



Pax Scotia

Issue 73

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Climate: Making a difference locally & globally - together



Jenny Adams is Chairperson of Eco-Congregation Scotland. She currently works as a Healthcare Chaplain, having previously worked as a Church of Scotland Minister and a software engineer. She has been involved with Eco-Congregation Scotland and Christian Aid for decades. Ahead of the Season of Creation she reflects on the actions we can take...

The wellbeing of humans and the rest of creation cannot be separated, as we are totally interdependent in the web of life. Therefore peace for people and planet are inextricably linked.

At a basic level, the climate and biodiversity emergencies will increase conflict between people. Water bankruptcy, habitat destruction and extreme weather events bring losses of homes, loved ones and communities, limit the resource of land, water and food to which people have access, and raise the potential of conflict out of desperation and displacement.

Environmental destruction and violence often coincide. As well as the direct and indirect destructive impacts of war and preparation for war, the extraction and exploitation of resources (including minerals and fossil fuels) cause environmental damage and are frequently accompanied by violent oppression of those who speak up in opposition. Some potential technological solutions to environmental issues still depend on the extraction of specific minerals and the industrial use of land and sea, raising important questions about truly sustainable ways of life.

Understanding peace to include justice, most environmental issues on Earth are rooted in grave injustices, often with imperial and colonial roots. Those most impacted by climate change are countries and people who have done the least to contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Climate injustice intersects with racial, gender and intergenerational injustices and the many inequalities in global financial systems.

Those who are aware of the threats to life on Earth, increasingly

unavoidable even to those who would prefer not to see, find our peace of mind challenged – there are increasing levels of eco-anxiety, especially amongst younger generations.

So, peace and environmental challenges are deeply connected. How can we respond? In our awards scheme, Eco-Congregation Scotland invites church communities to act across three broad areas: spiritual living, practical living and global living.

Spiritual living – Our action for peace, justice and hope for ourselves and the rest of creation will be most sustainable when grounded in our deepest values and spiritual resources. We believe that God's will is for creation renewed and love expressed through justice, and such beliefs can support times of action and of restoration. To help, Eco-Congregation Scotland offers a creative range of resources for the Season of Creation (1 September – 4 October – see <https://ecocongregationscotland.org/resources/season-of-creation-2026/>) These and further resources to challenge and encourage our spiritual lives are supported by our Eco Chaplain, David Coleman, seconded from the United Reform Church.

Practical living – This is the strand of work people most naturally think of, reducing energy and resource use, tackling waste and promoting biodiversity in grounds and gardens. That may be particularly challenging in shared buildings, and a much larger impact is possible when we encourage each other to make changes in all our lives and contexts. We also push people to consider travel and where we and our organisations put the money we have.

Global living – We are part of a global web of life, and peace and justice intersect locally, nationally and globally. So, environmental justice includes involvement in Fairtrade and joining global campaigns on debt, tax and climate justice and for loss and damage funding for those worst impacted by the climate emergency. We live within communities, so we can also be part of groups and movements making a positive difference to our local environment.

Peace on Earth is peace for all of creation, including human beings. Peace on Earth therefore needs us all to acknowledge the grave injustices of the climate and nature emergencies and to act, grounded in all that gives us hope, to make a difference locally and globally, together. *Jenny Adams*



Usama Nicola is a Palestinian civil society activist, an educational tour guide extraordinaire, husband, and father of three, rooted in the ancient and resilient city of Bethlehem. He brings together his love for people, justice, and faith in everything he does. Bethlehem, the city where, as he says, heaven met earth, is not only Usama's home, but also the heart of his mission. For him, it is a sacred place where history, struggle, and faith meet; a city that teaches him daily about rootedness, resistance, and radical love.



Women, Education and Family Life in the West Bank

For Palestinian women in the West Bank, everyday life is increasingly shaped by restrictions on movement, military checkpoints, settler violence and the uncertainty of never knowing whether a journey will be possible. Women continue to raise families, work, study and care for others, but even the most basic journeys can become difficult and, and sometimes life-threatening.

The consequences are particularly serious for pregnant women and those requiring urgent attention and medical care. In July 2026, a 28-year-old pregnant Palestinian woman from Qaryut, suffering from severe internal bleeding, lost her unborn baby after Israeli forces detained her ambulance for more than 30 minutes at the Awarta checkpoint near Nablus. According to reports, soldiers searched the bleeding patient and ordered the driver to switch off the engine, disabling medical equipment inside the ambulance. The mother survived, but her baby was delivered stillborn after she finally reached Rafidia Hospital.

