

ELCJHL

NEWSLETTER

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Greetings with Ethiopian Patriarch



Bishop Azar extended greetings and welcome to Ethiopian Orthodox Archbishop Abuna Nathanael

Football Tournament

ELCJHL schools held the annual Lutheran Schools Football Tournament this month at the Evangelical Lutheran School in Beit Sahour



Youth Conference

Lutheran and Anglican Youth met in Jericho for a four-day conference under the theme "Our Hope in Jesus Christ."



Bishop's News

Bishop Azar Visits ELCJHL Schools

This month, Bishop Dr. Sani Ibrahim Azar visited the ELCJHL Schools to mark the start of the new school year. In Beit Sahour, Bethlehem, and Ramallah, Bishop Azar thanked teachers and staff for their essential work during such challenging times and offered blessings and encouragement for a safe, successful, and fruitful year of education in our schools.

Bishop of Berlin Visits

In September Bishop Azar welcomed a visit from Christian Stäblein, the Bishop of Berlin in the EKD. He was joined by the Bishop of the City of Berlin, the Director of Berlin MissionWork, and other representatives from Berlin Mission.

Greetings with Ethiopian Patriarch

Bishop Azar and a delegation from the ELCJHL offered greetings to the new Archbishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Patriarchate, His Grace Abuna Nathaneal.

Visit to Germany

Bishop Azar traveled to Germany for the funeral of Bishop Dr. Johannes Friedrich, who faithfully served the German Church "Propst" in Jerusalem from 1985 to 1991 and was a close friend and supporter of the ELCJHL.



Congregations

Church of Hope

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ramallah held a special prayer and bonfire to celebrate the Feast of the Holy Cross.



Church of the Reformation

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Beit Jala has continued hosting weekly worship and Bible Study for the congregation.



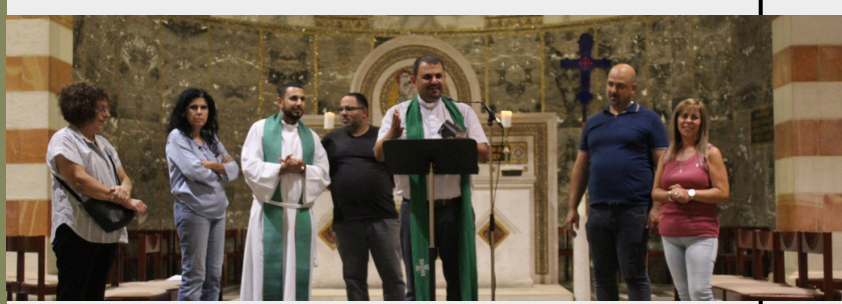
Good Shepherd

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Amman hosted a "Rally Day" event for families and children from the congregation, including games, songs, prayers, and food. Rev. Dr. Imad Haddad and Nada Zabana also traveled to Norway this month to sign a "sister congregation" agreement with the Kampin and Fularinga churches in Oslo.



Redeemer Lutheran

This month the Arabic-speaking Redeemer congregation held a special service to honor the years of service that Rev. Fursan Zu'mot gave to the congregation. After the service on the Mount of Olives, the congregation enjoyed a barbecue together.

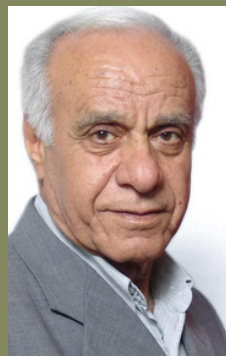


Lutheran Church of Beit Sahour

The Beit Sahour church continues their weekly worship, Bible Study, and Sunday School programs.

Christmas Lutheran

This month Christmas Lutheran and the entire ELCJHL community said farewell to church elder and Council Member Adel Khader, who passed away in September. His legacy and impact on the church will be remembered for years to come. The prayers of the Bishop and church are with his family.



Youth Conference

University and working-aged youth from the ELCJHL and the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem came together for a conference in Jericho under the theme, "Our Hope in Jesus Christ." Amidst incredibly challenging times for our youth, we are grateful for this opportunity for relaxation, spiritual renewal, and fellowship.



Education

Football Tournament

Students from the four Lutheran schools came together at ELS Beit Sahour for the annual Lutheran Football Tournament. We were glad to once again be able to hold this important annual tradition for our students. Talitha Kumi took first place, ELS Beit Sahour was second, and Dar al Kalima third. Though the School of Hope was not able to join due to travel restrictions within the West Bank, they held their own tournament in Ramallah.



