KAIROS INDIA PARTNERSHIP

CONCEPT NOTE
"The Empty Chair"

World Week of Prayer for Peace in Palestine and Israel (WWPPPI) 2026

"Let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."-Galatians 6:9

World Week of Prayer for Peace in Palestine and Israel

The World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel (WWPPPI) is an annual observance of the World Council of Churches (WCC), held during the third week of September, inviting churches worldwide to pray and work towards an end to Israeli oppression and a just and lasting peace for both Palestinians and Israelis. For 2026, the WCC has centred the observance on the protection of children-a focus made urgent by the continuing scale of child death, disappearance, and displacement in Gaza even after the October 2025 ceasefire.

The Kairos India Partnership (KIP)-an initiative of National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), Student Christian Movement of India (SCMI), Christian Institute for Study of Religion and Society (CISRS), National Dalit Christian Watch (NDCW), Board for Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC), National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations (NC YMCAs), Christian union of India (CUI), and others-exists to affirm solidarity with the global Kairos movements in Palestine, South Africa, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and elsewhere, reading the 'signs of the times' in India's own struggles against casteism and the marginalisation of Dalit, Adivasi and tribal communities alongside those struggles abroad. WWPPPI 2026 is therefore a natural point of convergence for KIP: an occasion to hold Palestinian suffering and Indian caste-based suffering in the same frame of prayer and witness, consistent with KIP's own founding vision.

Why "The Empty Chair"

An empty chair, placed visibly in the sanctuary or assembly, serves as the central symbol of this year's campaign-representing the child who should be present but is not. It is a simple symbol that any congregation, school, or hostel chapel can adopt without special resources.



- For Palestine: the chair represents the thousands of Palestinian children in Gaza who are missing, orphaned, injured, or killed-children who, in the words of UNICEF, have in effect 'disappeared from view.'

- For India: the same chair calls the Indian church to see its own missing and unprotected children-Dalit, Adivasi, and tribal children who go missing, are trafficked, malnourished, or fall outside systems of protection and are too rarely searched for with the same urgency.
- As symbol and as advocacy: prayer here is not only devotional but a form of public witness-the chair asks the church to notice absence, name its causes, and commit to action, not only to feel sorrow.

Churches and organisations are invited to introduce the symbol with a short-spoken framing before it is used in worship, so that it is understood clearly as an act of remembrance and solidarity with Palestinian children specifically, distinct from other uses of an empty chair in public discourse.

This campaign is grounded in the Kairos tradition-the conviction that certain moments demand the church read the 'signs of the times' and respond in the name of the Gospel, as articulated in the Kairos Palestine document and echoed by KIP's own reading of caste, land, and occupation as connected life-discriminating injustices. It draws on the biblical witness of Christ's particular regard for children (Matthew 18:5; Mark 10:14) and the prophetic call to notice and act for those rendered invisible (Isaiah 1:17). Intercessory prayer is understood here as advocacy: the church interceding not merely in private devotion but as a public act that seeks to move the conscience of the community towards justice.

Objectives of the WWPPPI are

- To unite NCCI member churches and KIP core group partners in a common act of prayer and solidarity during WWPPPI 2026.
- To raise awareness within the Indian church of the situation of Palestinian children, using accurate, dated, and properly sourced information.
- To connect that awareness to the lived realities of Dalit, Adivasi, and tribal children in India, consistent with KIP's founding vision of connected global struggles.
- To move intercessory prayer beyond private devotion into a visible act of advocacy and public witness.
- To provide member churches, schools, and Christian organisations with ready-to-use, low-resource liturgical material for the full week of observance.

Prayer Activities

Activity 1: Common Sunday Intercession-20 September 2026

A shared intercession liturgy for use in the main Sunday service across all participating churches. An empty chair is placed visibly at the front of the sanctuary, introduced with a short-spoken framing, followed by a litany of intercession (leader and congregation), a prayer of commitment, and a sending that connects worship to advocacy. This gives the whole church network a single, synchronised moment of shared witness on the opening day of WWPPPI.

Activity 2: Daily Intercession Guide-20 to 26 September 2026

A seven-day intercession guide for use in Christian schools, hostels, and organisations throughout the week. Each day carries a short thematic prayer, one dated and sourced statistic on Palestinian children in Gaza, and one resonant, sourced statistic on Dalit, Adivasi, or tribal children in India-moving through the themes of the missing, hunger, orphaning and exploitation, violence, displacement, denied childhood, and finally hope and advocacy on the closing day.

Both resources are circulated as separate, ready-to-print documents alongside this concept note: "Activity 1-Sunday Intercession, 20 September 2026" and "Activity 2-Daily Intercession Guide, 20–26 September 2026."

Guidance for Participating Churches and Organisations

- Hold both griefs-Gaza's and India's-with equal seriousness, as resonance in struggle rather than as a claim of equivalence in scale or circumstance.
- Use only the sourced statistics provided, or verify updated figures against UNICEF, NCRB, or NFHS before printing, since Gaza casualty and displacement figures change frequently.
- Where possible, replace national Indian statistics with local diocesan, state, or district-level data, which is often more powerful and specific for a local congregation.
- Treat the empty chair with pastoral care - introduce it with the framing provided, and avoid using it merely as a visual prop disconnected from its meaning.
- Close each use of the symbol, where possible, by inviting a concrete action-a written commitment, a letter of advocacy, or a link to a child-rights organisation-so that prayer moves towards witness.

Timeline

20 Sept 2026	Common Sunday Intercession (Activity 1) in all participating churches, Sunday Schools, and other organisations in solidarity.
20–26 Sept 2026	Daily Intercession Guide in schools, hostels, Christian and other institutions and organisations in solidarity
After 26 Sept 2026	Participating churches/organisations invited to share reflections, photos, and advocacy commitments with the KIP (email given below).

For Further Details:

Member churches and core group partners wishing to participate, request additional resources or assistance for prayer resources, or share feedback are invited to contact the Kairos India Partnership: Rev. Asher Noah through kip@ncci1914.com or cod@ncci1914.com.