

HOPE

HOPE Outreach of Canada



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Bethlehem Bible College President, Dr. Jack Sara, Visits Winnipeg

Pastor Jack Sara was one of the four main speakers at the 2016 Missionfest Manitoba conference in Winnipeg in early February, with the theme “Advancing the Gospel in the Face of Conflict.” Jack gave a seminar about the situation in the Middle East in general, Christians in the Middle East, and especially Christians in Palestine and the conflict they are facing every day. He also spoke about Bethlehem Bible College’s (BBC) ministry in the Holy Land, and shared how Canadian Christians can help the Palestinian church.

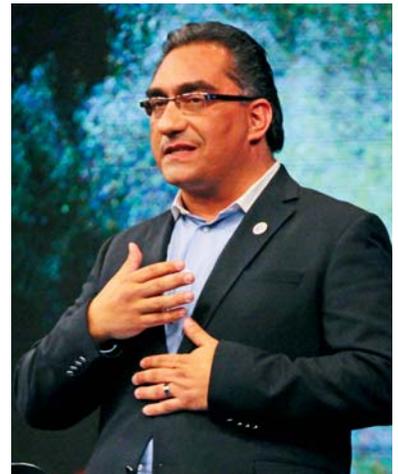
On the second day of the conference, Pastor Jack gave a strong word from the book of Acts. He preached about how God can powerfully use the church during challenging times. “Challenges shouldn’t stop us from doing God’s work. They should give us a push forward to keep ministering to the people that need to hear the gospel the most.”

He encouraged us to look back at the history of our Canadian church; how we had sent many missionaries around the world. He mentioned how it had touched his heart to see on television the new Canadian Prime Minister in the airport welcoming refugees with love and tenderness. Jack added, “I hope that this heart is within the Canadian church also. I hope that we will also see the church welcoming Arab refugees and preaching the message of love among them!”



Jack was blessed to learn on this visit that his alma mater, Gordon-Conwell Seminary’s Centre for the Study of Global Christianity, reports that Palestine is sending more missionaries per capita than any other nation! And BBC is honored to play a role in this exciting news.

In conclusion, Pastor Jack left the Canadian church with three challenges: to “go,” to support and to pray! “...Because God sent us to change the world that we are living in. This is our mandate!”



Dr. Jack Sara

Christ At The Checkpoint 4 Report

By Byron Rempel-Burkholder

Bethlehem Bible College held its fourth Christ at the Checkpoint Conference March 7 to 10, here in the town of Christ's birth. The theme this year was "The Gospel in the Face of Religious Extremism"—a topic that aptly reflects the current context of the Middle East but has special meaning for Palestinian Christians. The number of Christians in the West Bank and Gaza has diminished significantly in the last two decades as the churches face a choked economy and violence between Palestinians and Israelis.

The conference, named to highlight the barriers Israel has erected along the borders and within the occupied territories, brought together over 500 participants from 24 countries. About 80 participants were locals from the West Bank and another 40 from neighbouring Israel.

In plenary sessions, worship times, and intervening meet-the-speaker conversations, delegates wrestled with theological and practical responses to religious violence, whether by Christians, Muslims, or Jews. An impressive array of more than 25 speakers included Fuller Theological Seminary's president, Mark Labberton, who gave daily Bible studies on the Sermon on the Mount.

At least half the speakers were Palestinian or Israel-based theologians and peace activists, including Dr. Munther Isaac, Salim Munayer, Jonathan Kuttub, Yohanna Katanacho, and Jack Sara of BBC, and Jesuit theologian David Neuhaus. Others were visiting professors and church leaders from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the US (including African Americans Regina Henderson and Lisa Sharon Harper, speaking out of the context of the civil rights movement). There were also representatives of Messianic Jewish

communities who are seeking common ground with Palestinian Christians.

More than previous conferences, this one also included voices from outside the mainstream Christian community, including: Muslim theologian Mustafa Abu Sway; American activist and Jewish rabbi, Arik Ascherman; and Lisa Loden, a Messianic Jew from Israel.

