

## **Leaders of New St. James Condemn and Mourn the October 7 Attacks against Israel**

On October 7, Hamas terrorists violently attacked thousands of people in Israel. That day should have been a peaceful Shabbat, coinciding also with *Simchat Torah* (“Rejoicing with the Torah”) celebrations. Instead, Israel suffered the worst targeted killing of Jewish civilians since the Holocaust. At a music festival, at kibbutzim, and in homes and communities across southern Israel, attackers wounded, tortured, kidnapped, and murdered Israelis (as well as citizens of other countries). The brutality of these attacks, including attacks against children, has shocked us all.

Soon after this violence, war broke out between Israel and Hamas. We expect The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) to comment on that war, the ongoing hostage situation, and the possibilities for peace. At the same time, it is vitally important—amid the unfolding violence we see today—that we pause to acknowledge, condemn, and mourn the anti-Jewish violence of October 7. It is also essential that we recognize the feelings of grief, fear, isolation, insecurity, and distress that our Jewish friends and neighbours may be experiencing; accordingly, we offer our steadfast support and friendship to Jewish communities in Canada and throughout the world.

Amid this distressing time, we continue to pray for peace and an end to violence, hostilities, and suffering.

The Rev. Dr. David Clark, Minister  
Bruce Curtis, Clerk of Session  
Charlene Beynon, Deputy Clerk of Session

October 23, 2023