES ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO SILENCE

A word from our Executive Director, Tarek Abuata

Dear FOSNA community,

Thank you so much for your support. We have had a year of tremendous impact: denominational divestment efforts, a Palestinian narrative training program, a liberation theology speaking tour, and a growing municipal boycott campaign.



In May, Reverend Naim Ateek and I went on a two-week speaking tour titled Liberation Theology: Palestinians Speak Justice. With our combined 70 years of nonviolent justice organizing, Reverend Naim and I discussed what prophetic action looks like in 2018: While U.S. financial support for Israeli occupation is greater than ever, transnational solidarity with Palestine is stronger than ever. To confront this contradiction, our prophetic action must be intersectional, morally centered, diverse, and pragmatic.

We were welcomed by over 1,000 people in Atlanta, Pittsburgh, DC, Durham, and Indiana. Unfortunately, not everyone was excited by our words of justice. After our visit to Pittsburgh, where the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary hosted us, the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh severed its public ties with the seminary. The federation fought to silence us. We took that moment as an opportunity to communicate even more broadly the aims of liberation theology.

As people of faith, we are morally obligated to challenge those asking us to turn our backs on suffering. We are convinced that justice can never come while we uphold the supremacy of one group over any other. Even as we continue to open ourselves to mutual accountability, we recommit ourselves to hold accountable those who deny the humanity of Palestinian people. Prophetic voices call out with a shared longing for peace and justice that our faith traditions have nurtured in us.

We cannot do this work without your support and involvement. It takes courage to stand up at your city councils, your congregations, your denominations, and your family dinners. It takes strength to live by a moral stance in the name of justice and equality. And it takes enduring generosity to support the collective work of this movement. Thank you!

In solidarity,
Tarek Abuata

WE WELCOME OUR NEWEST FACES AT FOSNA

STAFF



Ramah Awad is FOSNA's new Communications Coordinator. She grew up in the Bay Area and finished high school in Ramallah, Palestine. She recently graduated from Stanford University, where she studied history and anthropology. Her senior honors thesis focused on the plight of Palestinian refugees from Syria. In addition to her work at FOSNA, Ramah is an organizer with the Palestinian Youth Movement in the Bay Area and nationally.

INTERNS



Stephen Welty holds a master's in Middle Eastern studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research for FOSNA investigates the involvement of Elbit Systems in the Israeli occupation and global militarization. As an international relations enthusiast and human rights advocate, he is convinced that active involvement in political movements must complement the development of any academic theories about Middle Eastern politics for actual change to be realized. FOSNA strengthens this vision, which has been rewarding.



Faryn Borella is a Jewish educator, community organizer, and ritual leader San Francisco. She is a longtime Palestine solidarity organizer, working both in the United States and Palestine with groups such as Jewish Voice for Peace and All That's Left. She is pursuing a master's in social change at Starr King School for the Ministry at the Graduate Theological Union, where she studies and teaches about Jewish Liberation Theology. With FOSNA, Faryn is helping to coordinate seminary outreach efforts to grow the Clergy and Seminary Action Council and to advocate for more education about Palestinian Liberation Theology in seminaries.

GOING HP-FREE MEANS CHURCHES STAND AGAINST APARTHEID SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY

We are proud to announce that we have reached 30 HP-free churches! Hewlett-Packard Inc. (HP) is commonly known for its brand of computers, printers, and ink cartridges. However, HP provides services and technologies to the Israeli military, which carries out the illegal occupation of Palestine and violations of Palestinian human rights.

To date, 30 churches from eight different denominations around the country have pledged to go HP-free! When churches choose to become HP-free, they not only make a stand against Israeli apartheid; they also make a stand against surveillance technology, racial profiling, and violent border enforcement worldwide.

These are a significant strides that bring BDS efforts from the national and denominational to the congregational level. But we are just getting started. We want to reach 50 HP-free churches this year and we need to you help make it happen. If you would like to get involved, please contact our national organizer, Rochelle Watson, at rochelle@fosna.org.

DENOMINATIONAL DIVESTMENT IS KEY TO ENDING CHRISTIAN COMPLICITY IN OCCUPATION

A word from our National Organizer, Rochelle Watson

This year, we witnessed the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches, with a total of 4.5 million members, adopt a wide range of resolutions in support of Palestinian rights! It is up to all of us to see these resolutions implemented in every congregation by supporting the HP-Free Church campaign and encouraging churches to take lead roles in municipal boycott campaigns.

