



from Garth...

## A man of hope, spirituality, and justice



*Talking and walking by Lake Managua*

I can't believe it's come round so quickly, but last Friday was a year since Gilberto died. Gilberto Aguirre will be known to many of you as he was a key figure in CEPAD, Amos Trust's partner in Nicaragua. Our thoughts at this time will particularly be with Damaris, and **it's nice to pause for a moment to give thanks for the life of Gilberto, someone who brought such life and enjoyment, laughter and spirituality.**

Here's a link to a clip with one or two pictures that bring back memories - one of them is of Gilberto and Damaris and myself in the studio of CEPAD Radio - that was one of my favourite memories. CEPAD Radio is a remarkable mixture of hope, spirituality and issues of justice.

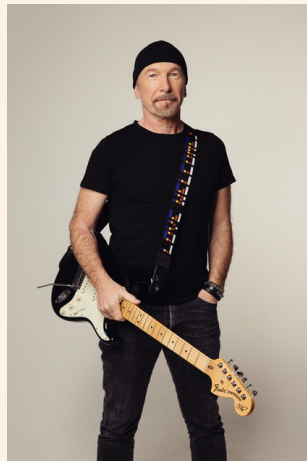
**Gilberto, we miss you, but you still seem to be very close.**

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## Love Welcomes... a new guitar strap



*Abi holds the 'famous' welcome mat*



*The Edge, from U2*

**Some of you know our daughter Abi, and as I have mentioned before she is the CEO and Co-Founder of Love Welcomes.**

**Love Welcomes** is a social enterprise that helps refugee women begin to stitch their lives back together. The organisation has created its own range of refugee-made products, as well as partnerships with renowned textile designer Margo Selby and world famous street artist Banksy. For more information visit [www.lovelwelcomes.org](http://www.lovelwelcomes.org)

Abi tells of their latest collaboration, "We are delighted to be collaborating with The Edge from U2, to create beautiful hand-sewn guitar straps. "

The Edge said, "In difficult times we all cling to the hope of a better future. Love Welcomes works with women and families who've been through the very worst of times, unimaginable trauma, and life changing events." He added, "**The causes of forced migration are super complex but in the end it's a very human problem that demands a humane response. The principle ought to be, 'treat others as**

**you would have them treat you'. Love Welcomes** attempts to do that and I am proud to be part of their initiative."

*Watch The Edge talk about Love Welcomes [here](#)*

**Last Sunday, the 20th of June, was World Refugee Day, but also Father's Day. So I think you can guess what I got as a present from Abi!!**

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## **Love Must Not Be Silent**

**Some very powerful words from Susan Rantisi Bahroum, a wise and thoughtful friend from Nazareth**



**"Words fail to express the utter sadness and horror at the enormous amount of hate shown in Jerusalem during the 'March of the Flags' on Tuesday. Sentences like, "Death to the Arabs," "A good Arab is a dead Arab," "The second Nakba is coming," and more are provocative and spiteful. Many were shouted out by children and everyone was under the protection of the Israeli police and the participation of some Israeli government ministers. I had thought about sharing the video, but I don't want to give them a voice. Hate like that should be silenced. I shudder to think about what these children will do when they grow up. Also, what kind of government**

anywhere in the world would allow such a display of hate?! However, when you think about it, the people who belong to the land do not need a display of power to show it, while the occupier does. We do not need a parade to show we care and this is our homeland. Young people who started to clean up the area had their brooms confiscated! **All we can do is remain steadfast, and ask you my friends for your solidarity and your voices. May Justice prevail!"**

*Susan Rantisi Bahroum*

## **Strong Words of a Grandmother in Jerusalem**

**Another powerful piece from Samia Khouri, educator and Co-Founder of Sabeel, living in East Jerusalem - just before the result of the recent election**

**"Yesterday my youngest grandson, who turned 15 at the beginning of this month, was walking in our neighbourhood, towards the barber shop to have a hair cut, when he was stopped by ten soldiers who beat him up before letting him go. Why? Can anybody who has any common sense answer me. There were no demonstrations, and the people in our neighborhood were going about their own business. The soldiers were in their full gear and were not in any danger. Yet the US continues to buy the gimmick of PM Netanyahu that Israel has the right to defend itself, and it cannot tolerate that his people are being attacked. Does he think we can tolerate our children being hurt, and brutalized by a sick army who shows up out of the blue in our residential areas. Seeing whole families and children killed by the raids on Gaza, we are grateful for the safety of our children. Maybe the PM should hear some of the voices of his own soldiers from "Breaking the Silence movement," and should read some of the Israeli press who are accusing him of flaring up the region so he can stay in office and avoid going to jail for his corruption charges. Not at all surprising; nothing is beyond him."**

*Samia Khouri*

## **Christian on a Crane**

**Modern-day Stylite climbs 200m crane in solidarity with the Palestinians**



*Nick Georges, 69, scales 650ft crane near US Embassy in London and unfurls Palestinian flag before being brought down by police 30 hours later*

69 year old activist Nick Georges stayed on top of a crane overnight to raise awareness of the plight of Palestinians. "For three months I was sent to Palestine as a humanitarian witness. I witnessed the atrocities and the horrors of the illegal Israeli occupation of the Palestinian homeland.

