



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in Canada**

Living Out God's Grace & Unconditional Love

July 22, 2025

Dear friends in Christ,

We are writing to you today with heavy hearts. For nearly two years, the people in Gaza, the West Bank and Jerusalem have been suffering under devastating violence, a deepening humanitarian crisis, and uncertainty.

Recently we received an update from Bishop Dr. Sani Ibrahim Azar of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, our Global Mission and Companion Synod partner. Bishop Azar shared that while the church continues to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, as we all do, he fears, "that peace is increasingly hidden from our eyes."

"There is an atmosphere of deep fear and uncertainty across our land," he continued. "No one knows what the next day will bring. The prospect of a regional war weighs heavily on a population already exhausted by suffering."

Yet, despite everything, the ELCJHL remains steadfast in its mission.

- Congregations continue to gather in prayer and fellowship.
- The schools of the ELCJHL have successfully completed their 2024-25 academic year.
- Diaconal ministry is providing food, rent assistance, medical care and school tuition support to hundreds of families across the West Bank.
- Gender justice and environmental ministries are still working towards a more just and sustainable future.

"For years," Bishop Azar writes, "we have worked to sustain the Christian presence in the Holy Land. Today, we are struggling to preserve our very existence."

As partners in mission, we are called to respond.

Together, the National Office and Eastern Synod are launching an appeal to support the ministries of the ELCJHL. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 to assist in supporting this vital work that embodies faith, resilience and hope of a just peace.

At our recent ELCIC National Convention, we welcomed Bishop-Elect, Rev. Dr. Imad Haddad, of the ELCJHL. Speaking on the theme Rejoicing in Hope, he shared these powerful words, "I will really cling to hope, but it is a hope that is not alienated from reality, a hope that understands the challenges. A hope that is great enough to choose life, a hope faithful enough to pose a question, 'my Lord, why have you forsaken me?', yet without losing faith in the justice of God. God is just. That is our hope."

Dear members of the ELCIC, our church's long-standing relationship with the ELCJHL is a vital expression of our shared faith and commitment to justice and peace.

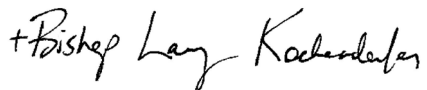
Together, we invite you to:

- Pray for peace.
- Learn more about the work of the ELCJHL.
- Give generously to the ELCJHL Appeal.

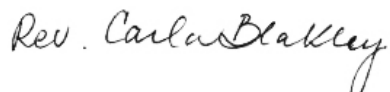
Yours in Christ,



Rev. Susan C. Johnson, Bishop, ELCIC



Rev. Dr. Larry Kochendorfer, Bishop-elect, ELCIC



Rev. Carla Blakley, Bishop, Eastern Synod

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*The ELCIC acknowledges that its buildings and ministries, from coast to coast to coast, are on traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples.*