

## **Updates on the Leadership and New Calls to the English-Speaking Congregation of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem**

On behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, Bishop Ibrahim Azar is excited to share the future plans for the pastoral ministry of the English-speaking congregation of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, a congregation of the ELCJHL in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Bishop Azar first wishes to express his gratitude to the Rev. Carrie Ballenger for eight wonderful years of ministry to the ELCJHL and wishes her success and fulfillment in her new calling at University Lutheran Church in Cambridge, Mass.

In July, Rev. Adam Miller-Stubbendick began as the interim pastor for the English-speaking congregation. Pastor Adam and his wife, Rev. Jordan Miller-Stubbendick, currently serve as the new Country Coordinators for the ELCA Young Adults in Global Ministry (YAGM) program in Jerusalem/West Bank. Pastor Adam's interim period will last until January 2023.

In January 2023, the ELCJHL will celebrate an historic event in the life of our church, when Ms. Sally Azar is ordained as the first female Palestinian pastor in the ELCJHL. Following her ordination, Ms. Azar has been called by the ELCJHL to serve as pastor to the English-speaking congregation of the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem together with the Rev. Dr. Meghan Aelabouni. Pastor Meghan currently serves as the ELCA Theologian in Residence for the Middle East/North Africa desk of the ELCA. Her work in this position will continue when she steps into her new call with the Redeemer Lutheran English-speaking congregation.

Ms. Sally Azar is currently finishing seminary studies at the Georg-August Universität Göttingen (Germany), and she holds an M.A. in Intercultural Theology. Upon her ordination, Ms. Azar will become not only the first Palestinian woman to serve in the ELCJHL as a pastor, but also the first female Palestinian pastor ordained to serve within Palestine/Israel. The ELCJHL is excited to take this significant step forward in our journey toward gender justice in our church and world.

Please join us in thanking Rev. Carrie Ballenger for her eight years of faithful service to the ELCJHL, Rev. Adam Miller-Stubbendick for accepting the call to serve as interim pastor, Rev. Dr. Meghan Aelabouni for accepting the call to further serve the ELCJHL in a new position, and Ms. Sally Azar for her faith, dedication, and integrity in answering God's call to serve as a pastor in the ELCJHL.