

Trinity Ministry News

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Trinity is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We support ministries all over the world. The following is an article from Pastor Eric Shafer who visited some of the ELCA's ministry projects in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

If God Calls Us We Are Coming

By Eric Shafer

On a February Sunday several years ago I was traveling with a group of ELCA communicators in the West Bank, the area of biblical Palestine occupied by Israel since 1967. We were scheduled to worship at Reformation Lutheran Church in Beit Jala, a town near Bethlehem. But that Sunday the entire area was under an Israeli army curfew. Since we were accompanied by Munib Younan, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (and now president of The Lutheran World Federation), we were able to pass through the military checkpoint from Jerusalem.

It was surreal experience. Our three vehicles, with hazard lights blinking, were the only ones on the road that morning. All businesses, schools and homes were closed up, many even boarded up. Normally on a Sunday morning, a work day for the area's majority Muslim population, the streets would have been teeming with people. Not this day. The streets and sidewalks were vacant and quiet except for an occasional stray dog. The Israeli curfew kept everyone at home and off the streets. Those who ventured out risked arrest and prison.

The church bells were ringing when we approached Reformation Lutheran Church in Beit Jala. We wondered if anyone would be there. As we entered the church grounds, there were hundreds of people waiting for the bishop and for worship. Surprised by their bravery, bravery I thought might be foolhardy, I asked one of our hosts why he had violated the curfew and risked imprisonment to come to worship that day. "If God calls us, we are coming," was all he needed to say.

Hope amid road blocks

I have just returned from my fourth visit to Jerusalem and the West Bank. The purpose of this trip was to produce a video Bible study on the stations of the cross

by gathering footage of the Mount of Olives and in the Old City of Jerusalem.

I wish I could tell you that the situation for ordinary Palestinians (and many Israelis) has improved since my last visit, but, alas, it has not. Palestinians still face difficulties in their daily life, whether it's finding employment and housing, getting through internal check points to work, church and family or violent flare ups followed by a violent response.

Yet despite all of these road blocks in Palestinians' daily life, what I saw and experienced during my most recent visit in late January was steady survival and even hope in the midst of difficult times. I witnessed the following signs of hope:

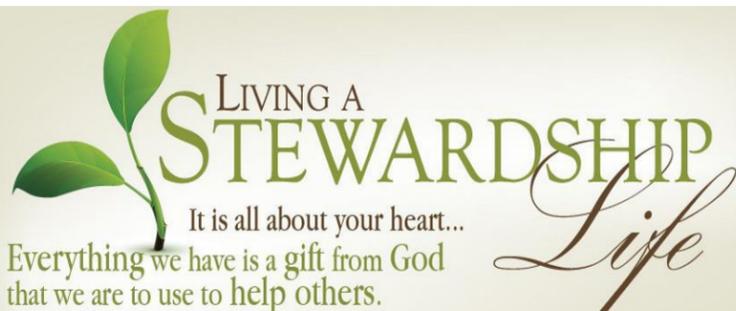
- The Lutheran World Federation's Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives continues, as it has for more than 65 years, to serve the Palestinian people and people of all faiths.
- The Lutheran World Federation's Vocational Training Center in East Jerusalem is providing vocational training to high school-age young people, both women and men, combating the 40 percent unemployment rate among young adults.
- The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land is sponsoring elementary and secondary schools for Palestinian children, both Christian and Muslim, in Beit Jala, Beit Sahour, Bethlehem and Ramallah.

I had a chance to visit the hospital, the vocational training center and three of these schools, plus the Lutheran church's environmental education center. I found all of these places full of dedicated staff, serious students, appreciative parents and patients, with the staff providing outstanding instruction and service and care, all amid the challenges of daily life in the occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Yes, life in the Holy Land is difficult for many, but the people I met were living proof of hope, bearing witness to Christ in service in spite of these difficulties.

We served approximately 400 meals that day between Lewisburg United Methodist and Trinity. Thanks to everyone for their help in serving on this day. All monies stay in Lewisburg for the Food Pantry.





**Saturday, April 2, 2016 1-4pm
Spring Gathering for ALL women**

St John Lutheran Church Ingomar
2139 Enterprise Rd
West Alex, Oh 45381
Church ph 937-839-5321

The lady's have invited us to join them in this gathering called Hear the Cry, Heed the Call Raising Our Awareness, Helping the Oppressed. This is an overview of Human Trafficking of Women and Children in OUR communities.

Speakers: Karen Granby, MSN, RN, CWOCN
Sister Sally Burk, Deaconess Community ELCA

*Uplifting worship with Holy Communion *Informative speakers *Displays *Refreshments *Networking & Fellowship *Free-will offering will be taken.

Don't miss this meaningful program!! Let us give witness to our identity as an Easter People!!



HOLY WEEK

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|----------|--------------------------|---|
| March 9 | Prayers around the Cross | 6:30pm |
| March 16 | Prayers around the Cross | 6:30pm |
| March 20 | Palm Sunday worship | 10:30 am |
| March 23 | Prayers around the Cross | 6:30pm |
| March 24 | Seder Meal | 6:00 pm (pending) |
| March 25 | Good Friday Tre Ore | 12:00pm and 3:00pm |
| March 25 | Good Friday Service | 7:00 pm at Victory Christian Church Pastor Brent preaching. |
| March 26 | Easter Vigil | 8:00 pm (pending) |
| March 27 | Easter Day worship | 10:30 am |

There will be an Easter egg hunt for kids during Sunday School 9:45 am on Easter Sunday.

April 3 The Holy Humor Sunday Pajama party 10:30 am
Bring your bears.

March Council Counter

Beth Blankenship



Assistant Minister's

March 6	Pastor
March 13	Jean Horstman
March 20	Pat Schroeder
March 27	Lalah Kline

Readers

March 6	Lalah Kline
March 13	Alicia Haas
March 20	Jean Horstman
March 27	Liz Shumaker

Communion Assistants

March 6	Pam Wade & Kenny Rawlins
March 20	Lalah & Roger Kline

Greeter's

March 6	Debbie Marker & Jeanette Wright
March 13	Stacy & Michaela Manning
March 20	Alicia Haas & Cooper McCloud
March 27	Janet Mangan & Carol Gebhart

Welcome Table

March 6	Open
March 13	Open
March 20	Carol Gebhart
March 27	Church Council

Thanks to everyone who volunteers to make every Sunday a welcoming place and sharing what the gospel means. Your Trinity family appreciates your dedication.



F.A.S.T.B.R.A.C.



Another great season of FASTBRAC has come to a close. F.A.S.T.B.R.A.C. stands for Future Athletes Sharing Together Basketball Respect and Christ. We had 42 players this year, two coaches and two assistant coaches from the boys and girls varsity basketball teams from Tri County North. It was a successful season. What makes it successful? I had a little boy come up to me and say that he thinks that "they (high school games) should pray before they play like we do on Saturdays. Maybe the fans would be nicer to each other." I couldn't disagree with that! F.A.S.T.B.R.A.C. is definitely a seed planting ministry by helping kids and their families' get comfortable being in a church, practicing elements of faith like praying together and having fun. I told the kids that God doesn't have a favorite basketball team, but that God delights in seeing his children using their talents for positive things like being on a team. F.A.S.C.T.R.A.C. is such an awesome ministry. Thanks to all who make it so.

Pastor Brent