That same month, Physicians for Human Rights reported that two Palestinian women were forced to give birth inside ordinary cars near Nablus after military blockades and locked village entrances cut off their routes to hospital. In another case, a 30-year-old mother of two children died from cardiac arrest in Sinjil, near Ramallah, after her ambulance was delayed for more than 30 minutes because soldiers refused to open an iron gate at the town's entrance.

These are not isolated stories. Women in labour have previously been forced to give birth at checkpoints or in vehicles because roads were closed or

access was denied. The World Health Organization has documented hundreds of attacks on, or obstructions of, healthcare workers and medical vehicles in the West Bank. OCHA has also reported how movement restrictions can force ambulances onto long and difficult alternative routes, sometimes over dirt tracks through olive groves, delaying patients who may already be in critical condition.

For families like ours in Bethlehem, these realities affect much more than emergencies. They influence where our children can study, where they can work, and how far they can safely travel from home.

I see this through my daughter, Layar.

After finishing school, Layar hoped to continue her education and build a better future. Like many young Palestinians, she considered studying abroad, both for greater educational opportunities and for the possibility of a safer and more stable life. We explored a study-abroad programme, and for a while it seemed that leaving might be the best option.

Eventually, however, Layar decided to stay.

She has now confirmed her registration at Al-Quds University in Abu Dis, where

she will study dentistry for five years. We are proud of her decision and happy that she will remain closer to the family. At the same time, we cannot ignore the uncertainty surrounding her daily journey. The distance between Bethlehem and Abu Dis is not simply a matter of kilometres. Movement restrictions, checkpoints, closures and military operations can turn an ordinary university commute into a source of anxiety.

As parents, our hope is simple: that the situation improves quickly enough for Layar to travel safely and easily between home and university, and that she can concentrate on her studies, rather than worrying about whether she will be able to get home.

Layar's story is but one of many. Palestinian women and girls are still continuing their education, careers and family life in a situation that makes normal life so extra ordinary. For Layar, staying means not giving up on her dreams. She is choosing education, choosing her profession and choosing to remain close to her family.

She is also making a decision to make her future here in Palestine.

Usama Nicola



Challenging the militarisation of our universities and their complicity in war

Carmen Wilson is director of operations of Demilitarise Education (dED), serving with dED's co-founder and executive director Jinsella Kennaway. Her degrees from Miami and Maastricht universities focused on the importance of press freedom and information for democratic accountability. She chairs the steering board for the UK network for the Global Campaign on Military Spending (GCOMS). She witnessed the impact of US militarism growing up in a military family and is a passionate advocate for peace, youth work, critical discourse and education.

About Us

Demilitarise Education (dED) is a UK-based nonprofit organisation founded in 2019 that exposes and challenges the ties between UK universities and the arms industry. By maintaining the Universities & Arms Database, the world's first detailed public record of these links, revealing over £2.39 billion in military partnerships, dED combines this research with advocacy and organising support for staff, students, and unions to drive tangible governance changes across higher education.

The Problem

Currently, UK universities are actively complicit in war, genocide and armed conflicts, serving as critical nodes in the military industrial complex by directly investing in and partnering with arms companies and military entities. This is not only a violation of the core purpose of education as places of critical inquiry and knowledge production for public good, but also a signal of how the arms industry uses university capacity and talent to normalise violence, and military ideology and promote the wider militarisation of society.

The Defence Universities Alliance

On July 13th, the Ministry of Defence's (MoD) officially launched the Defence Universities Alliance (DUA) by announcing its list of 35 founding university members. The alliance aims to build a "more strategic relationship between defence and academia" with three core objectives: "Advancing defence research, promoting defence careers, and fostering industry partnerships." Nearly 100 universities applied to be founding members and more will likely sign the charter. By doing so, universities publicly commit to "actively growing research and development activity and capacity in defence and national security relevant fields and technologies to support defence aims and objectives." This means institutions would dedicate resources, research capacity, and career services to advancing military technology and encouraging students into militarised industries, effectively becoming formal partners in the UK's war machine.

The Resistance Coalition: Peace Universities Alliance

In response, dED has recently (July 29th) launched a new UK-wide campaign and coalition called the Peace Universities Alliance to resist the DUA and defend universities as places of independent inquiry rather than extensions of the war economy.

The DUA further transforms universities into tools for war, signalling the rapid acceleration of the militarisation of both education and society. The DUA shows how the military is gaining direct influence over higher education, creating pipelines that funnel students into careers with arms companies. This happens while staff face job cuts and students struggle with living costs. Instead of supporting peace or helping people, universities are partnering with the Ministry of Defence and private arms companies. This highlights the betrayal of trust following decades of university campaigning for climate change and demilitarisation. It prioritises profit and power over people, a direct reflection of the government's military spending expansion over funding basic human needs.

Email hiya@ded1.co to be added to the coalition email list or join as a supporting member.

