

STATEMENT ON THE CONFLICT IN ISRAEL AND GAZA

ISSUED BY THE CABINET OF INTERFAITH PARTNERSHIP OF GREATER ST. LOUIS

October 13, 2023

As people of conscience, we are deeply distressed and profoundly saddened by the tragic attacks that took place in Israel this weekend, and our hearts break as we continue to watch the conflict unfold between Israel and Gaza. As we witness unconscionable attacks against civilians, our moral values have been violated and our longing for a peaceful world shattered. Our prayers go out to all those affected, especially those who have lost loved ones, those who have been displaced from their homes, and those who are held captive. Peace and safety are fundamental human rights entitled to all, Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Interfaith Partnership of Greater St. Louis (IPSTL) includes representatives of more than 30 religions or denominations, including those with people directly impacted by the conflict. For nearly 40 years, IPSTL has worked hard to nurture and sustain strong friendships among all faiths, not just within our organization, but also in the community as a whole. The current circumstances make that mission as important as it has ever been.

IPSTL's Cabinet is comprised of local religious leaders or their designees. The Cabinet provides a public voice for Interfaith Partnership on matters of religious, moral and ethical conscience.

The Cabinet declares that regardless of differing views regarding the conflict and its causes, all human beings should be assured of safety from violence. Therefore, we unite in prayers for peace, in prayers that the parties will work to resolve their differences without further harm to innocent civilians, and in prayers that all people be able to return safely to their homes.

Also, we declare a commitment that we will not permit the conflict to create divisions within our own community. We recognize that this commitment demands much of us, but it is essential if we are to assure that we remain at peace with one another.

We ask that everyone join us in these prayers and in this commitment.

Interfaith Partnership of Greater St. Louis has been in existence since 1985. Our motto is, "As communities of faith, we agree to differ, promise to love, and unite to serve."