



BETHLEHEM
BIBLE COLLEGE
كلية بيت لحم للكتاب المقدس



2018

A YEAR OF IMPACT

Bethlehem Bible College is bringing quality education and training to students who go through deep and powerful transformation for the purpose of serving the Lord and others.

The College is expanding and is relying on the use of information technology to provide existing dynamic programs to the whole Arab world. It is indeed a privilege to see what God is doing in the Palestinian Church and to recognize BethBC's vital role in empowering the Christians of the Holy Land and now the world.

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Message from the President

When we head into the final part of the year, we are reflecting on where we were and where we are going. Here at Bethlehem Bible College, we're always excited to share with you the events of the past year, as well as celebrate new accomplishments and events. Our students continue to work hard, and we are pleased with the effort and diligence of our staff and faculty.

This year's Annual Report is replete with stories of our students and their ministry and service activities. You'll also find important events like our 5th annual Global Leadership Summit, Christ at the Checkpoint (both in Bethlehem and for the first time in the United States), and the 11th issue of 'A Pot in His Hand' our women's magazine. It is a blessing to see our outreach expand from the little town of Bethlehem to the world, becoming one big international family. Bethlehem Bible College remains steadfast in being the salt and light of the land!

From the board members to the students, we are so grateful for another year of serving the Lord in our country. Through the challenges and difficulties, Jesus is faithful, and we are committed to remaining faithful to our Lord. We trust that you will enjoy the content of our Annual Report, and join with us in committing the upcoming year to the Lord as we enter 2019.

Rev. Dr. Jack Sara

President of Bethlehem Bible College



Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees meeting was held twice during the year 2018, in May and in October. Attending the meetings were Chairman of the Board, Tanas Alqassis, the board members and the College's Strategic Leadership Team. As usual, the Heads of Departments submitted their reports and discussed them during these meeting for guidance in planning, decision making and evaluation.

As a result of the strategic planning process which began at the beginning of the year, a new organizational structure was designed, classifying that under the umbrella of Bethlehem Bible College there are two main functions: the first one is the Academic Department and the second is the Community Outreach Department, which encompasses the Shepherd Society, the Women's Ministries, New Vision Media Centre, and the Community Training Department. The leadership believes that this new change will be of benefit to the future of the College. We pray for guidance through these new changes.

Dr. Bishara Awad Honored by MEATE

During the meeting of The Middle East Association for Theological Education (MEATE) in Egypt passed September, the Committee Members honored Dr. Bishara Awad, founder of BethBC, for serving as the association's Chairman for 8 years. They also elected new Executive Committee members; Rev. Jack Sara, the President of BethBC, was elected to be a member of the Committee, and Grace Al Zoughbi, Head of the BA Department of BethBC, was elected to be on the accreditation committee.

MEATE was founded in Cyprus in 1992 in order to strengthen the Church in the Middle East and North Africa by providing fellowship, networking, quality assurance, and professional services for evangelical higher educational institutions located in the region. MEATE seeks to serve both theological schools and churches in the region. As of January 2017, seventeen of these institutions have become members of MEATE. Bethlehem Bible College is a member of MEATE, and our Biblical Studies certificate is accredited by it as well.

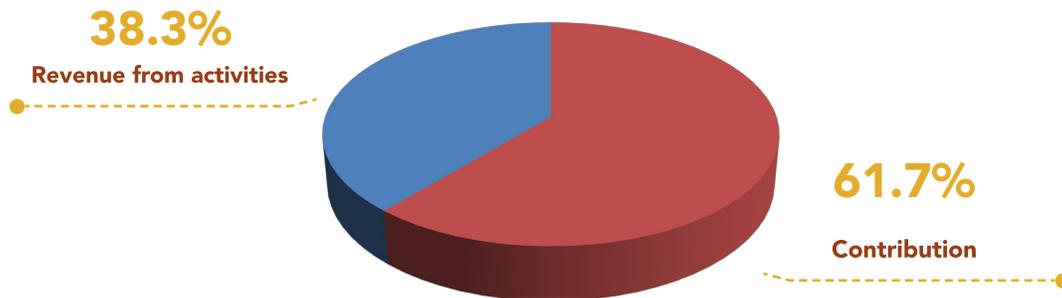
Meet Our Newest Senior Leadership Team Member: Jihan Twemeh Nazzal