Scottish Universities

Three universities in Scotland were chosen as founding members: the University of Edinburgh, the University of Glasgow, and the University of Strathclyde. This is not surprising, since dED's latest annual report, highlighting data on UK university partnerships with the global arms trade, showed that the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde were in the top 20 most militarised universities overall. Given available evidence, Glasgow and Strathclyde also ranked first and second respectively for the most direct investments in private arms companies, including the largest in Raytheon and BAE Systems.

This is in addition to the millions in academic partnerships, linking these three universities to several more large arms producers including Thales, Leonardo, GKN Aerospace, Rolls-Royce, MBDA, Babcock, Airbus, QinetiQ, and the Atomic Weapons Establishment. This demonstrates a diversity of involvement and undeniable links to complicity in war.

Carmen Wilson

Our website

Blogs, podcasts, book projects, past and future events – these are all on our Pax Christi Scotland website. All newsletters are archived there. You can make donations on the membership page. Please explore and share:

<https://www.paxchristiscotland.org>

Continued thanks to webmaster Chris Boles of Caledonian Websites:

<https://www.caledonianwebsites.com/>

Membership Reminder

Please pay in November by online banking, and give your name to identify your payment. Use the email address on the website to get banking details.

If you wish to pay by cheque, send to the snail mail address below, cheques payable to Pax Christi Scotland.

You can also make regular donations on our 'donate' page or by standing order – thank you.

Membership fees per annum are £10 for waged, £5 for unwaged.

Explore the website for all our activities:

<https://www.paxchristiscotland.org>

Where to find Pax Christi Scotland:

<http://www.paxchristiscotland.org>

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Snail mail:

Pax Christi Scotland

c/o Xaverian Missionaries

Calder Avenue

Coatbridge ML5 4JS

YouTube Channel

You can find recordings of all our events at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@paxchristiscotland>

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Click on the word 'Subscribed' and you will be informed whenever a new recording is posted.

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Keeping faith in the storm—bereavement, the Gospel and a flickering light



Arianna Andreangeli is a mother and an academic living and working in Edinburgh. She is passionate about peace work and in finding small ways to serve others and to bearing witness to God's Word. She serves as executive committee member of Pax Christi Scotland

"(...) For everything there is a season, for every purpose under heaven (...) a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance" (Ecclesiastes, 3: 1-2; 4)

We live in changing times, and with the passing of time, we change. For me, one of the most powerful images of the Gospel is that of the disciples on the boat at night, and all around them, the storm rages. And Jesus is asleep. Their reaction is so full of anguish, and yet so intensely human: 'Lord, do you not care that we are perishing?'. And so full of love is His response: 'Oh, you of little faith...' but to the rebuke follows peace. The sea is calmed down through His Word.

I think often of this image, as I listen to the news, and learn of war that rages, and the cry of the Earth, heating constantly. As I get to know one of our new parish friends, a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo, who fled from war with his wife and children, leaving his family behind, and now is, in his word, a new Scot.

More so, I think of this image now, in my life: I lost my beloved Mother not even two months ago, so suddenly and abruptly. The air changed on that very moment that she stopped breathing in her earthly life and is now asleep in Jesus Christ.

The Letter to the Hebrews speaks of a 'cloud of witnesses' (Heb 12:1) who have run ahead of us; they, with their prayers, encourage us to walk in perseverance, in these storms. To carry our crosses, yoked to the Lord Jesus. This is what I find great comfort in: to know that my Mum is one of these witnesses. She persevered in life, as she loved Jesus and God the Father, as she walked through joys and sorrows always yoked to Him. And I am certain that she prays for me and for us all, that we too may similarly walk.

How to explain how the faith in the Lord Jesus is helping me, as I live and walk in this storm, if not by remembering that hope does not fail? Even now, that my heart is broken, I feel not lost or lonely. I feel held, held by the prayers of others who surround me in earth and those who preceded me and that are now witnesses to the Love of God, through the life and death and the resurrection of Jesus.

The air changed on that day that we said goodbye to my Mum: I often feel that I am breathing under water, that I am standing in the present, only on tiptoes. Yet, the Lord, through His love and His mercy, carries me through to the next hour, and the next day. His Promise is not that this grief will disappear, but that He will give me, is giving me, the strength, through the Hope and perseverance that He gives me, to walk through this.

'Lord, do you not care, that we perish?'

He does, and he does not let us perish: in the night, I am sure that there was a lamp on that boat, a lamp that flickers but is not won by the clouds, rain and waves. It is the hope that our Lord Jesus has given us, and has been renewing every day through the Holy Spirit. That this light continues to shine and that we too can wait out the darkness, that temporary gloom til morning.

'The light shines in darkness, and darkness has not overcome it' (Jn, 1, 5)

Arianna Andreangeli