

## Protocol for Christians Rallying with Jewish Communities in Support of Israel

### Isaiah 40:1-2

*“Comfort, comfort My people,” says your God. “Speak tenderly to Jerusalem...”*

With the nation of Israel currently at war, we have an opportunity as Christians in the nations to support Israel and the Jewish people and to express our support by rallying with our local Jewish communities as a sign of our shared values. For those unfamiliar with uniting with the broader Jewish community, the following will give direction:

Generally, Jewish people appreciate openness and honesty in relationships. If asked why you have come to be with them, feel free to say you are a Christian who loves and supports Israel and the Jewish people, and you would simply like to show your love and support. There is no encouragement here to deny your Christian faith but simply to distinguish that you are not coming to force your faith on anyone.

- These solidarity events, when open to the public, may include a diverse group of Jewish people across a spectrum of secular, traditional, or religious who may have different levels of observance. The hosting synagogue may have variations in protocols. These guidelines provide a general frame of reference. If you have specific questions, call the synagogue hosting the event.
- Dress is usually business casual, all with modesty. Women - shoulders covered. If a Reform Synagogue, women may wear pants. Skirts or dresses for others. Men may wear a kippa (yarmulke), usually available in the lobby for temporary use.
- Avoid jewelry or clothing with a cross, *ichthus* (fish symbol), Christian messaging, New Testament passages, or similar. Christian symbols may inadvertently communicate a message that builds walls rather than bridges while we are attempting to show solidarity.
- Be aware of whether men and women sit together or separately during the service and whether men and women shake each other's hands. Be a better listener than a speaker, let them initiate. Shake a hand if one is extended to you, speak when you are spoken to but don't monopolize anyone's time with lengthy questions.
- Observe the proper time allotted for the gathering and don't linger when that time is over.

Important to note that it is unusual for Jewish people to know Christians who are interested in them as people, caring for them and desiring to understand them and their traditions, etc. The history of Christians with Jews has been tragic; thus we have not been trusted for centuries. As Christians, we need to learn through humility how to develop relationship with them through a love that has no conditions.