

# BEIT JALA JOURNAL



John Setterlund, missionary

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## Two New Pastors

The joyful and long-awaited celebration of Ordination was overcast by an ominous strike in the Arab sections of Jerusalem, including the Christian Quarter, where the festival service took place. Shops and offices were closed in protest of the recent violence in the Gaza strip, and the usually busy markets empty. Tourists wandered aimlessly through the few sites that were open.

The Ordination, nevertheless, proceeded on March 2 as planned. In his commissioning address, Bishop Munib Younan, spoke of the cross that is often laid on ministers of the church, and he encouraged the candidates to faithful service. Responding with their commitment, Imad Haddad and Saliba Rishmawi were named pastors of the church. Saliba will soon be installed as associate pastor of the Beit Jala congregation.



The Lutheran church in Jerusalem hosted an ecumenical service for the ordination of two new pastors.



Lutheran bishop Munib Younan and newly installed pastor Imad Haddad

Imad's installation on March 9 at the Lutheran church in Beit Sahour made him the first ordained pastor of that congregation. Until now, they have been served by a lay-evangelist. In addition to the local congregation and ecumenical visitors from Jerusalem, a delegation of Swedish pastors and their bishop was present for the installation. ■

## Radio Program

It was a pleasure to be interviewed on "Keepin' the Faith" last Sunday. Thank you to host Steve Shoemaker and those who called in with interesting questions. It will be archived at [www.will.uiuc.edu](http://www.will.uiuc.edu) ■

## Finding Good Information

To get a broad and balanced understanding of the situation in the Middle East is not a simple matter. The news media naturally are biased in favor of their own self-interests. Even the transmission of news from the Arab networks, when translated into English, is modified by western sensibilities. Moreover, reporting in the USA is selective—ironically, each faction thinks, in favor of the opponent.

I have found the Ma'an News Agency ([\[maannews.net/en\]\(http://www.maannews.net/en\)\) to be a very helpful supplement to NPR and BBC, all of which are available in the internet. A recent video vividly shows past conflicts and Israel's claims of legitimacy \(\[www.terrorism-awareness.org/what-really-happened\]\(http://www.terrorism-awareness.org/what-really-happened\)\). The Palestinian appeal is less to history, but more to the devastation caused by the current Israeli occupation.](http://www.</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

All this underscores my standing invitation: Come and see the situation for yourself. ■

## Legal Papers

It was encouraging to hear that two members of the boarding-home community have received Palestinian ID documentation. Now, as "legal citizens", one of the teen-age boys of our home and the wife of one of the adult educators can apply for passports and for Israeli permits to move about the country. ■

## IN MEMORIAM

Our spirits were dampened last month, when word came of the death of one of our senior members: Michael Zabaneh, 83. He had served as our church organist for many years, and was my Arabic language instructor.

As a young man driven out of Israel in 1948, Zabaneh settled in Bethlehem. He studied in Germany, and taught religion and German language. It seems that anyone above the age of 20, who attended the Lutheran school in Beit Jala, fondly remembers him as a teacher.

After a minor fall in November, Michael and his wife Amira were recuperating at their daughter's home in Jordan. There he succumbed to a stroke. ■