This past April, God blessed us with a new senior leadership member as the Director of Administration, the Financial Manager, and the Human Resources Manager. Jihan Twemeh Nazzal is our newest addition to the College. Jihan got her BA degree in Business Administration from Bethlehem University, and has an MA degree from the University of Maryland (USA) in Human Development. Now she is preparing her PhD in Human Development from the University of Maryland as well. Jihan worked for 20 years in the YMCA in Palestine. While she held several different positions, her last position was the Head of Human Resources. Jihan already has big plans for the College; developing and investing in employees.

Jihan said: *"Bethlehem Bible College has a good reputation internationally and locally, and it has an amazing mission. It is very important for me to contribute to the mission of the place I work in. I don't fit in a bank, for example, or in a for-profit organization. I want to be part of the bigger vision and mission of the organization I work in!"*

Financial Overview 2018

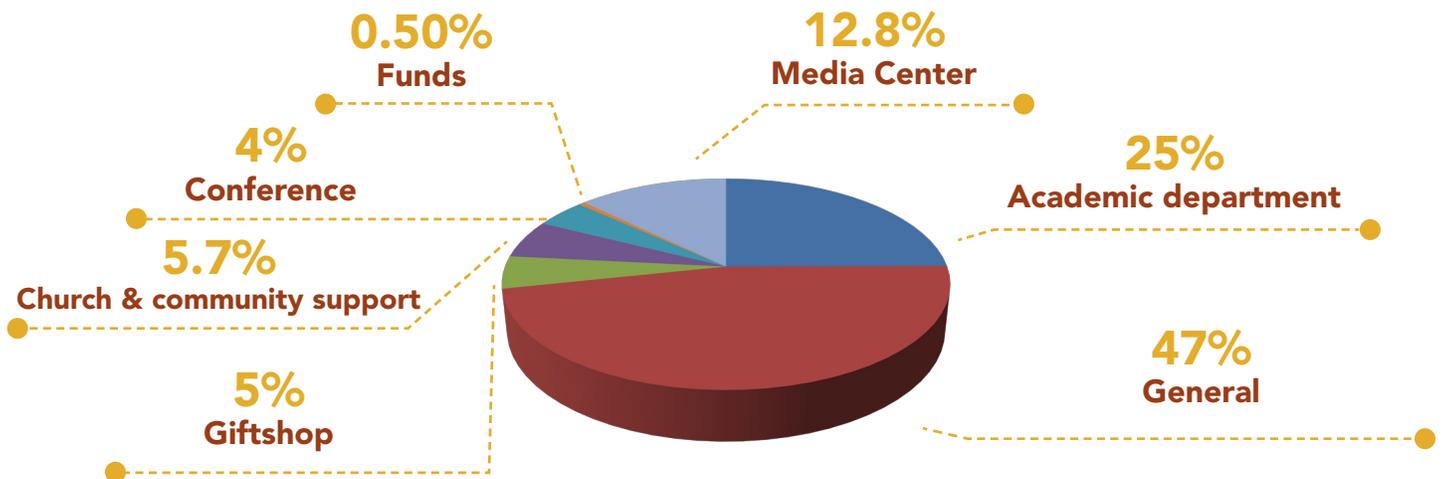
Source of Funds



\$1,714,131
Total Income

\$1,707,222
Total Expenses

Program Services Expense, by Cost Center



Bethlehem Bible College's source of funding is mainly from foreign contributions (61.7%). The locally generated income constitutes 38.3% of its total income and comes from students' tuitions, production services, Star Bazaar gift shop, guesthouse, dining services, community programs and conferences.

