



First
Presbyterian
Church
of Waynesboro, Virginia

The Columns *Online*

March 14, 2023 | Waynesboro, Virginia | *a newsletter supplement*

Religious groups urge Biden administration to work to end violence and hold Israel accountable

By Rick Jones | Office of the General Assembly - March 13, 2023

Louisville, KY (OGA) — As many as 10 Christian denominations and church-based organizations are urging President Joe Biden to actively seek peace between Palestinians and Israelis by ending military aid to the Israeli government. In a letter sent to the president over the weekend, the group described the deteriorating human rights situation and rise in violence in both the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel.



Woman sitting on the ruins of her house destroyed by Israel in
Photo by שי קנדלר (Masafer Yatta) January 2023.

“U.S. military funding to Israel in part sustains this violence, making the U.S. government complicit in ongoing abuses,” the letter reads. “As U.S. churches and church-based organizations, we call for change to end this U.S. complicity and ask that the U.S. government hold Israel accountable for its abuses by cutting military aid.”

continued

Israel, continued

The letter says the new Israeli government is moving to “undermine the rule of law in Israel” and is directly threatening the rights of women, LGBTQ communities and Palestinians who are citizens of Israel, adding that the abuses and lack of accountability have resulted in decades of Palestinian suffering.



A Palestinian home being demolished in Ras al-Amud, East Jerusalem, 21 January 2023. Photograph: Sinan Abu Mayzer/Reuters

“We have noted the lack of accountability for Israeli killings of civilians, ongoing land expropriation, home demolitions, settlement expansion, movement restrictions and other gross violations of Palestinian rights,” it reads. “The situation for Palestinians has only worsened without any accountability. Despite this reality, in 2016, the U.S. pledged to provide over \$38 billion in foreign military assistance and missile defense programs to Israel during the next decade, an \$8 billion increase over the previous 10-year period.” The letter refers to statistics from the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which shows that Israel demolished more than 7,000 Palestinian-owned structures, including 1,450 that were built by international donors including the U.S. It resulted in the displacement of more than 10,000 Palestinians while 140,000 suffered losses.

“B’Tselem, the Israeli Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, issued a report in January concluding that Israeli forces killed more Palestinians in 2022 than any year since 2004. Violence has continued to rise in 2023,” the letter reads. “At least 75 Palestinians — including women and children — were killed by Israeli forces in the occupied Palestinian territory. Settler violence also increased significantly, reaching a peak with the settler attack on the Palestinian village of Huwara during which one Palestinian was killed, more than 350 injured, and dozens of homes, businesses and cars were burned.”

The groups say Israeli actions have created a “reality based on inequality and discrimination” and that the U.S. bears partial responsibility because of its political, diplomatic and financial support for the government of Israel.

“The U.S. must end its military support of Israel, which amounts to \$3.8 billion per year,” the letter reads. “This position is consistent with our advocacy for peace and justice — and criticism of U.S. military aid to countries of the Middle East — more broadly. Continuing military aid without any accountability will only lead to further violence and abuse.”

In addition to the PC(USA), the letter is signed by: American Friends Service Committee; Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); United Church of Christ; Friends Committee on National Legislation; PAX Christi U.S.A.; The United Methodist Church — General Board of Church and Society; Mennonite Central Committee U.S.; Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Read the full letter [here](#).



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First
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Music Notes for March 19

The Lord is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want...

Those familiar words open Psalm 23, the first lesson in this week's worship service for the fourth Sunday of Lent. Scores of pieces have been written on the comforting text, including the hymns *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need* and *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*, both of which are based on folk tunes.



The King of Love My Shepherd Is is set to the tune ST COLUMBA, named for the Irish saint (also known as Colmcille) who brought Christianity to Scotland in the 6th century. The melody was one of many Irish tunes collected by George Petrie (1789-1866) and included in various publications, such as *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in 1868 and *The English Hymnal* of 1906.

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need comes from an anonymous Appalachian melody. The tune, initially known as HOPEWELL, first appeared in 1828 in *The Beauties of Harmony*. A few years later, the tune was renamed RESIGNATION for the 1832 publication *Genuine Church Music*.

An infographic with a green background. At the top left is a green leprechaun hat with a brown band and a gold buckle. To its right is the title '5 THINGS YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT St. Patrick' in white and yellow text. Below the title is a list of five facts, each preceded by a large yellow number. To the right of the list is a stained glass illustration of St. Patrick, a bearded man in a blue and yellow robe, holding a green shamrock in his right hand and a golden staff with a cross in his left. The background of the infographic is a dark green gradient.