This June, I was in St. Louis for the Presbyterian Church's biannual general assembly supporting the efforts of the church's Israel/Palestine Mission Network. By the end of the week, the Presbyterian Church adopted resolutions defending BDS activism and Palestinian rights and denouncing Israel's annexation of Jerusalem, discriminatory practices against Palestinians, and the siege on Gaza. The IPMN pushed the conversation to include the rights of Palestinians in Israel, as it is crucial that our work advocates for Palestinians globally—in Israel, in the West Bank, in Gaza, in refugee camps, and in the diaspora.

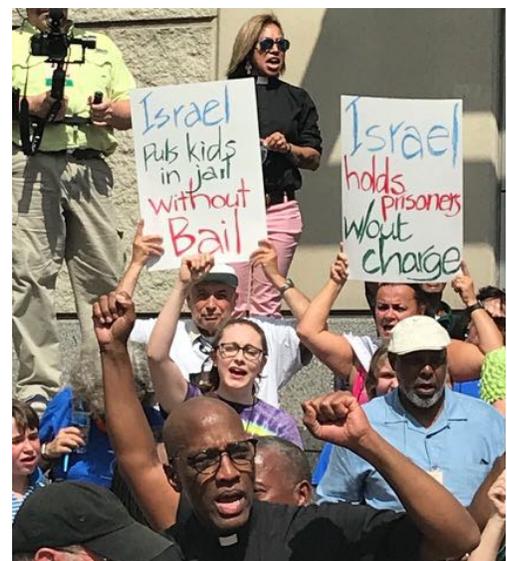
In addition to these powerful strides, the assembly led a 400-person march to the St. Louis City Justice Center to deliver \$47,000 in bail to free people being held for minor offenses. Some have been locked up for over a year waiting for trial simply because they cannot afford bail. It was an inspiring march with signs and chants that demonstrate the power of joint struggle.

In July, Tarek and I attended the Episcopal Church's 79th General Convention in Austin to support the efforts of the Episcopal Palestine-Israel Network. After 10 days of powerful organizing and lively debate, the Episcopal Church adopted six key resolutions affirming Palestinian rights, including a resolution to divest from companies involved in the occupation. The Episcopal Church became the 10th denomination in the United States to take economic action for justice in Palestine! The other resolutions reaffirmed Palestinian self-determination, advocated for the rights of Palestinian children and refugees, and condemned Israeli violence against protestors in Gaza.

We are so honored to have supported and witnessed these monumental achievements in the movement for justice for Palestinians, alongside several dedicated allies including the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, American Muslims for Palestine, Adalah Justice Project, Jewish Voice for Peace, and the American Friends Service Committee.

These tremendous victories reflect growing American support for Palestinian justice and illustrate the power of boycott and divestment campaigns in educating and moving our institutions into alignment with human rights and justice.

In solidarity,
Rochelle Watson



SABEEL JERUSALEM IS THE HEART OF PALESTINIAN CHRISTIAN LIBERATION THEOLOGY

In March of this year, the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem hosted its 10th annual international conference, “Jesus Christ Liberator: Then and Now.” The conference also coincided with 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, which provided a springboard for addressing some of the most pressing issues facing Palestinians today. The conference lasted six days and took its nearly 200 participants to the southern West Bank, Jerusalem, and the Galilee.

While the conference included afternoon lectures and seminars, it also involved quite a bit of moving around the region so that participants could personally experience the issues being discussed. One visit to Umm al-Hiran, a Bedouin village inside Israel, had a particularly strong impact on participants as the village was recently subject to state violence. A large group of participants travelled to the village and met with local activists who explained their experience with displacement. The conference covered a range of topics and included visits to many different places, from refugee camps and checkpoints to the Church of the Nativity and a remote Christian village in the Golan Heights. Overall, it was a wonderful time of learning, fellowship, and worship.

