

NAIC Meeting Minutes, Pilgrim Congregational Church, May 1, 2024

ATTENDING: John Rowntree, President; Judie Bryant, Vice President; Meta Vornehm, Treasurer; Jocelyn Sharp-Henning, Secretary; Tori Markiewicz, Karl Hester, Kim Hester, Jon Spira-Savett, Kathy Boss, Allison Palm, Bobbie Knickerbocker, Jim Jensen.

Zoom: Betsy Cotton, Laurie Toupin, Nonny Egbuonu, Tanya Stormo Rasmussen, Nancy Meyer.

John offered a prayer followed by introductions of attendees.

Topic: The Israel/Hamas conflict, a conversation with Rabbi Jon Spira-Savett and Rev. Kim Hester.

Rabbi Jon has personal connections and has lived in Jerusalem a couple times. Rev. Kim went to the West Bank in February of 2023.

How do we live together and work for peace? Who are Jews in relation to other groups?

Terminology:

Palestinians are people in a region, not a country.

Hamas is a terrorist, military group with the majority being Palestinian. They are not a democracy or under Israel.

Israelis are 80% Jewish and 20% non-Jewish, including Christians and Arabs.

Anti-Zionist is opposition to Jewish ethno-nationalism.

West Bank is the larger of two Palestinian territories.

Zionism is self-determination for Jews.

Kim shared the 5 levels of citizenship in Israel:

1. The City of Jerusalem has residency cards with no State.
2. There are 2 million Palestinians in Gaza, 500 who have no identity.
3. Palestinians in the West Bank have a dual reality, under Palestinian Authority and Israeli rule.
4. Palestinians in the rest of the world.
5. Palestinian Christians in Israel.

It all depends on where you are born.

The West Bank and rest of Israel are about the size of NH with multiple geographies. Biblical sites are in the West Bank. Intifada could mean a violent approach or self-organizing for freedom.

Jon says lives are at stake in the Holy Land. It is a Jewish imperative to not destroy land in Gaza. Is Israel responsible for Gazans? How has this become the galvanizing thing? Most Israelis support war to get rid of Hamas.

Kim states that Lutherans can't talk politics so pastors don't know when or how to speak up. But if no one speaks up, you are complicit in the destruction.

This is complex and an issue about race, power, and faith spanning centuries.

Tory commented that it is people with current power versus people with no power.

Jon suggests the book [Letter to My Palestinian Neighbors](#).

NAIC BUSINESS

John thanks everyone who helped create and implement the successful Poetry event at the library.

The [My Neighbors Faith](#) book group starts Monday at 7 pm by zoom. Please sign up through the email link John has sent.

Seven members have responded to a letter about dues, three others have not responded.

Meta announced a balance of \$1,955.06 in the Main account, \$2,686.20 in the Crop Walk account, and \$904.27 in the Choir account.

The Annual Meeting will be on June 5th at the United Methodist Church on Main Street. Rabbi Jon will preside. There will be an overview of the year, budget report and reports from committees.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jon invites you to the Yom HaShoah Holocaust Remembrance Day with Artemus Jaukowsky at Rivier University at 7 pm on Tuesday, May 7th.

Meta reminds us that the Cultural Committee is looking for day care space.

Kim invites us to the NH Gay Men's Chorus performance on Saturday, May 4th at 7:30 pm at Christ the King Lutheran Church.

Nonny reminds us that the United Way is looking for tech savvy volunteers to teach computer basics.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jocelyn Sharp-Henning, Secretary