

From: Rev. Katey Zeh, RCRC info@rcrc.org
Subject: Speaking from the heart on the Gaza crisis
Date: October 19, 2023 at 1:43 PM
To: Jeff Walton jwalton@theird.org

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Dear Beloved One,

At RCRC, we practice what we call *sacred pausing*—a purposeful slowing down to take in all that is happening around us before responding.

The pause gives us space to sit in the discomfort of our painful emotions that cannot be done away with but simply must be felt. This practice gives us clarity and helps ensure that any action we take is in alignment with love, compassion, and justice. We pause so that our work is guided by those values that we so long to see in the world.

We have anguished and prayed over the horrors that have unfolded in Gaza and the growing human toll they have taken. A shared value across all faiths is compassion and respect for life, and one of the core tenets of reproductive justice is the right to raise our children in safe and sustainable communities; these are impossibilities right now for countless families in Gaza—both Muslim and Jewish.

We clearly see how these atrocities are part of a longstanding cycle of violence shaped by the legacy of colonialism, racism, and religious oppression that spans millennia.

We at RCRC are reaching out and holding the larger community of faith—including the people of Palestine and Israel and our Jewish and Muslim siblings the world over—in prayer for a path toward peace, justice, and healing. Toward freedom, safety, and self-determination for all.

We hold hope for a way of living and being that honors our shared dignity as

divinely-created human beings.

The following is an adapted excerpt from ***Prayer to Heal a Divided Nation*** by the Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Kaeton. While it was written with the U.S. in mind, I find that it also speaks to this situation.

Help us to put aside our own feelings – jumbled and confused as they may be at the moment – in service of others, our families and friends and neighbors – here and around the world.

Help us remember your high calling to us to be agents of forgiveness and reconciliation, love and peace, healing and hope in a world made dark by fear and hatred and brokenness.

Help us to rebuild this world by seeking out your image in the face of others, finding the best in us to serve those who are the least, the lost and the lonely.

Help us to remember the words of one of your servants of old who reminded us that ‘perfect love casts out fear’. Help us perfect our love.

In Community and Solidarity,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katey Zeh".

Rev. Katey Zeh
Chief Executive Officer

P.S. For those seeking to donate, NPR has written a [helpful guide](#) on what to consider to ensure your dollars are going to reputable organizations.