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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement of Support from Churches for Middle East Peace for the 2026 Easter Message of the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem

Washington DC, April 03, 2026: Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) expresses its appreciation and solidarity with the [Easter Message of the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem \(2026\)](#), issued by the historic Christian leadership of the Holy Land.

In a time marked by devastating violence, regional instability, and profound human suffering, we are grateful for the moral clarity, spiritual depth, and pastoral care embodied in this message. The Patriarchs and Heads of Churches offer a powerful witness rooted in the hope of the Resurrection, proclaiming that even amid destruction and despair, death does not have the final word.

CMEP echoes their urgent call to the global community to pray and work ceaselessly for an end to the bloodshed and to advocate for justice and peace throughout the region, from Jerusalem to Gaza, Lebanon, and beyond.

We are particularly moved by their commitment to hope in the face of immense suffering. Their reminder that Christians are “afflicted in every way but not crushed” speaks not only to the resilience of the Church in the Holy Land but also to the calling of Christians everywhere to remain faithful, engaged, and active in the pursuit of peace.

CMEP stands in solidarity with the churches of Jerusalem and affirms their leadership, courage, and enduring witness. We encourage churches, faith leaders, and individuals in the United States to receive this Easter message prayerfully, to share it within their communities, and to respond with renewed commitment to peacebuilding, advocacy, and accompaniment.

As we celebrate the Resurrection, may we also embody its meaning, working together so that justice, dignity, and lasting peace may take root for all people in the Holy Land.

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed. Hallelujah!

You can find the full statement by the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem [HERE](#) or below:



PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF THE CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM

Easter Message — 2026

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead . . .”

1 Peter 1:3

In the weeks leading up to this year’s commemoration of Christ’s death and resurrection, a new and devastating regional war has once again plunged the Holy Land and the wider Middle East into turmoil. Each passing day has brought increasingly fierce escalations—a relentless cycle of death, destruction, and frightful suffering that now ripples across the globe in rising economic hardship. From the blackened smoke of this expanding wreckage, a deep darkness has engulfed our region, as stifling as the air inside the sealed tomb of the crucified Christ. Hope itself appears to have abandoned us.

Yet as Scripture teaches and our faith reveals, the desolation of the tomb was not the end of the story. Death did not have the final word. By the power of God, Christ rose victorious from the grave, bursting the bonds of sin and death. As the Apostle Paul wrote, “In fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Corinthians 15:20). As a consequence, for those who look to the Risen Lord in faith, God grants them “a new birth into a living hope” (1 Peter 1:3, above).

Thus, in the midst of these cataclysmic times, We, the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem, affirm these powerful and encouraging words to our communities and to Christians around the world as the heart of our Easter Message. For “just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4b).

In keeping with this profound truth, we bid the faithful and all those of goodwill to work and pray ceaselessly for the relief of the countless multitudes throughout the Middle East and beyond who are suffering severely from the ravages of this war. Likewise, we appeal to them to advocate and intercede for an immediate end to the bloodshed and for justice and peace to finally prevail throughout our war-torn region, beginning in Jerusalem and extending to Gaza, Lebanon, and all the Holy Land; to the Gulf States and Tehran; and to the ends of the earth.

Finally in this vein, we recall once more the words of St. Paul who, in the midst of his countless ordeals, wrote: “We are afflicted in every way but not crushed, perplexed but not driven to despair, persecuted but not forsaken, struck down but not destroyed, always carrying around in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies” (2 Corinthians 4:8–10).

With this same deep faith in the transformative power of Christ’s Resurrection, in the midst of our own torments, let us exchange with each other that ancient Easter greeting that continues to echo across eternity: “Christ is Risen! (*Al Maseeh Qam! Christos Anesti! Christos haryav i merelotz! Pekhrestos aftonf! Christ est Ressuscité! Cristo è risorto! Christus resurrexit! Meshiha qam! Christos t'ensah em' muhtan! Christus ist auferstanden!*) He is Risen, indeed! Alleluia!”

—The Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem

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Formed in 1984, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is a coalition of more than 30 national church communions and organizations, including Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Evangelical traditions that works to encourage US policies that actively promote a comprehensive resolution to conflicts in the Middle East with a focus on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. CMEP works to mobilize US Christians to embrace a holistic perspective and to be advocates of equality, human rights, security, and justice for Israelis, Palestinians, and all people of the Middle East.

Recent CMEP Statements and Press Releases:

April 1, 2026: [CMEP Urges Churches to “Hear the Cry of the Palestinian Church” in New Kairos Palestine Easter Alert](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace is encouraging churches, faith leaders, and individuals across the United States and around the world to read, reflect on, and wrestle with the newly released “Kairos Palestine Easter Alert 2026” from Kairos Palestine. As Christians prepare to enter Holy Week, the Easter Alert offers a sobering and deeply theological reflection on what it means to live in a prolonged “Holy Saturday”, a time of suffering, uncertainty, and waiting, in the context of ongoing violence and displacement in Palestine.

March 30, 2026: [Statement on Restrictions to Religious Freedom in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace condemns the decision by Israeli authorities to bar Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa from leading Palm Sunday services at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, calling it an unacceptable violation of religious freedom. While the reversal of the decision is welcome, CMEP warns that such incidents reflect a troubling pattern of increasing restrictions on worship in Jerusalem.

March 19, 2026: [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) Statement on Intensifying Violence in the West Bank](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is gravely alarmed by the rapidly escalating violence in the occupied West Bank, where Israeli state-sponsored violence and settler attacks against Palestinian communities are spiraling out of control. As international attention has shifted to the expanding regional war following Israeli and U.S. strikes on Iran, extremist settlers have taken advantage of the global distraction to intensify terror against Palestinian civilians. Palestinian villages across the West Bank are facing a wave of attacks, including arson, shootings, and intimidation, which are often carried out in broad daylight and frequently under the watch or protection of Israeli forces.

March 17, 2026: [60+ National Ecumenical Organizations Urge Congress To Oppose Iran War Funding](#)

CMEP is proud to have joined dozens of other faith-based organizations in signing a letter to Congress urging opposition to additional funding for the war on Iran. Grounded in our commitment to peace, we reject further investment in a dangerous and unauthorized conflict that puts countless lives at risk. Instead, we call on Congress to prioritize diplomacy, humanitarian assistance, and policies that uphold human dignity and pursue a just and lasting peace.

March 6, 2026: [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) Statement on Israel's Planned Invasion of Lebanon](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is gravely concerned by Israel's planned ground invasion of Lebanon and the escalating regional war that continues to engulf the Middle East. The ongoing expansion of the U.S.–Israeli war on Iran has set the region on fire. Nowhere is this more evident than in Lebanon. Reports that Israeli troops are amassing at the Lebanese border raise the grave likelihood of a ground invasion. Such an invasion would have catastrophic consequences for a country that has already endured economic collapse, political paralysis, and the trauma of repeated wars. It would not bring peace or security to the people of Lebanon or Israel. Instead, it would entrench political division, fuel radicalization, and result in devastating civilian casualties.

Feb 28, 2026: [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) Issues Statement on Israeli-US Attacks on Iran](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) condemns in the strongest terms the military strikes carried out on Iran by the U.S. and Israel. We urge all parties toward immediate de-escalation to avoid catastrophic loss of life, expanded violence, and war. This is an unnecessary war that will have profound and destabilizing consequences for the entire region and for all who inhabit it. The Middle East has endured decades of armed conflict, occupation, displacement, and political upheaval. Another large-scale war will not bring security or peace; it will deepen instability and compound the suffering of civilians who have already borne far too much.

See all of our [public statements](#) and [press releases](#).

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