



Upstate New York Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

October 10, 2023

Dear Beloved Church,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Crucified One, Jesus Christ our Lord.

I write to you today as we join our prayers to those who are mourning, healing, and waiting in the aftermath of the violence this past week in Israel. We pray for the Jewish community, and we pray for the Palestinian community.

I had the privilege of joining ELCA bishops in a companion trip to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land this past January where I learned more of the complex history shared with Palestine and Israel. We also witnessed first-hand the ministries of the ELCJHL through their congregations, primary schools and university, community resource centers and Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives.

We, the ELCA, through our Peace Not Walls campaign, support a “viable, contiguous Palestinian state; a secure Israeli state at peace with its Arab neighbors; [and] a shared Jerusalem with equal access and rights for Jews, Muslims and Christians.” (elca.org Peace Not Walls) As a church in partnership with the Lutheran World Federation and the ELCJHL, we call for equal human dignity and rights for all people in the Holy Land.

The Rev. Adam Miller-Stubbendick and The Rev. Jordan Stubbendick serve as country coordinators for the Young Adults in Global Mission program in the Middle East. I have been in contact with Pr. Adam who reports that they are safe along with the YAGM students and ELCA staff in the West Bank. Please include these persons and their families in your prayers.

Please join me in prayer. Let us pray for peace in the Holy Land. Let us pray for a peaceful resolution going forward. Let us pray for peace to prevail in Israel and in Palestine, and in all places in conflict.

Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Yours in Peace,

Cultivating a G.R.A.C.E. Mindset: Restorative Justice

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