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New Website

HOPE Outreach has a new website at our same address:

www.hopeoutreach.ca

Please stop by for a visit.

SAVE THE DATE!

“Christ At The Checkpoint”

Conference for 2018 is scheduled in Bethlehem for May 28 – June 1. A great time of year to visit the Holy Land.

We can cut expenses by sending you this newsletter by e-mail. Please send us your email address.

He is Risen Indeed! A Blessed Easter Season

The resurrection affirmation rang out around the world this Easter: **CHRIST IS RISEN!** That is the basis of our faith and why we follow the resurrected Jesus – even along whatever challenging pathways He may lead us. Prior to Holy Week this year, students and staff at Bethlehem Bible College (BBC) shared the love of the resurrected Jesus with the marginalized in their local communities. The social contacts also brought spiritual renewal.

The BBC Student Council and Mrs. Shireen Hilal, the Dean of Students, arranged a weekly visit to St. Nicholas Elderly Home in adjacent Beit Jala. They spent quality time with the elderly there, prayed with them, talked with them, sang worship songs for them, and brought them gifts. Mother’s Day in Palestine occurred on March 21st. The students went to the elderly home to remind those people that they are not left alone, but loved by them and by Jesus.



BBC Students With Kids From The Community

The students also prepared a small Mother’s Day celebration at the campus for the moms and staff at BBC. They celebrated these hard-working women and gave them flowers as an act of appreciation.

Students also visit two or three families in Bethlehem every Saturday. They choose the “forgotten” poor, and simple families, bringing with them food for the families and gifts for the children.

A new initiative for the students is going to the high schools in Bethlehem, to talk to the students there about BBC and encourage them to be part of our

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Bethlehem Encounter

by Beverley Timgren

As a representative of HOPE Outreach of Canada, I have served at Bethlehem Bible College (BBC) over the past six years and have experienced first-hand the significant ministry and impact of the College. As a volunteer teacher in both the academic and community English programs, I was also able to help in other ways as needed. Having lived in the Middle East for over 30 years, responsible primarily for a dental health ministry, I was familiar with BBC and knew some of the staff and faculty. However, it was my participation in BBC's first Christ at the Checkpoint conference in 2010 that connected me to HOPE Outreach of Canada and, in turn, led to a commitment to serve at the school. It was a perfect fit.

It is because of Dr. Bishara Awad's vision and faithfulness that BBC exists today and has trained so many Palestinian Christians who currently serve in local churches and ministries (including some of the staff and faculty members of BBC). As



President Emeritus, he continues to speak on behalf of the College and is very involved in the community. I have also had the privilege of seeing the College continue to develop under the leadership of Dr. Jack Sara. I knew Jack as the pastor of the Jerusalem Alliance Church, and while volunteering at BBC during this transition period, I attended his installation as President. Jack is a graduate of BBC, and his story bears witness to what the Lord can do in the lives of Palestinians.

The strength of the College lies in its dedicated and capable local staff

and faculty. BBC offers programs for Palestinian students: BA in Biblical Studies, MA in Christian Leadership, and diploma programs in mass media and tour guiding. Last year an MA in Peace Studies was launched that included both Palestinian and international students as well as a new online learning initiative that allows Arabic speaking students globally to study in the Biblical Studies program. BBC also hosts special events including lectures and conferences. The Shepherd Society, staffed by local social workers, continues to aid the poor and needy in the Bethlehem district with emergency assistance,

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big family. They have visited more than 20 schools so far, and plan to continue in the coming months. Please keep them in your prayers, as they will also reach out to the local churches in Bethlehem of different denominations.

We thank God for the enthusiastic students and amazing Dean of Students, who are working alongside each other, to build themselves up spiritually, and to reach out to the outside community. Your continued support enables them to make a difference.



Friendship Evangelism Begins Here

family sponsorships, temporary employment projects and funds for small business initiatives, and also leads teams to minister to refugees in Jordan. BBC stands as a beacon of light in Bethlehem and beyond.

