





PROGRAM YEAR:

September 2020- August 2021

A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

let there be goodness & light

DEAR CMEP FRIENDS AND DONORS,

As 2021 comes to an end, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is stronger than ever because of your steadfast support. I am grateful to say that CMEP's work, persistent advocacy, and commitment to human rights have never wavered. This past year, CMEP has engaged in numerous issues of conflict and peace in the Middle East - including, but not limited to - the ongoing economic crisis in Lebanon, the May hostilities between Israel and Gaza, the one year anniversary of the Nagorno-Karabakh war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the ongoing engagement of the US government in the Saudi led coalition war in Yemen, and so many more critical issues. In the midst of the ongoing global coronavirus pandemic, with your support, CMEP has accomplished great things!

- After a five-year wait, CMEP finally became a formally recognized special status organization with the United Nations.
- We sent over 13,000 advocacy messages to leaders in Washington, D.C.
- We welcomed a new Board Organization: The Lott Carey Global Christian Missional Community.

In addition to our education and advocacy efforts, CMEP's staff team has grown and developed. On the next page, meet the incredible people who make up our team and help us press forward in our efforts to equality, human rights, justice, and peace. CMEP's work makes a difference at stopping violence and working to end hostility, addressing core underlying causes of oppression and injustice such as the ongoing occupation of the Palestinian people, and working toward peace throughout the Middle East.

We couldn't do our critical work without your support. Celebrate with us all that was accomplished in the past year. And commit to pray and work alongside us in all the work that is yet to be done in the months and years ahead!

Blessings in Christ Jesus,



CMEP Staff and Volunteers

as of November 2021

(and their favorite subject in school)



Mae Elise Cannon

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

everything!

(SHE'S GOT A LOT OF DEGREES)

Kyle Cristofalo

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

history



chemistry





Aune Carlson

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

band



math



Kevin Vollrath

MANAGER OF MIDDLE EAST PARTNERSHIPS

math

Anna Baker

PROJECTS AND COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Lisa Kennedy

FINANCIAL MANAGER



history

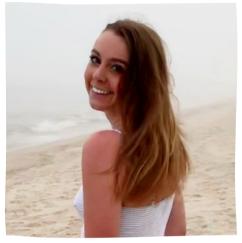
art



Fayelle Ewnakye

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

GOAT: NOT ON STAFF



Mary Golden DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

literature

Ernma Johnston

TRIPS COORDINATOR

history



math





AMBASSADOR WARREN CLARK FELLOW



Jennifer Maidrand

AMBASSADOR WARREN CLARK FELLOW

English

Bruce Fisk

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW

Hellenistic Greek



choir

(BUT ALSO MATH)



Jessica Tissell

VOLUNTEER STAFF: 1835



this past program year saw work and advocacy from: **12 STAFF b** INTERNS **4** FELLOWS **18** REGIONAL COORDINATORS **3** VOLUNTEERS 30 BOARD ORGANIZATIONS <u>& 50,000+</u> CONSTITUENTS



Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is pleased to announce the addition of Lott Carey Foreign Missionary Society (Lott Carey) to CMEP's member communion board.

Lott Carey is a global Christian missions community of African-American Baptist heritage. They aim to extend the Christian witness around the world. Through prayer partnership, financial support, and technical assistance, Lott Carey comes alongside indigenous communities to support ministries of evangelism, compassion, empowerment, and advocacy. Lott Carey will be represented by The Rev. Emmett Lafayette Dunn.



The Reverend Dunn serves as Executive Secretary-Treasurer, CEO of the Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention. For twenty-two years, Rev. Dunn served on the Executive Staff of the Baptist World Alliance. His ministry with the BWA took him to places all over the world, where he provided skill leadership in the areas of youth leadership development, conflict resolution, mission and evangelism, church health and wellness, emerging leaders' initiatives, and conference management. For the last 25 years, Rev. Dunn has traveled to more than 100 countries, encouraging, equipping, and empowering faith-based communities.

He is married to the lovely Suan J. Dunn, and they have three beautiful children, LeAnn Amal, Emmett Lafayette, Jr., and Annette Olivia. They reside in Fort Washington, Maryland.

"The values of CMEP are very much in line with one of Lott Carey's core strategic drivers,

that being, advocacy. I look forward to serving alongside CMEP and the other members of the board in seeking peace for all," said Rev. Dunn.

CMEP is grateful to welcome our newest member organization and looks forward to increased opportunities to work constructively toward Middle East peace with Lott Carey, The Rev. Dunn, and our other member communions.



