

**Friends of Sabeel Conference**  
**One Land, Two Peoples, Three Faiths:**  
**Time for Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace**  
**October 29-30, 2010**  
**Luther Seminary**  
**St Paul, Minnesota**

The Justice and Witness Team co-sponsored the conference, earning two free registrations. John Guttermann and I, Dwight Wagenius, attended the conference.

Friends of Sabeel is an international peace movement initiated by Palestinian Christians in the Holy Land. [Sabeel means “the way” in Arabic, recalling first-century Christians who were called “the people of the Way.”] Sabeel seeks a just peace based on two states, Palestine and Israel, as defined by international law and existing UN resolutions. Sabeel promotes theological, moral, and legal principles for peace.

Palestinian Christians and their Muslim brothers and sisters in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem are struggling to survive after four decades of Israeli military occupation, forced to live under inhumane conditions imposed by “Israel’s apartheid system of concrete walls, electrified fences, razor wire, and a matrix of checkpoints, illegal settlements, and a system of bypass roads.” Sabeel argues that it is time to end the military occupation and establish a viable Palestinian state with all the rights, duties, and privileges of other nations.

The conference was organized by Friends of Sabeel—North America (FOSNA) to educate participants about the Holy Land to become more effective advocates for justice and peace. It was a call to our churches to respond to a Christian call to live “in truth” and be peacemakers.

Conference speakers in plenary sessions included Palestinian Christians, Jewish Americans, Muslims, and American Christians (including the mother of Rachel Corrie who was killed by an Israeli bulldozer in the Gaza Strip in March 2003). Eight workshops were offered. I attended three: Christian Peacemakers—Their Key Role, hearing from an American Christian who spent 20 years in Palestine/Israel; Jerusalem Women Speak, hearing from a Jewish, a Muslim, and a Christian woman; and Advocacy from American Jewish Communities, hearing from an advocate with Jewish Voice for Peace in the Twin Cities working on divestment from companies profiting from Israel’s occupation of Palestinian territory. A copy of the program is attached.

Thanks for allowing me to attend the conference.