

BEIT JALA JOURNAL



John Setterlund, missionary
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Come to Visit!

In case you haven't already detected it in previous messages, my invitation goes out to all readers: Why not make plans to visit the holy land! The fall weather is pleasant, the local situation is calm, connections are good, and prices are moderate. Accommodations at our guest house are comfortable and convenient, and the staff and I can arrange an itinerary to suit your interests and wishes. ■

Losing Ground

A 160-page study, "The Wall", was published earlier this year by the International Peace and Cooperation Center. It documents the on-going confiscation of Palestinian land:

"The Wall is the saddest chapter in the continuing saga of the Israeli land grab. The wall impacts Palestinians most directly, it is important to point out, because it is being built on Palestinian land."

More than 100,000 acres of previously confiscated settlement land lie to the west of (*i.e.*, outside) the wall, and another 80,000 acres of West Bank village land is partially or completely surrounded, on one side by the wall and on the other by a secondary barrier, and usually not made accessible to its owners. These areas alone total 12.4% of the entire West Bank. Additional Palestinian lands have been approved for future confiscation by Israel's government. ■

American Pastor

It was a pleasure to welcome Rev. Mark K. Holman, an ELCA missionary, to serve as the new pastor of the English-speaking Lutheran congregation in Jerusalem, and also his wife Marcia, who will work with the Lutheran schools in Palestine.

They were installed on Sept. 16 by the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, Dr. Munib Younan.



Yasser Arafat, the influential and controversial leader of modern Palestine, is buried at the government compound in Ramallah.

Bishop Munib preached an especially fine sermon, reminding the church and its ministers that we are called not to be served, but to serve, and that our Christian service is to be done together in harmony, always witnessing to the world our love for God by how we love one another and serve all humanity.

The Holmans fill the vacancy left by Ann and Russ Siler, who completed their 4-year term in June and have returned to the USA. ■

FEDEX

In August I shipped a package from California to Jerusalem via FedEx at what I thought was an exorbitant price. Five weeks later it was delivered, with a huge tariff added by the Israeli government. Beware! ■

Music Students

From the beginning, one of my assignments has been to teach music, specifically organ and piano. A year later I understand some of the frustrations of any teacher.

For one thing, notated music is a foreign concept in Arab culture, so it is like a whole new language. Happily, a few of the children are indeed learning to read it.

Like students of music everywhere, these folks find little time to practice their pieces, especially since practicing means spending time away from their friends. Showing up for their 30-minute lesson each week is also difficult for some.

I hope that the general love of music and the potential I see will develop into real keyboard skills, and that there might be a musical renaissance in Beit Jala. ■