A BOARD ORGANIZATION Jate



We are grateful that the Maryknoll Office for Global Concern has moved from observer to full member status as a Board Organization.

19 PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON TOPICS SUCH AS:



We must "act immediately to address the continuing underlying causes of injustice that will otherwise remain a constant threat to peace in the Holy Land: occupation, land dispossession, displacement, and the withholding of basic human rights we take for granted."

05/20/21 Statement to the UN Security Council



Policy and Other Recommendations to President Biden

"We seek to encourage a US foreign policy in the region that addresses these and other issues in a fair, just, and consistent way. As faith leaders it is our duty to speak up on behalf of those who suffer injustice. We believe peace and justice in the world is also the duty of the United States and of all nations."

03/09/21 Letter to President Biden



Lebanon, Armenia, and the Broader Middle East

"CMEP acknowledges that the current financial crisis in Lebanon represents one of the greatest economic catastrophes of our time."

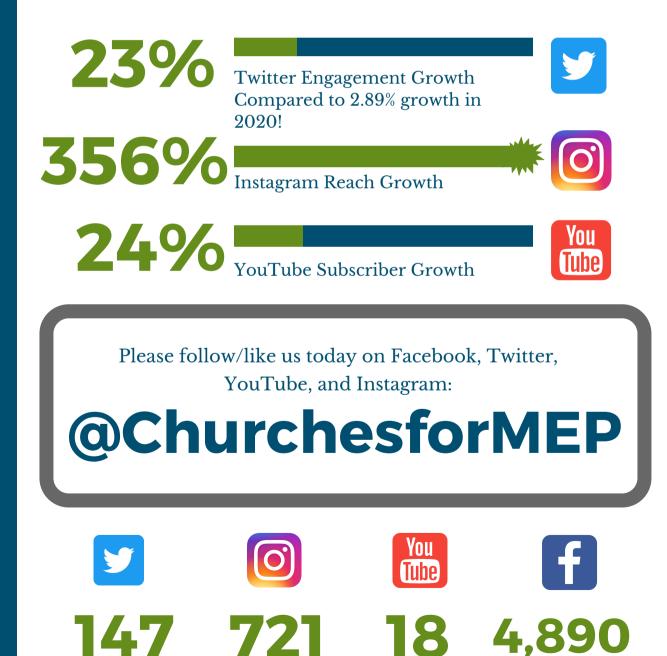
09/17/21 Statement on New Lebanese Government

LEARN MORE AT: CMEP.ORG/PRESS



SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH

CMEP continues to be active on Facebook and Twitter and significantly increased engagement on Instagram. Our social media feeds are more streamlined and consistent aesthetically and we've begun regular use of the story feature on Facebook and Instagram which is also getting a lot of attention.



posts

new videos

followers

new followers

CMEP IN THE NEWS

CMEP was mentioned at least sixty-seven times in the press this past program year.



HIGHLIGHTS

INTERFAITH VOICES INTERVIEW

80+ National Public Radio Stations! Featured an extensive interview with CMEP's ED addressing the realities of the Israeli/Gaza fighting in May 2021. One of the episodes focused on "The Dispossessed and Displaced in the Occupied Palestinian Territories" and the other focused on "The Path Forward: Prioritizing Human Rights and Learning from the History."

THE JOURNAL OF RELIGIONS

CMEP Staff executive director Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon and Ambassador Warren Clark Fellow Kevin Vollrath published the article "Spiritual Synchronicity: Icon Veneration in Evangelical and Orthodox Religious Practices in the 21st Century" in the academic publication The Journal of Religions.

LEARN MORE AT: CMEP.ORG/PRESS

A FEW MORE NOTES



14,376 subscribers to our monthly publications.



40 (weekly) bulletins were sent to our mailing list



5 press releases



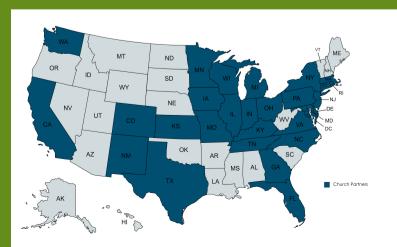
18 Regional Coordinators from 13 States

120 Church Partners (including 9 new ones this year.)

CHURCH PARTNERSHIP DONATIONS



\$25,662



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



CMEP's executive director Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon had the privilege of leading a prayer among several heads of communion including His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophorous of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of North America, His Eminence, Metropolitan Joseph, Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, and His Eminence Archbishop Vicken Aykazian the Ecumenical Director and Diocesan Legate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) - and member of CMEP board. The gathering was in lament of the one year anniversary of the Hagia Sophia church in Istanbul being converted to a mosque.

WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT

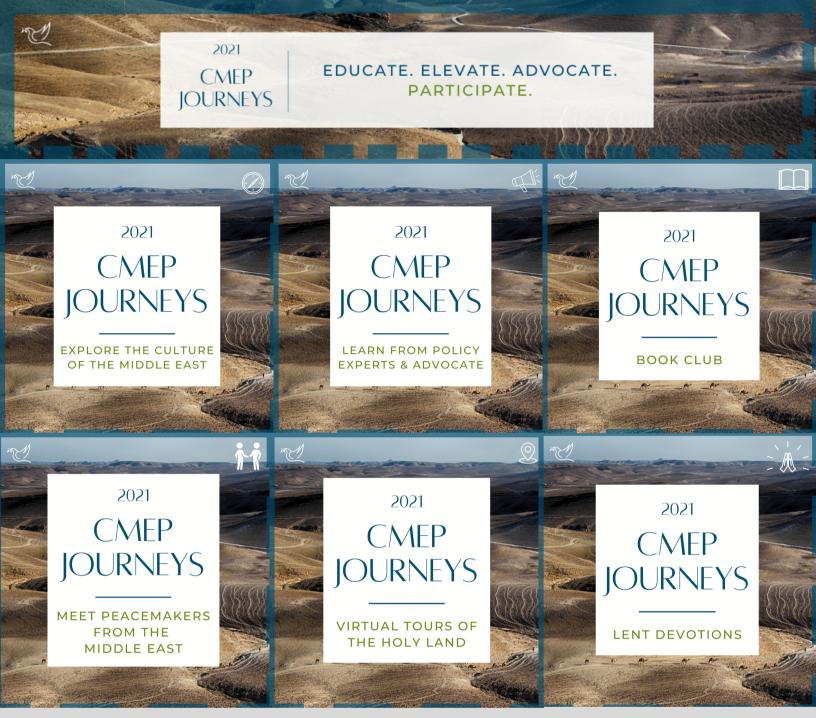
Our (mostly virtual) Events covered a variety of topics including:

- The intersection of theology and the Holy Land
- History of Christians in the Middle East
- Current Political Priorities and actions
- Gaza
- Women in peacemaking
- Religion's role in peacemaking

PEOPLE FROM DOZENS OF DENOMINATIONS AND COMMUNIONS JOINED US TO LEARN THIS YEAR

Baptists | Evangelicals | Unitarians | Greek Orthodox | Antiochian Orthodox | Armenian Church of America | Catholics | Episcopalians | And More!

CMEP WAS ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANNUAL MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES INCLUDING: UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS AND LOTT CAREY



Throughout the spring and summer of 2021 we hosted numerous online events - including cooking classes, webinars on policy, virtual tours, and book clubs.



Day of Action for CMEP Journeys, CMEP sent over 2400 messages to President and Vice President asking them to immediately release Congressionally approved funding to UNRWA and humanitarian programs in the West Bank and Gaza.

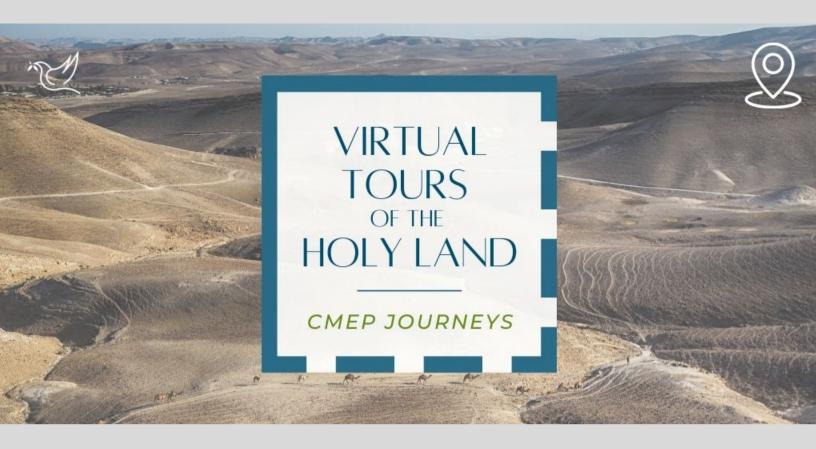


Authors Robert Stoddard, Wafa Shami, Colum McCann, and Rashid Khalidi joined us to discuss their books.



