



Grain

“Welcome to Tent of Nations—an Educational & Environmental Family Farm. Our mission is to build bridges between people, and between people and the land. We seek to embody a positive approach to conflict and occupation. Faced with great injustice, we know that we should not hate, despair, or flee. We can refuse to be enemies and channel our pain and frustration into positive action which will build a better future.” (Tent of Nations on-line statements of history and mission, paraphrased by Rev. Gail Sowell)

Field

1 Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? 2 Those whose walk is blameless, who do what is righteous, who speak the truth from their hearts; 3 who have no slander on their tongues, who do their neighbors no wrong, who cast no slur on others... 5b Whoever does these things will never be shaken. Psalm 15:1-3, 5b

Thoughts by Rev. Gail Sowell, St John/St Stephen Lutheran Parish (ELCA), Edgar WI

Whose sanctuary is it anyway? Jews and Christians revere the Temple Mount, built on the site of the Second Jewish Temple in the first century BCE. Muslims revere it as the place where the Prophet Mohammed made his “Night Journey” to the throne of God. Three religions, three cultures, three histories, each passionately claiming rights to this “holy hill.”

During my recent educational tour/pilgrimage to the Holy Land with the Society for Biblical Studies, Miriam Binyishai presented the Zionist point of view. “Never again,” she said, “never again will the Jews have no place to go.” We heard from Jean Zaru, a Palestinian whose broken heart yearns for peace. Another speaker was Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom, Co-Founder of Clergy for Peace and Field Director of Rabbis for Human Rights, both based in Jerusalem and working for peace in the Middle East. We visited Tent of Nations, a 100-acre family-owned farm clinging to their land against Israeli harassment and infringement (see above *Grain*).

Four speakers. Four deeply felt and clearly stated beliefs that injustice of some sort has been done to them and those they represented. Four people of deep faith in their God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob—and us.

Whose sanctuary is it anyway? Psalm 122: *Let us go to the house of the Lord! . . . Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May there be peace within your walls, and security within your towers.” . . . For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good.*

It seems clear to me that at this time, when all sides have grievances, the people suffering the most are the Palestinian Christians. What they were legally granted in the 20th century is being systematically, often violently, taken away. What can we do? Contact those who make and administer laws. Ask them to seek and enforce the truth. And please, pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? Those who are blameless, who do what is righteous. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Gail