Sabeel Jerusalem will be hosting a witness trip from October 30 to November 7, 2018, for participants to experience the realities of Palestinians living under Israeli occupation: the wall, settlements, checkpoints, confiscated land and demolished homes, refugee camps, and environmental degradation. This witness trip is an opportunity to worship with Palestinian Christians and to meet and reflect with Palestinian Christians and Muslims as well as with Jewish Israelis and internationals, all of whom partner with Sabeel in non-violent resistance against the violation of international and humanitarian law. **For more information, visit www.sabeel.org.**

FOSNA'S CLERGY AND SEMINARY ACTION COUNCIL CULTIVATE CHRISTIAN LEADERS

FOSNA's Clergy and Seminary Action Council, a network of 143 clergy and seminarians, is working to strengthen our connection to seminarians, introduce Palestinian Liberation Theology into seminary curricula, and coordinate support for seminarians to take witness trips to Palestine. FOSNA's Edmond Lee Browning Memorial Fund supports witness trip scholarships for seminarians and seminary professors to visit the holy sites for the first time, connect with Sabeel in Jerusalem and Friends of Sabeel North America, and builds an applied understanding of Palestinian Liberation Theology. This fund is supported entirely from individual donations and is dedicated entirely to preparing the next generation of Christian leaders with a deeply rooted, solidly grounded training in liberation theology.

We hope to grow FOSNA's Clergy and Seminary Action Council to 200 members by the end of this year. We also hope to sponsor two witness trip scholarships through the Browning Memorial Fund this year. If you or someone you know would like to join the council, please visit www.fosna.org/clergy. If you would like to donate to the Browning Memorial fund, write “Browning” in the memo of your check, or donate online at www.fosna.org/browning.

A word from Reverend Diane Dulin, Clergy and Seminary Action Council co-convener



Muriel Smith, Allison Tanner, and I are all looking forward to our first-ever, in-person gathering of the Clergy and Seminary Action Council at the Prophetic Action Convening. We feel this will be a powerful launch for church-based strategy within the context of Palestinian liberation theology. It will be exciting to share ideas for on-the-ground liberation advocacy/action.

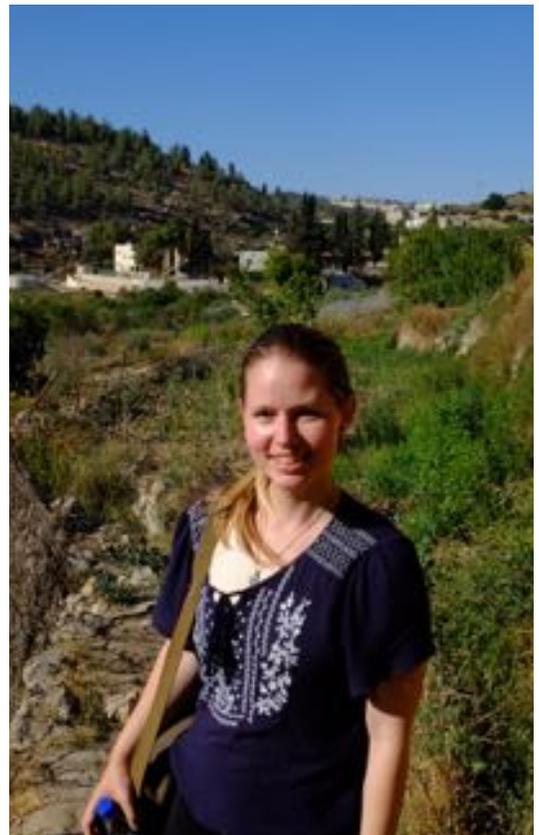
In solidarity,
Diane Dulin

A word from Marie-Claire Klassen, the first recipient of the Edmund Browning Memorial Fund

This year, I had the opportunity to spend the summer at the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center thanks to the Browning Scholarship. As a graduate student in theology, most of my time is spent in the library reading books. My time at Sabeel gave me the unique opportunity to see liberation theology in action. I learned so much from participating in weekly bible studies at Sabeel in which scripture is brought into conversation with the brutal realities of living under occupation. This deepened my appreciation for the fact that theology is more than what we find in a library. Liberation theology, as I witnessed it at Sabeel, is living out faith through a radical commitment to justice, nonviolence, and inclusivity.

As I start the second year of my PhD program, I am challenged to reflect both on how I can continue to incorporate Palestinian Liberation Theology into my studies and how I can live out a commitment to justice, nonviolence, and inclusivity in my own context. I know this experience will continue to impact both the direction of my research for my dissertation and my own faith over the coming years. Thanks so much for your support!

