



CHURCH OF NORWAY

The Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL)

Bishop Sani Ibrahim Azar

Date: 26.04.2025

Our ref: 24/02710-11

Your ref:

Greeting from the Church of Norway

Dear bishop, dear sisters and brothers.

Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

We are these days gathered at our General Synod in Trondheim. We have heard the cry from our sister-church in the Holy Land. It has been another Easter amid a brutal and devastating war. You have been facing 18 months of violence and destruction, the situation in your land is as dark as it has ever been, as you have told us. We have heard the cry from Gaza, from thousands of children and civilians. We have heard that the Al Ahli Anglican Hospital in Gaza, supported by our Lutheran community, again has been bombed. We have heard about killings and severe hardships also on the West Bank. We have also seen heavy restrictions on the Christian Easter Celebration even in Jerusalem. We are indeed worried about the continued existence of the Christian presence in The Holy Land.

From The Church of Norway we condemn this war and all this hardship you are facing as a consequence. We continue to pray for you, for your church, and for all Palestinians and Israeli citizens. We must in our time insist on safety and human dignity for ALL, Christians, Jews and Muslims, Palestinians and Israelis. We insist on humanitarian access and urge the fighting parties in Gaza, and all nations, to respect the rule of law and work tirelessly on implementing the rulings of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) rulings and opinions. This war must end! As you and ELCJHL has made clear so many times, justice and peace must be kept together, interlinked as they are. Thank you for this strong reminder. The Easter Story encourages us to keep the steadfastness (sumud) and together pray and work for a just peace and a solution for the future. Christ is risen!

Our strong faith in the risen Christ is what unite and empower us. In the Opening Service at our Synod we read from John 14, 1-4:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will

come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Trondheim, 26th of April 2026,

Yours sincerely

Olav Fykse Tveit
Presiding Bishop

Harald Hegstad
Moderator National
Council

Kristine Sandmæl
Moderator Council on
Ecumenical and
International Relations

This document is electronically approved.