Opinion

Guest Voices



Jonathan Kuttab, a Palestinian Christian and human rights lawyer, speaks at a ceasefire service at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., on Dec. 11, 2023. (NCR photo/Aleja Hertzler-McCain)



by John Dear

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On this week's episode of "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," I speak with Jonathan Kuttab of Palestine, executive director of Friends of Sabeel North America, a Christian solidarity group working with Palestinians for peace. I have worked with this organization for many years and gave a keynote speech at the Sabeel conference in Bethlehem in 2008 with Michel Sabbah, then-Latin patriarch of Jerusalem.

Kuttab is cofounder of the Palestinian human rights group Al-Haq and cofounder of Nonviolence International. A well-known international human rights attorney, Kuttab practices in the U.S., Palestine and Israel. He serves on the board of Bethlehem Bible College and is president of the Board of Holy Land Trust. He was the head of the Legal Committee negotiating the Cairo Agreement of 1994 between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

"The war on Gaza is continuing even today," he told me just before the U.S. and Israeli war on Iran began. "They're refusing medicine, food, journalists, aid, and they're using the ceasefire to continue the genocide. The world is allowing this to continue, and it breaks my heart."

"Most Christian Palestinians are nonviolent peacemakers, and have been since the first century," he said. "For Palestinians, nonviolence is the best option for Christians. Violence does not work. It does not deliver what it is supposed to deliver. But the entire message of Jesus comes down to 'My kingdom is not of this world.' The message of Jesus calls on all Christians to take a different position than the worldly powers. Christians need to condemn and not participate in the genocide going on today."

"It is possible for people to live together," Kattub said. "We have lived together peacefully in the past, and hopefully we will in the future. We are people of the Resurrection, and we believe God will have the last word so we have integrity to speak the truth in difficult times."

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