5 THINGS YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT St. Patrick

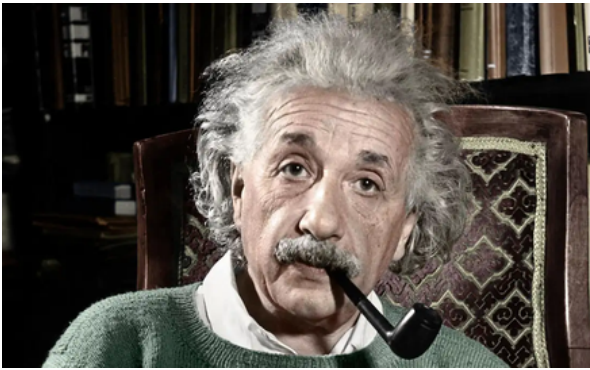
- 1 He wasn't Irish: Patrick was captured by Irish pirates and brought to Ireland from Roman-Britain in the early 5th Century.
- 2 Experienced a (mystical) vision of the Irish asking him to teach them about Christ.
- 3 Having become a Bishop, he was sent back to Ireland. He preached first to the members of the royal family, and soon his audiences grew. He used the druid rituals as evangelizing tools.
- 4 He used a shamrock to explain the Trinity because the Irish had a love for nature.
- 5 Instituted what is known as the Croagh Patrick Hike, where he prayed that Ireland would always keep her Christian Faith. To this day, young and old hikers follow that famous route in pilgrimage.

This Week in History.



The Church of England ordains 32 women as its first female priests. In protest, 700 male clergy members and thousands of church members leave to join the Roman Catholic Church.

March 12, 1994



Albert Einstein is born in Ulm, Germany. His theory of relativity would lead to new ways of thinking about time, space, matter and energy. He received a Nobel Prize in 1921 and emigrated to the U.S. in 1933 where he would be an outspoken critic of Nazi Germany. Believing the Nazis might develop an atomic bomb, he urged the development of the U.S. atomic bomb.

March 14, 1879



James Madison is born in Port Conway, Virginia. He played an important role in the formation of the new U.S. Constitution following the American Revolutionary War, and served as the fourth President. During the War of 1812, he was forced to flee when the British attacked Washington DC, burning the White House and other important public buildings.

March 16, 1751



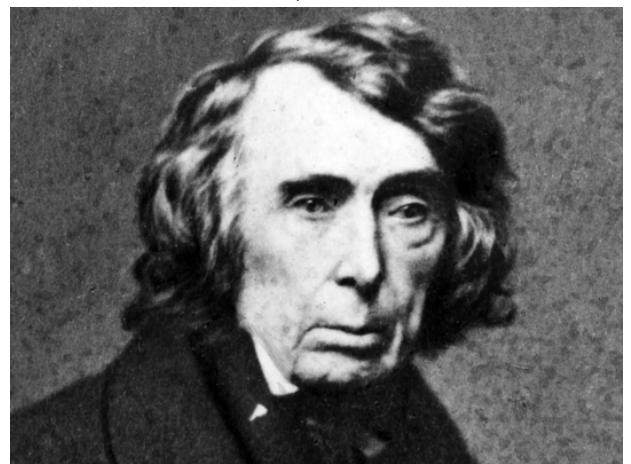
German army officers under the leadership of Major General Henning von Tresckow (above) attempt to assassinate Adolf Hitler by hiding a bomb in a case of brandy and convincing an aide carry aboard Hitler's plane. The bomb fails to explode due to a faulty detonator.

March 13, 1943



Julius Caesar is assassinated in the Senate chamber in Rome by Brutus and fellow conspirators. After first trying to defend himself against the murderous onslaught, Caesar saw Brutus with a knife and asked "Et tu, Brute?" before succumbing to his injuries.

March 15, 44 BCE



Roger Brooke Taney is born in Calvert County, Maryland. He served as U.S. Attorney General and Secretary of the Treasury before being appointed as the first Roman Catholic to the Supreme Court by President Jackson. As the court's 5th Chief Justice, he would become infamous for delivering the majority opinion in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* in 1857, ruling that African Americans could not be considered U.S. citizens and Congress could not prohibit slavery in the U.S. territories.

March 17, 1777