

## **Opportunity Palestine**

Opportunity Palestine's (OP) mission is to sustain the educational institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) through development and awareness building in the United States. Opportunity Palestine does this because they believe that the powerful hope and vision for justice created by the educational ministries of the ELCJHL are essential to overcoming the challenges facing the vibrant and peaceful communities in the Holy Land.

Opportunity Palestine supports four K-12 Lutheran schools in the West Bank: Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, Ramallah, and Beit Jala. The Lutheran schools currently educate over 2,100 students regardless of gender, race, religion, or ability to pay. Peace education and interfaith dialog are embedded in the curriculum and the schools intentionally promote gender balance and equality with co-educational instruction.

Young Palestinians live under a disturbing reality of ever-present violence, making daily life extremely complicated. By providing a consistent, healthy and nurturing environment, the Lutheran schools and educational programs directly address the anxieties and fears that, too often, frustrate the lives of their students. Through a curriculum that integrates peace education and conflict resolution with arts, science and language skills, these students develop the tools needed to navigate their community's complex and politicized global relationships.

Opportunity Palestine is anxiously watching the escalation of violence and bloodshed unfolding in Palestine and Israel and praying for peaceful resolutions and, as always, freedom.

Your faithful dedication to the future freedom and dignity of Palestinian children through education continues to be invaluable.

We want to remind you of one of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land's (ELCJHL) educational core values:

- Peace, faith, love, constructive dialogue, teamwork, and belonging

Unfortunately, the reality in the West Bank, where four ELCJHL schools are situated, has been disrupted.

The Administrative Assistant to the ELCJHL schools, Ms. Eva Azar reports that the schools were closed relatively quickly when the conflict began on October 7, 2023.

Despite the uncertainty and the emotional toll that compounds life living under The Occupation, Ms. Azar expresses her appreciation for Opportunity Palestine donors' prayers and continued financial support.

"I want to convey my appreciation for your kind words and prayers. It's important to underscore the gravity of the current situation. We find ourselves in a deeply saddening and intense period, marked by significant difficulties and hardships."

She continues, "We are committed to keeping you informed as we navigate through these trying times. Your generosity and support serve as beacons of hope in these dark moments."

After accompanying the schools through the height of the COVID pandemic, Opportunity Palestine understands that lockdowns, wars and restricted tourism leads to more economic hardship for parents already earning menial salaries.

These disruptions in employment make it difficult to pay school tuition.

You can help during these volatile times. Your prayers and generous contributions are needed now more than ever.

*LDA Deaconess Adrainne Gray  
Sept. 11, 2024*