We learned from political experts, women in peacemaking, those working in Gaza, and many others.

CMEP Journeys will continue with church and organizational partners into 2022. Let us know at info@cmep.org if you or your community are interested in hosting a CMEP event.



We partnered with MEJDI tours to lead three virtual tours through Jerusalem - each focused on the work of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox, and Catholic, churches doing the work of peace and justice.

CMEP appreciates the partnership and support of several Middle East Church Leaders as a part of these virtual tours.



featuring an interview with Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon and His Beatitude Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Pierbattista Pizzaballa

UNITED NATIONS INVOLVEMENT

After an application process that took over five years, CMEP is thrilled to have been granted special consultative status as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations (UN). Special consultative status allows for an NGO to engage with the ECOSOC, the Human Rights Council, and, at times, the General Assembly and the United Nations Secretariat. As an NGO with special consultative status, CMEP will have the privilege of designating official representatives to the UN Headquarters in New York and UN Offices at Geneva and Vienna, as well as offering expert information, advice, and statements to the Council on topics related to faith, justice, and peace in the Middle East.



CMEP signs letter to the UN Security Council calling on an immediate ceasefire

Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, Executive Director of CMEP, joined more than 50 other church leaders from North America and Europe calling on the UN Security Council (UNSC) to secure an immediate ceasefire to the current violence in Israel/Palestine. The letter also urges the UNSC "to act immediately to address the continuing underlying causes of injustice that will otherwise remain a constant threat to peace in the Holy Land: occupation, land dispossession, displacement, and the withholding of basic human rights we take for granted."

advocacy Priori

With a new Administration and Congress, CMEP began the year by establishing relationships with new officials in the Administration and Congress by introducing them to CMEP's key advocacy priorities for the year. The below list provides a few of our key advocacy priorities over the past year:

Immediate restoration of bilateral humanitarian assistance to the West Bank and Gaza, as well as funds to URNWA. After all humanitarian funding and assistance to UNRWA was halted by the prior Administration, CMEP ensured our earliest advocacy with both Congress and the Administration prioritized the need to resume these streams of funding as soon as possible.

Prioritize human rights by implementing tangible consequences against those who violate them. This included pushing the Biden Administration to make clear its opposition to the ongoing expansion of settlements by classifying them as illegal. Within Congress, it meant encouraging support for HR 2590, The Palestinian Children and Families Act, which seeks to ensure no U.S. military assistance to Israel is used to detain Palestinian children, demolish Palestinian homes, or further facilitate annexation of Palestinian land.

Reopening the Consulate General in East Jerusalem. The Consulate General served as a key connection point between the U.S. Government and Palestinians until its closure and merger with the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem by the Trump Administration. CMEP strongly supports the reopening of a separate Consulate General as a way to meaningfully engage with Palestinians throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip.

Ending U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition war in Yemen. CMEP remains engaged in efforts to push Congress and the Administration to play an active role in pursuing an end to the war in Yemen. In a letter to President Biden signed by 28 Church and Christian organizational leaders, including CMEP's ED Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, call on the President to "work with Congress to legislate a permanent end to arms sales and military support to the Saudi/UAE coalition's war on Yemen, pressure Saudi Arabia to end the blockade on Yemen and work to secure passage of a new UNSCR that calls for a nationwide ceasefire in Yemen and urges the international community to stop all military support to all the warring parties."





Total Action Alert Messages Sent

13,729 messages to congress & white house

We sent a total of 6 action alerts to Congress and the Administration with topics ranging from support for reinstating U.S. assistance to UNRWA and humanitarian funds to the West Bank and Gaza, to opposing home demolitions in East Jerusalem.

Opposing evictions in Sheikh Jarrah/Silwan

5,452 messages to Congress

The Biden Administration has consistently said they will center human rights and the rule of law in their foreign policy decisions. CMEP constituents joined us to remind the Biden Administration of this promise by asking them to directly intervene with the Israeli government to end the violence against Palestinians and stop the planned expulsion of families in Sheikh Jarrah.







HR 2590



CMEP again worked with Rep. McCollum and NGO partners on the introduction of legislation related to Palestinian human rights. In April 2021, Rep. McCollum introduced HR 2590, the Palestinian Children and Families Act. The legislation would ensure no U.S. taxpayer funds are used to detain and abuse Palestinian children in the West Bank, demolish or seize Palestinian homes, or annex Palestinian land in the West Bank. Through action alerts and constituent advocacy, CMEP has helped secure cosponsors for the legislation.