Sherri, from Edmonton, came because she wanted to understand first-hand "what was going on here between Israel and Palestine." Meeting Palestinians and hearing their stories "has helped to shed light on why it's so complicated—more complicated than I had imagined." A number of participants were intrigued, even surprised at the conference's consistent emphasis on "peace, nonviolence, humility, and love." John found it "most encouraging" that the Palestinian Christians attending and hosting the conference showed so little spirit of revenge in their biblical teaching and in the stories they shared. "I was really struck by the emphasis on

nonviolence, love of enemy, and the search for a way of peace and not becoming what we hate," added Esther. David, a veteran speaker and author on Christian-Muslim relationships, agreed. He was particularly encouraged by the presence of other Christians who share the desire to be peacemakers.

Further to this, Scott, a pastor, wants to take the Palestinians' hopeful spirit back to his own congregation, which worships in a neighbourhood where there is poverty and violence. "I want to bring encouragement from Palestine that says, 'Don't give up; there is reconciliation.'"

Esther Epp-Tiessen from Canada summed up the resolve that many of the participants expressed at the end of the conference: "Palestinian Christians are getting smaller in number and yet they are a vibrant community with a vibrant faith; they are brothers and sisters in Christ. I want to amplify their voice and share their hope."



Canadian Esther Epp-Tiessen (centre) attended the Christ at the Checkpoint 4 Conference with her friends, Melta and Byron Rempel-Burkholder, BBC volunteers

You can watch videos of the challenging and inspiring Christ At The Checkpoint 4 sessions at: <http://livestream.com/accounts/7454985/events/4916027>

Meet BBC Student Patricia Hashwa

If you take a tour around Bethlehem Bible College on a school day, you will probably notice that 60% of the students are female. If you take a closer look, you'll notice that many of those females are wearing rings. Yes, they are married. And not only married, but many of them also have children; some more than two! Despite these challenges, they still manage to study, work and raise their children.

Patricia Hashwa is a third-year student in the Biblical studies program. This 36-year old student is married to Wael Hashwa from Gaza. She is also a mother to 3 amazing children: Sara, who is 10 years old; Daniel, 6; and Jimmy, 5. Here is her story:

I was born in a believing Christian family and raised in the local Baptist Church in Bethlehem, where I attended Sunday School as well as youth group.

In my adolescent years, I committed my life to the Lord Jesus at a youth conference, made Him Lord and Savior of my life, and obeyed Him in baptism. I went through many experiences, but God was very faithful to me and used me in worship and praise ministry in my church. He also called me to share the Gospel message in small groups to help them grow in their faith to a point where they could go out and evangelize and disciple others.

I studied nursing and worked in this field for two years upon my graduation. Then I got married and moved to Gaza with my husband where we served the Lord in the area of youth ministry in the Baptist Church in Gaza, as well as in the area of married couples and discipleship.

Because of special circumstances, we were able to leave Gaza and move to Bethlehem with our children. Once they were settled in school, I returned to study at Bethlehem Bible College (BBC).

Ministering in the Field of God

I think God had been showing me for years that He wanted me to be part of a discipleship program, but as a teenager and young adult, I wasn't part of a ministry and I didn't have a compelling interest in discipleship. After I got married, however, I began to understand much more, and my hunger for God began to grow. My husband was already in ministry. As I began to help him, it made more and more sense for me to pursue further ministry training.

Now I serve as a volunteer nurse in a poor Palestinian village which is in dire need of medical services. I have also served the Lord in the area of discipleship and evangelism with the "Life of Love" organization in Palestine. When we were in Gaza, I

served the Lord through the Baptist Church as a Sunday School teacher and assisting the young married couples ministry at our church.

Changing lives

Today, a big portion of my ministry looks like this: We go to the villages and we minister to the ladies there by providing Bible-based training for them--and I am seeing changes in their lives! I listen to them sharing about what they have learned from the training and I can see the difference. When we do medical days in the villages, we are able to show the love of Christ to them. This expression of His love and care is also bringing a change in their hearts and lives.

Bethlehem Bible College

For the past 4 years, the desire to study at BBC had been growing in my heart. I knew that I needed seminary training, because it will open doors for me in ministry and make me more effective, especially in the knowledge of the Bible and how to study it.

