

# Churches for Middle East Peace



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Armenian Orthodox Church

Catholic Conference of Major  
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Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)  
Common Global Ministries Board

Church of the Brethren

Church World Service

Episcopal Church

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Franciscan Friars (OFM)  
English Speaking Conference,  
JPIC Council

Friends Committee on National  
Legislation

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese  
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Maryknoll Missioners

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Unitarian Universalist Association

United Church of Christ  
Common Global Ministries Board

United Methodist Church  
General Board of Church and Society  
General Board of Global Ministries:  
Women's Division

December 12, 2007

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

For Christians, the season of Advent is a time of hope-filled expectation. The November conference in Annapolis has given us renewed hope for a time when Israelis and Palestinians can live together in peace and security as two sovereign and viable states.

We are grateful for your leadership and that of Secretary Rice in bringing together many of the key regional players at Annapolis. Our hope for the future is based on the expectation that your Administration's commitments to a strong and continuing US engagement will be fulfilled. That engagement requires not only effective US diplomacy but also the active involvement of the Quartet and the Arab League states. We believe it was important that both Saudi Arabia and Syria were invited to attend Annapolis and ask that you encourage peacemaking between Israel and Syria as well. We are heartened by the decision to proceed simultaneously on both the Road Map requirements on the ground and negotiations on final status issues, such as Jerusalem, borders, refugees, settlements, water and security. We welcome your commitment to support the work of President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert with the resources and resolve of the American government.

Churches for Middle East Peace represents 22 Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant institutions that together work to support US government policies that advance the cause of peace. In doing so, we are ever mindful of our sisters and brothers in the Holy Land - churches and Christians with whom many of CMEP's members have long-standing partnerships. In part through these relationships, we are acutely aware of the difficulties faced by Palestinian Christians, as well as Muslims, in the West Bank and Gaza. We hope that on your upcoming trip, you will visit Bethlehem and meet with the Christians there.

We join with Jewish and Arab-American organizations in building public and Congressional support for a negotiated agreement that ends Israel's occupation, establishes Palestinian independence and results in a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace that brings Israel security and recognition. On Capitol Hill and across the country, we are encouraging implementation of the plans agreed to in Annapolis

and the sustained diplomatic engagement that will be necessary to establish a Palestinian state alongside Israel by the end of next year.

We pray that in this season of Advent, all will find the will and the way to see the vision of peace in the Holy Land realized.

Sincerely,

**Archbishop Vicken Aykazian**  
Armenian Orthodox Church

**Bishop Wayne Burkette**  
Moravian Church in America

**James Fine**  
Legislative Secretary for Foreign Policy  
Friends Committee on National Legislation

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Executive Director and CEO  
Church World Service

**Michael McNulty, SJ**  
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**The Very Rev. George Rados**  
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