



Jerusalem  
2 June 2026

**Statement from Bishop Dr. Imad Haddad on the Israeli Detainment of  
Natalie Abudayyeh**

This morning a beloved youth from our church community, Natalie Abudayyeh, was taken at gunpoint by Israeli forces from her student apartment in Birzeit alongside three other women. We are deeply shocked and horrified by this news, as well as by the news that her family does not yet know where she has been taken. Natalie is a member of Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Beit Jala, a graduate of Talitha Kumi Lutheran School, and a Media and Journalism student at Birzeit University.

As Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, I unequivocally call for Natalie's immediate release. The entire ELCJHL stands in solidarity with the Abudayyeh family and the Beit Jala and Birzeit communities, and we join them in earnest prayer for Natalie's safety and freedom.

We are incredibly disturbed by the reality that Natalie now joins the thousands of Palestinians in Israeli detention without charge or trial. Palestinian civilians, including women and children, suffer deep injustice in Israeli military detention and are often held for months or years with no explanation.

We call on our friends, partners, and siblings in Christ around the world to advocate for Natalie's freedom using whatever channels are available to them, and to demand an end to this unjust and unequal system of detainment and detention that paralyzes and destroys Palestinian communities.

Bishop Dr. Imad Haddad  
Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

