

Conference Bethlehem Partnership Event, November 15

The Conference wide Bethlehem Partnership Event scheduled for November 15 has been cancelled. However the Bethlehem Partnership Working Group will continue to provide opportunities for pastors and churches to learn about and support the work of the church in Bethlehem.

Consider sharing the following programs and resources with your church:

*Invite members of the working group (see names below) to come to your church for a conversation about this partnership and its mission. Members can provide a presentation about the Bright Stars of Bethlehem organization and the various programs offered by our partners in Bethlehem.

*Read more about this ministry at www.Brightstarsbethlehem.org

*Consider using the Advent devotional, *The Bright Star of Bethlehem*, scripture reflections by members of Bright Stars of Bethlehem. These daily devotions offer insight into the challenges and hopes of the people who are living in the "little town of Bethlehem" today. Copies are available from Bonnie Van Overbeke.

*Read one of the books written by Rev. Mitri Raheb, former pastor of Christmas Lutheran Church and founder of Dar al Kalima Consortium, the educational arm of this ministry.

Faith in the Face of Empire, looks at how people of faith have lived out their faith with hope no matter the realities or rulers of the day.

The Cross in Context, written by Rev. Raheb and Suzanne Watts Henderson, explores the meaning of the crucifixion in light of both the first and twenty first century Palestinian Christians.

*Contact Bonnie Van Overbeke for information about our next trip to the Holy Land, which is planned for 2019. On these trips we visit traditional holy and historical sites, worship with the congregation at Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, and meet with people and organizations in both Israel and Palestine who are working for justice and peace.

Members of the Bethlehem Partnership Working Group are:

Rev. Bonnie Van Overbeke, chair (email at bonnievano@aol.com)

Nancy Baumgardner, SW Fitchburg Memorial

Rev. Phil Haslanger, SW Fitchburg Memorial

Ted Peterson, SW Fitchburg Memorial

Merry Spangler, SW Fitchburg Memorial

Rev. Karla Schmidt, SW The Crossing Campus Ministry

Deb Burich, NE First Congregational UCC Appleton

Rev. James Schleif, SE St. John's UCC Slinger

Emma Ledbetter, NW First Congregational UCC LaCrosse