Attending this college has changed my life in many ways. I have learned so much through my studies at BBC. This has led me to a deeper understanding of the Holy Bible. It has strengthened my relationship with the Lord and has helped me grow on a personal level by giving me greater confidence in myself. All of this has helped me forge new relationships.

And more than that; in the area of ministry, the things I have learned at BBC have helped me share God's word more effectively.

Of course, I'm not saying that it was easy. I faced many different challenges during my studies at the college; especially finding time to teach my children, in addition to my responsibilities as a wife and mother. But through the grace of God, I have been able to manage everything.

Future Plans

I will complete my studies at BBC soon, and I hope to continue to specialize at the post-graduate level in Bible-related studies. My desire is to be able to present God's word more powerfully, based on my knowledge and deeper understanding of the word of God.

A Message to all the strong women out there

If you have a goal, don't let anything in the world to stop you, not even your own children. They will be so proud of you when you accomplish it, and you will teach them that it is possible to reach their own goals! I know it is hard but it's not impossible. If you ask God, He will help you organize your time and work. You will see yourself turning from being a normal girl to a strong and powerful woman!



Patricia Hashwa



New HOPE Outreach missionary to Bethlehem: Yujeong Cho



Yujeong Cho

Yujeong Cho is a Canadian citizen of South Korean descent who has long sensed the call of God to missionary work. She has been accepted to minister in the Holy Land, specifically at Bethlehem Bible College.

Yujeong came to Canada to prepare herself for missionary work. For English language training, she went to Pacific Life

Bible College (PLBC) in Surrey BC and graduated with a BA in Church Ministries in 2003. While at PLBC, she did an internship at First Baptist Church in Vancouver BC, working with internationals for almost three years. After graduation, she was sent out by Vancouver Jesus Agape Church to reach out to internationals in the Greater Vancouver area. Many came to the Lord through this ministry.

After five years of full-time working as an outreach missionary, she felt a need to study further for the future ministry where God would lead her. After much prayer and research, she moved to Otterburne, Manitoba to study at Providence Theological Seminary where she received an MA in Educational Studies in 2012.

She received a job offer from Providence in the summer of 2011 and saw this opportunity as a sign from the Lord that He wanted her to stay at the school for a while. During those five years, she took a course, "Islam and Current Events" with Dr. Nabeel Jabbour. God

spoke to her very clearly through Dr. Jabbour that He was leading her to the land of Palestine. When she asked for advice from Dr. Jabbour about a ministry opportunity, he recommended Bethlehem Bible College.

Please pray for Yujeong Cho as she now makes her third transition...to Bethlehem.

New CFO at HOPE Outreach of Canada: Alan MacDonald

Alan MacDonald has been a friend of several of our HOPE board members for some time.

In December 2014, he retired from the Ontario Civil Service. His education degrees are in French and Accounting and he is still a member in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers, having taught those subjects as well.



Alan MacDonald

We have already seen great improvement in our financial accounting and records with his arrival to help us part-time.

Alan has been to the Holy Land and is very excited to be helping Christian ministries there now. We welcome him to our small but growing team.

PRAYER REQUESTS:



A local pastor, in a city of great spiritual and physical conflict, was approached by a young man named Fadi who asked the pastor if he could help him find a cross to wear. The pastor responded that wearing a cross could endanger his life. Fadi then explained that he had recently followed Jesus and read in the Bible that followers of Jesus are to "take up their cross daily." Fadi felt that his form of obedience was to wear a cross, where the cross is despised. The pastor was humbled by this new believer's willingness to identify with Jesus and to wear a cross, though it was sure to bring him great trouble.

- Pray for Fadi as he follows Jesus and seeks to identify with Him. Ask for protection over his life and that God will make him a powerful witness to many who do not know him.
- Please pray for Musalaha's three upcoming summer camps (in Bethlehem, Nablus and Israel)! Pray as they seek funding for the camps, and for their recruitment efforts among Muslim, Christian and Jewish children.
- Pray for the students and faculty of BBC as they work hard to complete another school year. Pray that the graduates will find significant ministry opportunities to serve the Lord.

Donate securely through our website: www.hopeoutreach.ca. While there you can read much more about our ministry to the Holy Land.



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