Peace,
Marie-Claire Klassen



PALESTINIAN NARRATIVE TRAININGS CENTER THE VOICES WE MOST NEED TO HEAR

A word from our Communications Coordinator, Ramah Awad

In March 2018, I was one of 30 participants in FOSNA's first Palestinian Narrative Training in San Francisco. The training was a two-day Palestinian-led workshop for Palestinians living in the diaspora to cultivate their family stories. As a Palestinian-American who grew up in the Bay Area, I had an opportunity to work on my family oral history project and connect with other members of my local Palestinian community. After the training, I joined FOSNA as the communications coordinator because of my belief in FOSNA's advocacy work for Palestinian rights.

The importance of such trainings cannot be overstressed: The stories of Palestinian people have historically been silenced. Storytelling serves a central role in maintaining the Palestinian community in the face of ongoing dispossession and displacement and honoring the incredible resilience of those who have survived ethnic cleansing. Centering Palestinian voices, both in our solidarity work and our own Palestinian communities, is at the heart of empowering Palestinian leadership in the movement for justice in Palestine.

I look forward to our upcoming Palestinian Narrative Trainings in Denver and Houston. **If you would like to host a Palestinian Narrative Training in your community, contact Tarek Abuata at tarek@fosna.org.**

In solidarity,
Ramah Awad

JOINT BLACK-PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE IS THE PATH TO COLLECTIVE JUSTICE

Recognizing deep connections between the struggles for Palestinian and Black justice in the United States, FOSNA has partnered with Black4Palestine (B4P). B4P is dedicated to justice in Palestine and to bringing a liberation theology curriculum to African-American churches across the United States. The curriculum trains FOSNA and B4P member-activists on the intersection of Palestinian and Black struggles, on methods to preach about these commonalities in Black faith communities, and on concrete actions that congregations can take in furthering joint campaigns for justice.

We are in the early stages of outreach and are facilitating an education plan within each congregation. This project is especially relevant in that the leading Black organization advancing Palestine justice and the leading ecumenical Christian organization advocating for a just peace in Palestine will collaborate in authentic cross-movement ways to advance this joint struggle for justice.



ELAINE KELLEY IS RETIRING!

A word from Kali Rubaii, Development Coordinator and Internship Coordinator

Sister Elaine Kelley is the nun who can tell you true stories of hanging off the sides of whaling ships as a Greenpeace activist, of living alone in a Palestinian village as a young woman, of cultivating hay-bale gardens, and of distributing milkweed for monarch butterflies. She has been the backbone of FOSNA's operations from the very beginning. If you have received an envelope from FOSNA in the past 25 years, she probably sealed it herself.

If you need the backstory on a new acquaintance, she has that. If you need a joke or a "jibjab" video, she has that too! Need someone to remember your birthday? Elaine will do that, and she'll spell your nickname correctly when no one else can. In fact, Elaine has taught me more about faith than anyone I know, because she practices faith in the details of daily life. "God is in the details," I have learned in knowing Elaine. It is this working philosophy that has kept FOSNA running, but it is also what makes FOSNA feel like home to so many people.

Elaine, in your retirement from scrolling through donor databases, I will miss your hearty spirit, your detailed perfectionism, your humorous wit, and your deep well of institutional memory at FOSNA. Thank you, Elaine, for three decades of service to FOSNA, and for your ongoing lifetime of service to Palestinian liberation. You are such an inspiration to me!

Love,
Kali





Friends of Sabeel North America
PO Box 3192
Greenwood Village, CO 80155

Non Profit
US Postage
PAID
Permit #1
Sebastopol CA

SUPPORT OUR PALESTINIAN NARRATIVE TRAININGS

"By sharing the story of myself and my family members, I am performing an act of resistance and of advocacy. These stories may not be much; but even if I have one person question their belief system, I am happy. If one person takes this story to heart, I have planted a seed."

- Salwa, March 2018 narrative training participant



Palestinian Narrative Trainings are a way for FOSNA to cultivate and center Palestinian voices. Centering Palestinian voices is not about finding token speakers to fill token roles. It is about making space for the full spectrum of Palestinian experiences that sit at the heart of the movement for justice. Palestinian narratives are the guide and impetus of our movement, and storytelling is a powerful catalyst to social change. With support from people like you, we will be able to offer Palestinian narrative trainings in communities across North America. Help make this vision a reality. Donate today to support Palestinian voices.

Complete the enclosed donation form or visit fosna.org to give today.