Math Olympiad

Each spring the ELCJHL holds a Math Olympiad for the four Lutheran schools. This month high scorers from the 6th, 8th, and 10th grades were recognized for their achievements.



Science Experiments

Students in the ELCJHL schools undertake weekly science lab experiments to bring classroom theory to life, helping students grasp complex concepts through hands-on learning.



Inclusion Workshop

Planned by the ELCJHL schools Education Office in cooperation with Al Qader foundation, workshops were held this month for the three ELCJHL schools Kindergarten and elementary teachers about inclusion.



Diaconia

Hot Meals Program

The Diaconal Ministry continued the Hot Meals Program in September, serving fresh, homemade meals to the community twice a week. With economic insecurity growing in the West Bank, providing hot meals for our neighbors is more important than ever.

School Counselors Meeting

The Diaconal Ministry held the first meeting of the semester for local school counselors. These meetings occur monthly to introduce counselors to new methods for psychosocial relief for students, teachers, and themselves. They also provide an opportunity for school counselors to take time for their own mental health. The session was presented by psychologist Jumana Kaplanian, who introduced participants to EMDR therapy and its methods.



Deaf Ministry

The Diaconal Center welcomed a group of students from the Lutheran school in Beit Sahour to participate in the ongoing Deaf Ministry candle project. The group shared lunch, activities and of course time for candle making together. The day ended with a group prayer.

In another meeting of the Deaf Ministry, the group discussed the story of Zacchaeus.



Environment

Visit to Sweden

In September a delegation from the EEC visited Sweden at the invitation of Act Church of Sweden. The visit focused on deepening partnerships, fostering dialogue on environmental and social sustainability, and sharing experiences with Swedish academic, parliaments, religious, and environmental institutions. The delegation from the EEC included Executive Director Simon Awad, and Climate Justice Youth Representatives Lubna Nassar and George Bandak.

EEC Activities in the Northern West Bank

In September the EEC, in partnership with the Nablus Municipality's Child Cultural Center and several national institutions, organized an interactive day for women's and youth forums across the northern West Bank. The event brought together more than 80 forum members and 100 students for training and workshops on sustainable home economics, safe storage of agricultural products, recycling methods, and olive oil preservation.

Delegation Visit

On September 4th, the EEC welcomed a distinguished delegation from Germany, led by Dr. Christian Stäblein, Bishop of the Evangelical Church of Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lusatia, accompanied by his wife Anke Stäblein, and church leaders including Dr. Julia Helmke, Dr. Ulrich Schöntube, Dr. Simon Kuntze, Gerd Herzog, and Almut Bockisch.

The delegation toured the various sections of the EEC, learning about its environmental programs, sustainability initiatives, and community engagement efforts. Guests expressed admiration for the center's educational role and its commitment to protecting creation, while enjoying an atmosphere of warm fellowship and shared vision.

Remaining Like Olive Roots

The EEC, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, has launched a free student drawing competition titled "Remaining Like Olive Roots." The initiative invites higher education students to artistically express the olive tree's cultural, social, and national symbolism as a symbol of resilience. The exhibition will be for the Olive Harvest Festival in October.



Gender Justice

6th Annual Gender Justice Conference

This month the Gender Justice Ministry of the ELCJHL held their 6th Annual Conference on Gender Justice from a Religious and National Perspective. Throughout the sessions, ELCJHL pastors, staff, and honored speakers talked about recent research, initiatives and achievements in the pursuit of gender justice in Palestine and discussed opportunities for the future.

For another year, this conference comes during a very difficult time for the Palestinian people. In the face of incredibly challenging circumstances, we are grateful to all those who came together to envision how we can create a more just and equitable society and world. Thank you to all the government officials, religious leaders, professors, scholars, judges, and community members who participated in this critical work.

Old City Tour

The Gender Justice Ministry organized a tour of the Old City of Jerusalem for ELCJHL staff. This tour was an opportunity to learn more about the history of our Holy City and our church. Today, Palestinians who live and work in the Old City face violence and intimidation from Israeli soldiers, police, and armed settlers, leading to alienation within their own city. This tour also provided a safe opportunity to explore and enjoy. The tour included history about the Church of the Redeemer and was led by Redeemer congregation member Salim Mussalam.

