

Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf

Province of the Episcopal Church in
Jerusalem and the Middle East



The Right Reverend Sean Semple

Sixth Bishop of the Diocese of
Cyprus and the Gulf

1 March 2026

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ

Yesterday, six of the countries of our Diocese were subjected to missile and drone attacks in response to the United States and Israeli strikes on Iran. As I write there are reports of continuing attacks on many countries—now including all ten in our Diocese. We find ourselves suddenly living through the danger, unpredictability and terror of war.

Amidst the fear and pain of this time, our faith inspires us to make real the love and compassion of Christ, in search of peace and understanding.

In the last 24 hours I have been in contact with clergy and parishioners across our Diocese and Province. I am grateful for the responsiveness and compassion of our clergy and those in parish leadership, who have rallied quickly to check on parishioners and to offer them spiritual and practical support. Where it has been unsafe to travel to church, online services are being offered, and virtual prayer groups have gathered.

No one knows how long this conflict will last or how it might continue to affect our lives.

We pray for peace—for a swift end to conflict; for the leaders of the world to be inspired by the just and peaceful rule of the Kingdom of God; and for all who strive for de-escalation and negotiation in our region.

We pray for God's protection over all people; for the clergy and people of our sister dioceses of Jerusalem and Iran; for our clergy and people, and for ourselves.

We pray for the empowering of the Holy Spirit; for the grace to bear witness to the faith, hope and love of Christ in traumatic times; and for courage and creativity to meet the challenges we face.

From the wellspring of prayer flows vitality, resilience and yes, peace. Our Lord taught that despite the tribulations of the world we will find peace in him, for he has overcome the world. (John 16.33)

I pray that the deep peace of God which transcends all earthly understanding will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus through this time, and overcome all our fears. (Philippians 4.7)

And I thank our friends and partners across the world for their support and prayers.

Yours in Christ,

+ Sean Cyprus and the Gulf

The Rt Revd Sean Semple

Bishop in Cyprus and the Gulf

