

Stories from Israel-Palestine



Talk - Synopsis

Joe Moffatt, the Vicar of All Saints, welcomed the audience to an event addressing the urgent issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He introduced Nick Papadopoulos, dean of Salisbury who served with the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), a ministry dedicated to human rights and peace who spent three months in Jerusalem and shared his experiences.

Nick recounted his three months in East Jerusalem, a journey prompted by a poignant question from a Palestinian Christian: "What brings you to this godforsaken place?" His service with EAPPI was rooted in a commitment to Christian witness, aiming "to monitor human rights abuses, deter such abuses through visible presence, show solidarity with peace activists, and advocate for an end to the occupation." Nick emphasised that EAPPI is neither pro Palestine, nor pro Israeli although importantly is not neutral but is instead guided by international law. Nick provided some brief historical context, detailing the 1948 and 1967 wars that shaped the region's current territorial boundaries.

Nick bore witness to numerous personal stories that underscore the human cost of the conflict and linked each to an article of the Geneva convention that had been broken. He spoke of arbitrary restrictions on Muslim worshippers, like Muhammad, a medical student "repeatedly denied access to Al-Aqsa Mosque for Friday prayers," forcing him to pray on the street. He recounted the demolition of businesses, like Radi's car repair shop, "without warning, despite his recent investment," leaving him without income.



Stories from Israel-Palestine Talk Monday 28th July 2025

Synopsis



The profound vulnerability of children was highlighted by Malik's story, a 13-year-old subjected to a "nighttime arrest, strip search, and handcuffing without a clear reason, and was denied access to a lawyer," a routine occurrence for Palestinian children.

Nick concluded that these incidents breached international law and amounted to human rights abuses by Israelis against Palestinians. He noted that while Palestinians also commit abuses, he could only speak to what he witnessed.

Ruth Valerio from Embrace the Middle East, noted the devastating statistic that 50% of children in Gaza are now disabled, outlined Embrace's vital work, including supporting hospitals in Gaza and organizations providing psychosocial support and legal aid to children affected by military detention.

There followed the opportunity to ask questions, many of which were challenging, with notable examples including the reliability of Hamas' figures, the impact and work of dissenting Jews in Israel, and why the word genocide was not used in the presentation. In response to questions, Nick and Ruth advised prayer, self-education, financial support to relevant organizations, and political action.

Joe ended the talk with the words that it takes courage to speak on this issue at present and we have benefited from the knowledge and care of the speakers and encouraged donations to [EAPPI Fund - Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel](https://www.embraceme.org) and www.embraceme.org

You can watch the full video on our youtube channel @allsaintskingston8231

