



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

January 14, 2016

Dear Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb,

On behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), I congratulate you on being named a co-recipient of the 2015 Olof Palme Prize for your “courageous and indefatigable fight against occupation and violence, and for a future Middle East characterized by peaceful coexistence and equality for all.” At a time when Jerusalem and the West Bank are experiencing a sustained period of heightened tensions, and when Bethlehem and Beit Jala are sites of random attacks and violence, you and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) have been singled out for your constant call for hope against fear and for peace with justice for all who live in the land we call Holy.

I learned that the Olof Palme Memorial Fund for International Understanding and Common Security was established by Olof Palme’s family and by the Swedish Social Democratic Party to honor the memory of this Prime Minister who was assassinated, to the shock of Sweden and the international community, in 1986. Palme was a renowned international figure, known for his support of liberation movements and his strong pacifist stance.

This award gives honor to you for your scholarship and activism and to the ELCJHL for its deep commitment to advocating for an independent Palestine and secure Israel co-existing with peace and equality for all. We in the ELCA are honored to be a close companion to the ELCJHL, working and praying with you for peace in your homeland in our time. May God make it so.

God’s blessings,

Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Cc: The Rt. Rev. Dr. Munib Younan, Bishop, ELCJHL
The Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, Executive Director, Global Mission, ELCA
The Rev. Cindy Halmarson, Area Program Director for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Global Mission, ELCA