I've seen a house where a family of four were burned alive by Jewish settlers with incendiary bombs. I've seen land desecrated, olive tree plantations burned. the Palestinians have no rights, even their electricity and their water is taken from them. **As a Christian who cares I cannot just stand by and let this go on... we should all be doing more to promote the cause of peace and freedom for the Palestinians."**

Although I don't necessarily advocate climbing up cranes, one can understand his frustration - he has seen what's going on and then he is being ignored. Georges posted a separate video from the top of the crane on Tuesday in which he said that he tried to engage with his member of Parliament on the issue of Palestine but that it was "a complete waste of time."

**Just for the record, I will not be going up a crane - I can hardly get up my own step ladder! - however, though this may not be our favourite option, we all have to find a way to raise our voices for the Palestinian people.** I particularly think it's helpful to pass on some words from the Palestinian Christian community called **Kairos Palestine** where they issue what they call "A Cry of Hope" to all the churches and Christians in the world, asking them to stand against injustice and apartheid, urging

them to work for justice... "We declare that the military occupation of Palestinian land constitutes a sin against God and humanity. Any theology that justifies the occupation and justifies crimes perpetrated against the Palestinian people lies far from Christian teaching."

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## **Call from Western Sahara**

"First of all I want to thank you for this wonderful song 'My Name Is Palestine'. I hope you will one day sing the suffering of the Sahrawi people in the Western Sahara.

I hope so someday sir. We also suffer in silence...

I have just one request: Help as please, we live like the Palestinian people but nobody talks about us... please.

Thank you Sir."

*Abdati Ramdan*

I was very moved to receive this email the other day. Once when I was working for Christian Aid I met some people from Western Sahara, and they told me their situation was like the Palestinians - and I was shocked to realise I knew nothing about it. Abdati has sent through some information for me to look at.

I was very challenged at Abdati's request asking for a song; I will start doing my research - I have found quite a bit already [here on the Western Sahara Resource Watch website](#). They are facing very familiar issues.

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## **Live Concert! - and live streamed**

It looks as if my first live concert in over a year will be in Ipswich on July 23rd - it will be called Song for Palestine. It is going to be live-streamed, so watch this space, we'll let you know more in the next newsletter.

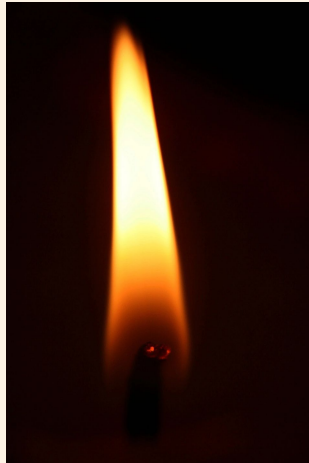
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## **Prayer - May We Never Be Silent**

As I do the final prayer here my thoughts are also with Jacob and Jasmine Devadason, who brought us an update in the last newsletter, as they are struggling with the death from Covid-19 of close friends and church leaders in their village and



community back in India - and you might remember them as we pray this prayer.



O God, just & loving,  
May we find a way to speak up  
for those who are being brutalised,  
ignored or forgotten.  
May we be those who speak up for refugees,  
May we be those who speak up for the oppressed in Palestine  
May we bring support where we can and may we never be silent.

Love is never silent and justice is never silent –  
May we find ways to speak up  
Especially when our sisters and brothers are asking for our solidarity – with  
our voices telling the story.  
May we echo the Palestinian Christian “Cry for hope”  
And stand against injustice and apartheid -  
And stand against the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.  
May we show the love and justice of Jesus  
And find ways for our voices to tell the story.

And may the God who dances in creation  
Who embraces us with human love  
Who shakes our lives like thunder  
Bless us and drive us out with power  
To fill the world with her justice.

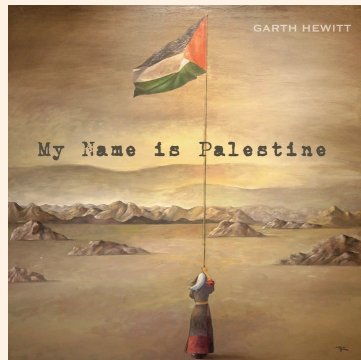
*The final paragraph is a blessing from St Hilda's Community*

*Gail Hewitt*

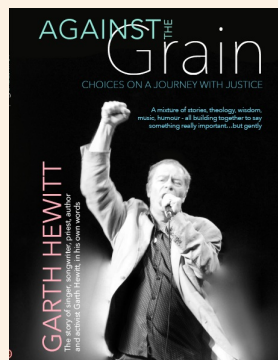
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