



from Garth...

Quiet Day for Activists



Our hearts must be so quiet if we are to hear -
If we are to hear we must be still.

There stand the olive trees as they've stood for years,
As they've stood for years in Gethsemane,
There stand those ancient witnesses as they've stood for years,
As they've stood for years in Gethsemane.

On 30th March at St Aidan's Church in Sheffield we had our first **Quiet Day for Activists**, called **There Is An Ancient Peace**. With the quantity of problems around the world at the moment it seemed to me that people might appreciate a period of quiet, a time for reviewing our spiritual foundations, and hopefully a time to be refreshed and encouraged in our activism. Using liturgy, songs, meditations and quiet, we had a day which I hope reflected the character of God, and a theology of hope in a troubled world.

We found that all the spaces filled very quickly - in the end we went over the number of attendees we had planned for. We were encouraged by people's responses at the event and afterwards, how much the day was appreciated, confirming just how much something like this seems to be needed.

We have another Quiet Day booked, this time in Ross-on-Wye on Saturday 12th of October 2019 - **you can get more information or book your free place here** - but also I wanted to put the idea in front of you that you might like to host one of these in your church. Do get in touch with Isobel **by emailing here** if you'd be interested or would like more of an idea what's involved.

My Name Is Palestine - 12" vinyl single



I'm doing some recording this month, and I'm enjoying it very much as I always do; it's a great environment up at the GingerDog Studio. I went in with the idea of doing a vinyl 12" single - and that is still happening - but I had a couple of other new songs ready too so we thought we'd also release a CD that was an EP (extended play, for those who can't think that far back!); however more tracks have been added and four more are being recorded next week, so the CD should end up as a full album! I'll tell you a bit more about it next month.

The 12" single will be available first - the title is My Name Is Palestine. As I talked about in the last newsletter, the song was sparked off by a painting by the great Palestinian artist Suleiman Mansour.

The idea of the 12" vinyl single is to creatively promote the song with the painting on the record sleeve, and to make as many people as possible aware of it. **I wrote to quite a large group of Palestinian people and showed them the picture and asked them what words they would put in the song, and I hope and believe that the song reflects the emphasis that they gave.**

As we come to the Eurovision Song Contest I hope this is an alternative number for

you to hum! These are particularly difficult and dangerous days for the Palestinians - I actually heard an Israeli politician saying "We must attack Gaza and remove Hamas as soon as the Eurovision Song Contest is over." I wish I could remember which of the news programmes that was on - I can't remember, but I was shocked to hear it.

The Garth Hewitt Foundation is putting out the 12" single - we're not interested in making money on this, it is very much a project with a message and a hope, trying to reflect the ways of justice and equality that are necessary for a peaceful future for both Palestinian and Israeli. **If you'd like to contribute something to this project we'd be very grateful - our main concern has been to get the message out. You can look at the song [on youtube here](#) and if you did feel like donating to the project [you can do that here](#)**

Words of the prophets

It is very hard to get balanced news about the situation in Palestine and Israel, not least regarding the Gaza conflict. I have been constantly amazed though at the prophetic words that come from various Jewish people, rabbis or others, who courageously speak up about what is happening to the Palestinians. They are prophets and maybe sometimes 'exiles' (- a term that Jewish theologian and friend Marc Ellis has used) - but I believe they give us hope because they speak out with all the integrity and painful honesty that is so needed. Have a look at this extraordinary adaptation of Psalme 140, written in the current context over Gaza, by Rabbi Brant Rosen -



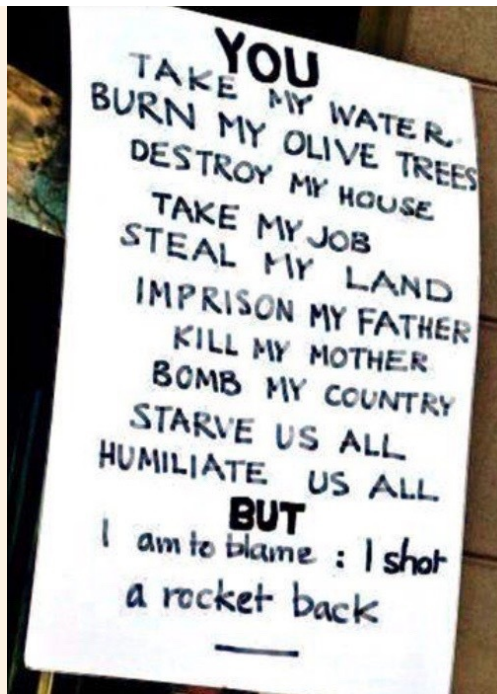
**oh lord deliver me from my people
who wield their weapons with impunity
whose armies rain bombs on the imprisoned
whose apologists equate oppressor and oppressed
defending those who punish resistance without mercy.**

keep me from those who speak so easily of two sides
of dual narratives of complexities and coexistence
those who call submission peace and lawless laws justice
who never tire of intoning never again
even as they commit crimes again and again
who have forsaken every lesson they've learned
from their own history and their
own sacred heritage.

like jacob i have dreamed fearful dreams
i have struggled in the night
i have limped pitifully across the river
and now like jacob in my last dying breath
i have nothing left but to curse my own
whose tools are tools of lawlessness
who maim refugees who dare dream of return
and send bombs upon the desperate
for the crime of fighting back.

so send me away from this people
this tortured fallen assembly
keep me far from their council
count me not among their ranks
i can abide them no longer.

**Also, Jews For Palestinian Right of Return shared this post
on their Facebook page:**



So thank you to the prophetic Jewish voices that make us proud of your honest and deeply human witness.

Some words from the Quiet Day liturgy

Way beyond all journeying,
Truth behind all mystery
Life within all living:

We are grateful and we come to you

Comfort in difficult times
Healer of all wounds
Bringer of a better future

We are grateful and we come to you

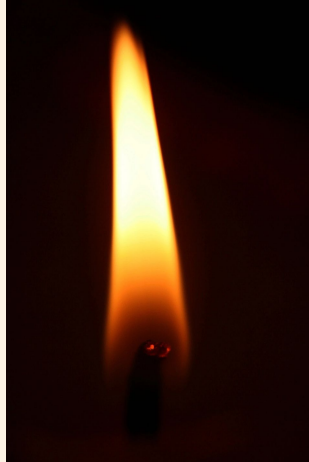
Ground of all being
Judge of all nations
Conscience of the universe

We are grateful and we come to you

Maker, Redeemer
Confessor, companion
Befriender, inspirer

We are grateful and we come to you

A blessing from Pope Francis



May God change the hearts of the violent.
May God change the hearts of those who seek war
May God change the hearts of those who manufacture and sell arms.
And may God strengthen the hearts and minds of peacemakers
And grant them every blessing
May God bless you all!

Garth Hewitt



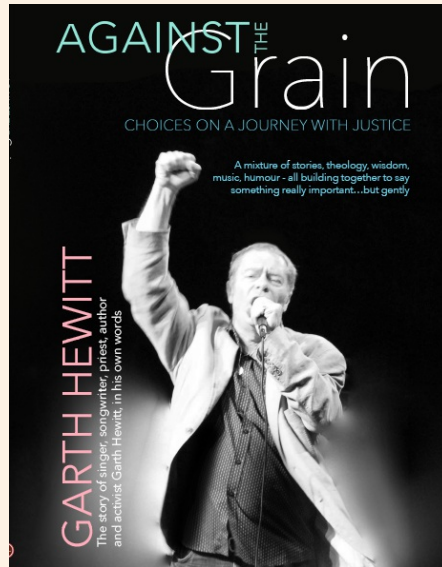
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