One way I have tried to share my experiences is by leading encounter trips to Israel – Palestine. I have organized and led three such trips so far and am planning the next one October 27 to November 12 of this year. The trip allows you to interact with local people (Christian, Muslim, Jewish) who are impacting their communities through projects that address issues of peace, justice, reconciliation, and care for the marginalized, and is an excellent opportunity to see Bethlehem Bible College and Musalaha in action (HOPE Outreach of Canada's ministry partners). Participation supports the Bible College and local ministries; informs you of prayer concerns; encourages the people you meet; enhances understanding of the Bible, Jesus' ministry and the local church (the living stones); helps you to understand the challenges of life in this troubled land.

Highlights include:

- Cook and savour a traditional Palestinian meal with inspiring women in one of Bethlehem's refugee camps.

- Explore biblical and historical sites in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Hebron, Nazareth and the Galilee.
- Help a Palestinian family with their olive harvest.
- Gain biblical, historical and cultural insights into the Palestinian/Israeli conflict through interactive sessions with faculty members of Bethlehem Bible College.
- Sing and play with the special needs children who reside at the House of Hope.
- Float on the Dead Sea and sail on the Sea of Galilee.
- Visit Yad Vashem (Holocaust museum) and converse with Palestinian Christian and Messianic Jewish staff working for reconciliation with Musalaha.

And much, much more! Participants will be stretched, challenged, inspired, and forever changed as you encounter Jesus and encourage His living stones in this holy yet troubled land. Estimated cost is \$3,600 (based on 10 - 12 participants). For more information, a detailed itinerary, or an application form, please contact Beverley Timgren at btimgren@compuserve.com or Paul Estabrooks at office@hopeoutreach.ca



PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Join in prayer with Arab and Israeli Christians on Pentecost, June 4th, as they meet in Nazareth for the GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER observed around the world.
- Pray for the faculty, staff and students at Bethlehem Bible College as they complete the last lap of the current school year.
- Pray for Musalaha and their many facets of reconciliation programs including youth and women in the Holy Land.
- Pray that the right 12 people will join our Bethlehem Encounter in October.



- Pray that more student/volunteers will go to BBC like Canadian, Walter Brynjolfson (pictured above).

After completing courses for the Master of Arts degree in Peace Studies, Walter is now using his on-line marketing experience to help build an e-commerce platform for BBC support. Walter says studying and working at BBC has been a great way for him to understand how people can live out their faith in a way that speaks on behalf of the oppressed and calls for justice.



New Friends On The Journey

This year, Musalaha used their Annual Women's Conference to introduce as many new women as possible to the need for reconciliation between Jewish and Palestinian believers. They proposed an idea to the experienced participants to bring a friend, acquaintance, and ideally someone younger than them, so that they could pass on hope to the next generation.

The women did not disappoint! Twenty brought a friend, and in some cases, two. For the first time, a Musalaha women's event had equal numbers of participants from different cultures and there was a waiting list to attend. Recruitment is usually a challenge. This time, however, with 80 women registered, they had to tell some that there was no more room at the inn.

They began with simple questions: Have you had contact with any followers of Jesus from the "other" side? In your congregation or church, do you normally worship with the "other"?

The group answered with a resounding no. There is no contact on a daily basis, no relationships, no visiting for holidays or weekends. They are almost surgically removed one from the other, even though they may live in the same city, never mind being unable to cross the checkpoints to enter or leave the Palestinian Authority.

Acknowledging this, they asked the participants to arrange themselves at tables by the color of their name tags. They were asked to describe how each of them physically arrived at the conference that day. Of course, some had simple answers like, "I got in my car, drove, parked." The learning came when others described traveling four hours on a bus or crossing a checkpoint and having to remove their shoes on a cold January day.



Musalaha Ladies

The weekend continued with teachings about God reconciling us to Himself (symbolized in the downward portion of the cross) and our responsibility to reconcile with each other (symbolized in the horizontal portion of the cross). Two of the participants who had been trained to teach this curriculum lead the group to an understanding of God's desire for each of us to have a ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

And the weekend ended with a dramatic interpretation of the story of the Good Samaritan. They discussed how the world beats us down daily, as this man was beaten. It is up to us, as family in the Kingdom of God, to sacrifice our time, money and comfort to help each other heal. This is the Kingdom of God. This is the ministry of Musalaha.

Donate securely through our new website: www.hopeoutreach.ca. While there you can read more about our ministry to the Holy Land. Be sure to see the excellent video about the Holy Land Christians by Greg Musselman on the HOME page



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