



March 4, 2026

*Dear sisters and brothers near and far*

*Dear friends*

*Dear colleagues*

*I greet you from the city of peace Bethlehem, from the city of the shepherds Beit sahour, hoping and praying that you, your families and everything relates to you is doing well.*

*Today, I send you this email to ask you to hold us and this region in your prayers. To shout out loud: just peace has to prevail. Peace without justice and equality is like a green, beautiful tree bearing no fruits.*

*The Middle East is facing a serious threat and crisis. We ask you to stand for Peace and send your governments letters to put pressure on the decision makers to stop this war and go into negotiations. Everyone has to respect the international laws. No one is above the law. If it happens once it will happen all the time, then we will live in a wilderness governed by violence, threat and crisis. Today I send you this message to tell you that the situation is not easy and we hope and pray that it will not stay for long.*

*Members of Christmas, Lutheran Church and Beit sahour Lutheran Church are OK, but we are living under lots of fear and stress. The reason is the unclear vision of the coming future. Yet we remain thankful, for we recognize and believe that the incarnated peace, hope, faith and Love (was) born here in Bethlehem, in the Holy Land. This faith is what we grew up with. Therefore, we must protect it,*

*keep it, and save it for ourselves, for our coming generations, to be able to continue sharing it with the whole world*

*may God bless you all.*

*Rev. Ashraf K. Tannous*

*Pastor of Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem*

*Pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Beit Sahour*

*Chief Justice of the ELCJHL Ecclesiastical Court*