



AFEDJ

American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

# Bearing Witness

A Journey with Holy Land Christians

SESSION 2:

## Healing

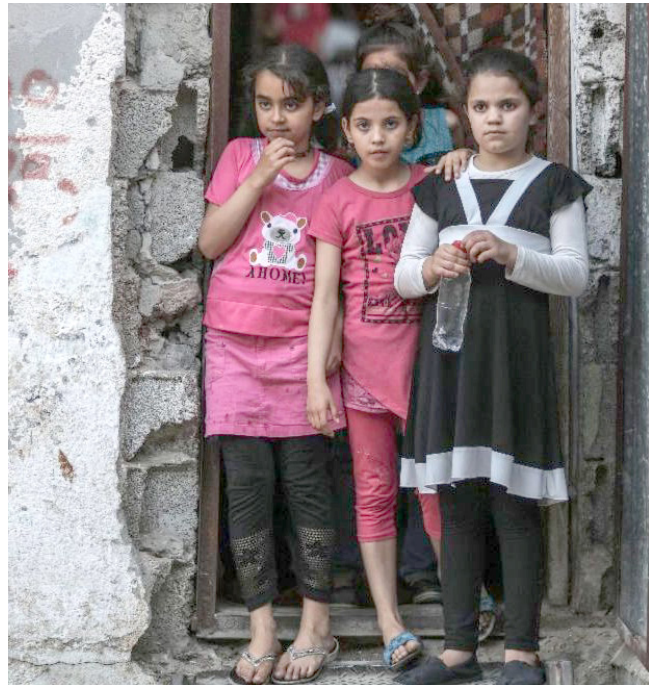
PARTICIPANT SESSION GUIDE

# Healing

## Before the Session

### Session 2 Background

Today's Christians engaged in healing ministries in the Diocese of Jerusalem follow Jesus' example by providing compassionate and respectful medical care to all people in the Holy Land, regardless of religion, ethnicity, or ability to pay for services. Jesus drew crowds because people were attracted to the incarnation of love, acceptance, and dignity he demonstrated just as they are drawn to the care provided at Diocese of Jerusalem hospitals. St. Luke's Hospital in the northern West Bank city of Nablus and Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City are the only Christian hospitals in the West Bank and Gaza. In both Nablus and Gaza, the Christian community is tiny and shrinking. The hospitals serve, almost exclusively, indigent Palestinian Muslim families, who seek out these hospitals for the expert care they receive and because they are treated with dignity and respect.



### Pre-Work

These *Bearing Witness* documents will give you background information as you prepare to attend Session 2. You should set aside thirty minutes to an hour prior to the session to read these materials.

#### PDF

- GETTING TO KNOW THE HOLY LAND: **Gaza**
- EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM MINISTRIES: **Hospitals**

## SESSION OPENING

### Opening Prayer

*God, Son, and Holy Spirit, meet us in this space, whatever space we find ourselves in. Help us to learn more about who you are through Holy Scripture and the people of our Holy Land. Help us to see your image in the stories we will encounter through Bearing Witness. Help us to sympathize, grow, and lean into their stories. Give us wisdom and gentleness with ourselves as we witness those who yearn for healing in a broken land. In your name we pray, Amen.*



**JESUS' MINISTRY****Scripture Study** Luke 8:43-48

<sup>43</sup> Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians, no one could cure her. <sup>44</sup> She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. <sup>45</sup> Then Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you." <sup>46</sup> But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me." <sup>47</sup> When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. <sup>48</sup> He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

**Video Gospel Reflection:**  
**Bishop Anne Hodges Copple,**  
**Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina (retired)**  
**and AFEDJ Trustee**

**Reflect**

- What are the forces that keep us from being healed today?
- What does it mean for you to be seen and heard by someone else when you are in need?

**THE REALITIES OF LIFE IN GAZA****Video Life in Gaza**

Living conditions for the more than 2 million Palestinians living in the tiny Gaza Strip are appalling. Gaza has been described as an "open-air prison." Since 2007, when the militant Hamas party was elected to power, Gaza has been under a land, sea and air blockade imposed by Israel. The threat of violence and war is ever present. Years of conflict and the

blockade have left 80% of the population dependent on humanitarian assistance to survive. Ninety-five percent of Gazans don't have access to clean water, and there is an ongoing power shortage which impacts essential services like health, water, and sanitation. Almost half of Gaza's people do not have enough food, around 35% of young children are anemic and many children suffer from stunted growth due to malnutrition. The poorest families in Gaza depend on Ahli Arab Hospital's ministry of mercy for free quality healthcare and medical services.

**Reflect**

- What surprises you?
- What gives you pause?
- What are the forces working against the people of Gaza?

**THE CHRISTIAN WITNESS OF AHLI ARAB HOSPITAL****Video Christian Witness, Ahli Arab Hospital**

Overcoming obstacles on many fronts is a daily routine for the leaders of Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City. Recent years have offered up some particularly daunting challenges including violent clashes at the border and war with Israel, the effects of U.S. cuts in aid to the U.N. agency that serves Palestinian refugees and the continued degradation of infrastructure and living conditions for most Gazans. This video will show how the leaders and medical staff of Ahli Arab Hospital work with dedication to help their patients cope with appalling living conditions, including widespread water contamination, food insecurity, psycho-social trauma from poverty and war, limited medical supplies, the lack of fuel for heating and cooking, and much more.

**Reflect**

- How are the Diocese of Jerusalem's hospitals and medical institutions like the hem of Christ to those who need healing?
- Where do I see God at work in this hospital?

**OUR INVITATION****Video Engaging with the Diocese of Jerusalem**

Hear how St. John's Episcopal Church Norwood in Chevy Chase, MD has responded to the needs of St. Luke's Hospital in the West Bank by working with AFEDJ.

**Reflect**

- What is calling to you?
- How can I (or my church) respond to the challenges and needs that medical institutions face in bringing health and healing to those who cannot access or afford it (in my local community or in the Holy Land)?

**CLOSING PRAYER**

*Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*

(BCP p. 826)

## Resources For Further Study

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These links and resources may help you learn more about life in Gaza and the West Bank as well as the healing ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

### Video, Graphics, and Articles **Palestine Divided**

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**Palestine Divided** is a rich website from the news organization Aljezeera. It provides videos, maps, graphs and articles describing life for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Covers 1947-2014. It is sometimes confusing to navigate, but the content is relatively balanced and deeply informative.

<https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/PalestineRemix/palestine-divided.html#/27>

### PREPARE FOR SESSION 3 **Teaching**

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**Review for the next session:**

#### PDF

- GETTING TO KNOW THE HOLY LAND: **The West Bank and Ramallah**
- EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM MINISTRIES: **Teaching**
- PARTICIPANT SESSION GUIDE: **Session 3: Teaching**

#### Article **Israel Tampers with Palestinian Education in Occupied East Jerusalem**

by Najla M. Shahwan (Turkey's Daily Sahba, 8/11/22)

<https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/israel-tampers-with-palestinian-education-in-occupied-east-jerusalem>

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