Letter to Biden

28 Church Leader Signatures

The letter addressed initial key policy recommendations for the Biden Administration related to the Middle East. In the letter the leaders share their vision for a rights-based foreign policy writing, "We seek to encourage a US foreign policy in the region that addresses these and other issues in a fair, just, and consistent way. As faith leaders it is our duty to speak up on behalf of those who suffer injustice. We believe peace and justice in the world is also the duty of the United States and of all nations."

Meetings with Biden Administration

Since taking office in January 2021, CMEP staff and board have had multiple meetings with Biden Administration officials regarding Israel/Palestine. This includes staff members from the White House, National Security Council, State Department, and USAID.

ARMENIA

This past program year we began to intentionally have conversations with our Board, including Representative Archbishop Vicken Aykazian (Armenian Orthodox) about CMEP's engagement with Armenia.

CMEP statement on Armenian genocide

In order to prevent future actions of violence, it is imperative that we acknowledge historic wrongs such as the genocide of the Armenian people where approximately 1.5 million Armenian Christians were killed in massacres and displacement campaigns carried out by the Ottoman Empire beginning in 1915.

04/24/21 Statement on Armenian Genocide Day

CMEP hosted two webinars in September 2021 focused on Armenia: one about the human rights concerns around the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The second focused on the realities facing Armenian Christians.

MIDDLE EAST

New Manager of Middle East Partnerships: Kevin Vollrath



Kevin is a Ph.D. candidate in Religion and Society at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he researches how the Israeli occupation affects Palestinians with disabilities in Bethlehem.

Kevin also earned an M. Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary and a BA in philosophy from the University of Chicago and has researched how churches can better care for and empower people with various disabilities. He has affiliations with the Evangelical Covenant Church and Vineyard USA. In his spare time he enjoys running, yoga, and watching Arab films.

Kevin is based in Israel/Palestine and can be contacted at kevin@cmep.org.



Tent of Nations Advocacy: CMEP has been working with <u>Tent of Nations</u> and Friends of Tent of Nations North America to advocate for the re-registration and legal protection of Tent of Nations. The Nassar family has proof of ownership of Tent of Nations' land dating back to the early 1900s, but lack of Israeli recognition of Nassar ownership has wrongfully licensed frequent attacks, legal and physical, from both the Israeli government and Israeli settlers. CMEP has been working closely with our contacts in the Palestinian Affairs Unit as well as State Department and submitted a petition organized by Tent of Nations and Friends of Tent of Nations to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to pressure the Israeli government to grant Tent of Nations a court date to officially re-register their land, now slated for December 2021.

Pictured: one of the hundreds of trees that burned at Tent of Nations following the May 2021 fire.



Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, Executive Director of Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP), will serve as an international faculty member for the Certificate Program in Peacemaking and Justice in the Palestinian Context at Bethlehem Bible College during the 2021-2022 academic year. The certificate program is comprised of 2 courses that introduce key concepts in both the theory and practice of peacemaking and justice in the context of Palestine and Israel and as expressed by Palestinian Christians and other international scholars. Additional information can be found on the Bethlehem Institute of Peace and Justice's website

SHEIKH JARRAH ADVOCACY



In August, Kevin released two video updates on social media updating CMEP's constituents of the political/ legal challenges facing Sheikh Jarrah's Palestinian residents. Combined, they received almost 400 views.

OPPOSING EVICTIONS IN SHEIKH JARRAH/SILWAN

5,452 MESSAGES TO CONGRESS

CMEP constituents joined us to remind the The Biden Administration they consistently said that they will center human rights and rule of law in their foreign policy decisions. They must now put these words into action by intervening directly with the Israeli government to end the violence against Palestinians and stop the planned expulsion of families in Sheikh Jarrah. Your voice is critically important. Please act now as we work to push the Biden Administration to play a proactive role in bringing about justice and peace in Jerusalem and throughout Israel/Palestine.





VIRTUAL TOUR OF SHEIKH JARRAH/SILWAN

On September 29, 2021, CMEP traveled via zoom through the City of David, Silwan, and Sheikh Jarrah. This was an opportunity to view, learn, and discuss with the live guide. CMEP staff was also present to talk about current events and advocacy opportunities related to the Holy Land. We had 100 people register and max out the zoom capacity for this event!

Connections

Elevating our connections in the Middle East and the United States is central to our advocacy efforts. These organizations are some of Churches for Middle East Peace's (CMEP) connections that work in the United States and the Middle East.



Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is grateful for our coalition relationships. However, these logos and relationships do not indicate agreement on all policy positions. See more at cmep.org/connections.



CMEP 1835 engages young adults and university students around the country through educational regional summits as well as advocacy summits in Washington The journey to justice and D.C. across the Middle East peace requires the effort and unity of voices from all kinds of advocates, especially those ages 18-35!

our fall 2020 summit INTERSECTIONS OF FAITH AND ADVOCACY: A FOCUS ON PEACEBUILDING IN ISRAEL.

The summit was held virtually and featured speakers from Bethlehem Bible College and J-Street. In follow-up to the summit, we held a Spring 2021 Advocacy Training to equip and encourage young adults to make their voices heard on key issues affecting Middle East Peace.

our 1835 email network grew 18% dedicated 1835 staff TWO PART TIME EMPLOYEES

new social media accounts @CMEP1835

learn more CMEP.ORG/CMEP1835

THE FINANCIAL REPORT

We saw more challenges in income as the Pandemic continued, but we also saw bright spots and unexpected victories as we continued to fund our work for peace and justice.



PAYCHECK PROTECTION LOAN

CMEP was able to tap into much needed relief funds through receiving a second PPP Loan to help combat some of the challenges brought on by COVID. The full amount of our \$53,033.25 2021 PPP Loan has been forgiven.

SPRING 2021 GIVING CAMPAIGN

CMEP's spring giving match campaign has exceeded its goal! We raised \$25,698.75 toward our \$21,000 goal. With the matching pledges of \$21,000 – that gives us a total of over \$46,000 donated towards the work of educating, elevating, and advocating.





HONORARIUMS

CMEP was in high demand to participate in the virtual events of our church and organizational partners. As a result, we met and surpassed our ambitious budgeted income of \$7,500 for the 2021 fiscal year. This is a huge achievement as historical income has typically reflected an average of \$700/fiscal year.

INCOME DIFFERENCES

While CMEP saw a decrease in individual and grant giving over the past year as individuals and foundations adjusted to new Covid realities, we are grateful to report that at the close of Fiscal Year 2020 we had a net positive income of approximately \$63,000. As of the publication of this annual report, we are projected to end Fiscal Year 2021 at a net negative income. We are working diligently to fundraise during the year end as we address the very real struggles that Covid has brought to individuals, funders, and non-profits. We are grateful for a year that saw unexpected increases in honorariums and board giving as well as the generosity of our numerous supporters who continue to make CMEP a priority for their charitable giving.



SUPPORT THE WORK OF CMEP. Make a donation at cmep.org/donate



CMEP Board Organizations

and their representatives

Alliance of Baptists: Allison Tanner American Baptist Churches, USA: Rev. William T. Young, IV American Friends Service Committee: Michael Merryman-Lotze Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America: Fr. Thomas Zain Armenian Orthodox Church: Archbishop Vicken Aykazian Catholic Conference of Major Superiors of Men's Institutes: Tom Southard Catholic Relief Services, observer: Myron Meche Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): Peter Makari, CMEP Executive Committee Christians for Social Action: Nikki Toyama-Szeto Christian Reformed Church: Rev. Mark Stephenson Church of the Brethren: Rev. Nate Hosler, Ph.D., CMEP Board Chair, Executive Committee **Church World Service: Steve Weaver** The Episcopal Church: Paul Fehelev **Evangelical Covenant Church: Jeff Anderson Evangelicals 4 Justice: Dr. Andrea Smith** Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Dennis Frado, CMEP Executive Committee Franciscan Friars (OFM): Russ Testa Friends Committee on National Legislation: Diana Ohlbaum Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: Maria Kouroupas, CMEP Executive Committee Lott Carey Foreign Missionary Society: Rev. Emmett Dunn Maryknoll Office for Global Concern: Susan Gunn, CMEP Executive Committee Moravian Church in America: Rev. Richard L. Sides National Council of Churches: Tony Kireopoulos Presbyterian Church, USA: Catherine Gordon **Reformed Church in America: Josh Vis** Unitarian Universalist Association: Susan Leslie United Church of Christ: Peter Makari, CMEP Executive Committee United Methodist Church, General Board of Church & Society: Mark Harrison United Methodist Church, General Board of Global Ministries: David Wildman United Methodist Church, United Methodist Women: Tatiana Dwyer U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, observer: Lucas Koach



Working Together: Justice can prevail. Peace is possible.

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