



November 2025 Pilgrimage to Peace Report

an education program of Churches for Middle East Peace



**PILGRIMAGE
TO PEACE**

The “Peace by Piece” tour with Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans



Dear friends and partners in ministry,

In the very first meeting between Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) and the Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans (BFTA), I imagined a speaking tour that would bring together the core of CMEP's educational mission with concrete support for the Palestinian artisan communities. In November of 2025, this vision was realized as our "Peace by Piece" tour.

Alongside CMEP's communications coordinator, Chris Huth, and BFTA executive director, Suzan Sahori, we connected with thousands of American Christians, sharing authentic stories from the Holy Land, directly supporting the economic empowerment Palestinian artisans by selling their products, and calling upon churches to advocate courageously for peace in Palestine, Israel, and the broader Middle East.

The verse that I centered for much of our tour was this one from Isaiah 2:4 (NIV)

He will judge between the nations
and will singettle disputes for many peoples.
They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

Reading this verse, where weapons of war are transformed into tools of peace, continues to remind me that peacebuilding is not a process done passively or in isolation. But rather, that seeking just peace happens actively, constantly, and sometimes painfully, in community. We must continue to implore those around us to not look away, but to instead take up the call to peacebuilding for our churches, nations, and the world. This is what our faith in Jesus, the Prince of Peace, calls us toward. This is the heart of what "Peace by Piece" represents.

To this end, this tour would not have been possible without the incredible support we received along the way. To our host families, church partners, regional coordinators, donors, and everyone who had a hand in making this tour possible: thank you. Your support of our ministry gives us hope and keeps us going.

The pages ahead reflect not only the work of CMEP and the BFTA, but also the communities who welcomed us along the way, those from the Middle East whose stories we uplifted, and all of the work still to come. I pray that the seeds of peace sowed on this journey grow into new possibilities for a more just world.

With tremendous gratitude,

Destiny Magnett

Programs & Outreach Manager, CMEP



about the tour

Communities hosted events centered around peacebuilding, economic justice, and advocacy related to Israel-Palestine. In collaboration with Bethlehem Free Trade Artisans (BFTA), this program offered a unique opportunity to support Christian-led Palestinian craftspeople while fostering dialogue about paths toward peace and justice in the Holy Land. Our tour featured both CMEP representatives and a BFTA leader from Bethlehem who shared firsthand experiences about daily life, creative resilience, and hopes for peace.

This initiative was particularly timely as communities in the region continued to recover from recent violence and conflict. Our presentations incorporated the most current insights from our team's recent visits to the region, including perspectives from diverse communities affected by ongoing tensions.

Events included:

- Guest sermons and lectures
- Faith-based discussions on just peacemaking
- Educational forums on current realities in the Middle East
- Direct encounter with Christian experiences in the Holy Land
- Fair trade marketplaces featuring artisan-made products

Participants:

- Gained deeper understanding of life in the Holy Land beyond headlines
- Learned about the critical situation of decline facing Christian communities in Holy Land
- Discovered how supporting artisans creates sustainable livelihoods in marginalized communities
- Supported local artisans through economic empowerment and storytelling
- Connected personal faith journeys with the pursuit of justice and reconciliation
- Learned approaches for peacebuilding in their own context and community

The P2P Speaking Tour served as the bridge between direct experience and local action in CMEP's peace initiative framework. This tour brought these experiences to communities across the United States through the voices and stories of those living through the conflict daily. By featuring Palestinian artisans and their handcrafted products, the tour created tangible connections between American audiences and Holy Land communities, transforming awareness into economic support and advocacy.

2,970+ people
at 15 different events
in 7 states
over 14 days
selling over \$25,000 in artisan goods



Pilgrimage to Peace

We partnered with Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans (BFTA) for this tour. BFTA is a non-profit NGO established in 2009. It works to spread the fair trade message in Palestine and links Palestinian producers to global fair trade markets. In 2015, BFTA became the first guaranteed member of World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) in the Middle East. WFTO is the largest global network advocating Fair Trade principles. BFTA's mission to empower the most vulnerable producers in Palestine, support them to become active agents in their own livelihoods, and develop their social rights and their communities.

BFTA's Handicrafts Showcase



Ceramic Bowl



Olive Wood Heart



Olive Wood Musical
Nativity

"The impact of this trip is already tremendous - the connections made is already bright from each church support in selling our artisans products and the dedication from each church - host families were kind and generous made us feel at home." -Suzan, BFTA

Speakers



**Suzan Sahori, Executive
Director of Bethlehem
Fair Trade Artisans.**



**Destiny Magnett, CMEP
Programs and Outreach
Manager**



**Christopher Huth,
CMEP's Communications
and Special Projects
Coordinator**



East Coast November 2 - 9, 2025

Nov 2, 2025: New York

First Presbyterian Church in Albany (pictured below)

54th annual Albany Festival of Nations - The event showcased foods and crafts from dozens of nations around the world, celebrating the diverse cultural heritage of Albany. CMEP was able to table the event with Suzan Sahori, a Bethlehem native and Executive Director of Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans. The table was filled with handmade products brought from the Holy Land for people to purchase, with the proceeds going directly to the artisans who made them. The CMEP team was also able to talk to passersby about CMEP's mission and goals. The festival was attended by more than a thousand people with hundreds passing by the Palestine table.

Delmar Presbyterian Church





East Coast November 2 - 9, 2025

Nov 3, 2025: New York

Niskayuna Reformed Church

Nov 4, 2025: New Jersey

First Congregational Church of Montclair, co-sponsored by church partner Union Congregational Church

Throughout the tour, presentations focus on Bible readings that center on the transformation from war to peace as well as the on the ground, lived experience of those in Palestine. The time almost always ends in a Q & A session where participants are eager to know how to engage.





East Coast November 2 - 9, 2025

Nov 5, 2025: New Jersey

The Perfecting Church in Atco, NJ - Let There Be Light worship and panel discussion. The panel focused on what actions Christian Americans can take to help bring an end to the atrocities in the Holy Land, including the CMEP "Let Children Live" campaign. The panel ended with a lively Q and A from the audience as well as the sale of BFTA goods. The service can be viewed [here](#).

Nov 6, 2025: Delaware

Delaware Churches for Middle East Peace (DCMEP) pastors' group gathering.

Westminster Presbyterian Peace & Justice Work Group: "Peace by Piece: The Arts, Economic Empowerment, and Building Peace."





East Coast November 2 - 9, 2025

Nov 8, 2025: Delaware

Newark United Methodist Church

Nov 9, 2025: DC

Christ Lutheran Church

Throughout the tour, attendees had the opportunity to first listen to stories about the realities of life on the ground in Bethlehem and then purchase handmade artisan goods from BFTA.



One of the goals of the tour is to connect people across America with how they can stay involved in advocating for peace after the one-time event. Participants have the opportunity to learn about CMEP and our work. We connect the dots between the work of Churches for Middle East Peace, scripture, and peace-building.



Midwest November 15-19, 2025

Nov 15-16, 2025: Minnesota

Minneapolis Lord of Life Lutheran Church. We were grateful to be hosted by the Minneapolis Lord of Life Lutheran Church for their Sunday morning worship. Destiny Magnett preached at all 4 worship sessions about the prophetic imagination and the pastoral heart as it relates to peacebuilding in the Middle East. Suzan Sahori, spoke about the difficult situation facing the artisans of Bethlehem and the broader Palestinian population living under occupation in the West Bank generally. After the service, CMEP and BFTA were able to sell BFTA goods and CMEP reading materials to interested parties. Recordings of all four services can be found [here](#). The event was attended by over 1000 people in-person as well as several hundred online.

Nov 16, 2025: Minnesota

Creekside UCC in Minneapolis





Midwest November 15-19, 2025

Nov 17, 2025: Michigan

Grosse Pointe War Memorial.

Nov 19, 2025: Michigan

Geneva Presbyterian Church

The discussions along the tour often focused on the complicity and silence of the Western Church in the face of the atrocities committed in the Holy Land. We'd turn to the steps Christian Americans can take to help bring an end to the atrocities in the Holy Land, including the CMEP "Let Children Live" campaign.





Pilgrimage to Peace Totals

covering all P2P events since the program began in 2013

Number of People Reached: 276,015

Number of Events: 310



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CHURCHES FOR
MIDDLE EAST PEACE

Churches for Middle East Peace
110 Maryland Ave NE #505
Washington, D.C. 20002

cmep.org
202-543-1222
info@cmep.org



@ChurchesForMEP

Registered 501(c)(3). EIN: 52-2112331