Sources of contributions can further be classified as:

- **U.S: 65%** **International: 35%**
- **Foundations: 52%, Churches 21%, Individuals 26%, Businesses 1%**

BethBC's expenses are accounted for by cost centers. General costs constitute the largest portion of expenses (47%). It includes overhead costs, utilities, staff salaries, depreciation, and other general expenses. Academic related costs make up the second largest portion of expenses (25%) and includes costs such as faculty salaries, scholarships, students activities, books, accreditation fees and more. The media production center accounts for 12.8% of expenses. This includes mainly production costs and staff salaries for that department. The rest of the 15.2% are costs from specific funds, conferences, and community outreach programs such as the women's ministry & magazine, youth ministry, and church planting.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

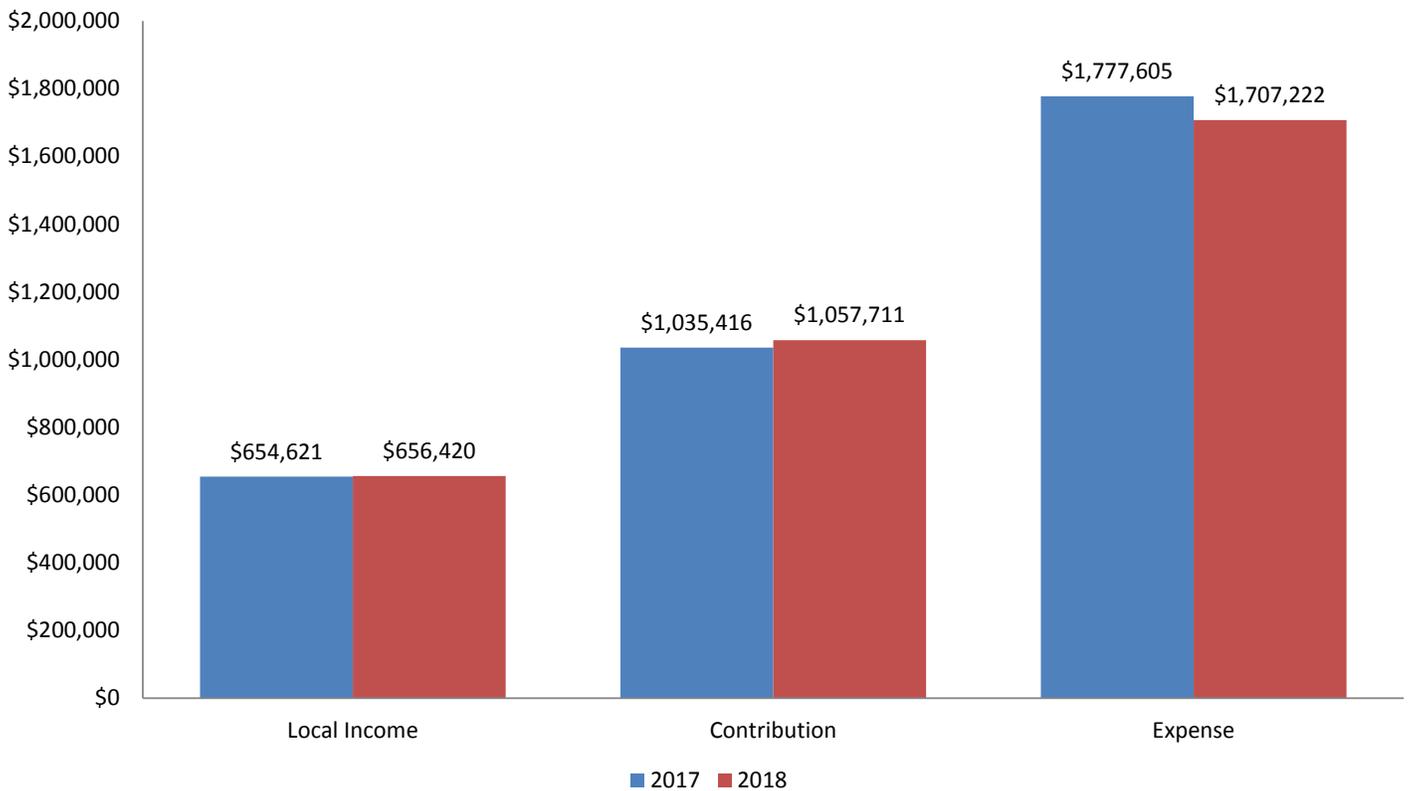
Statement of Financial Position 2018

Assets	\$	4,638,990
Liabilities		657,908
Net Assets		3,981,082
Total liabilities & net assets	\$	4,638,990

Statement of Activities 2018

Income	\$	1,714,131
Expenses		1,707,222
Net Income	\$	6,909

Yearly Income & Expense Comparison

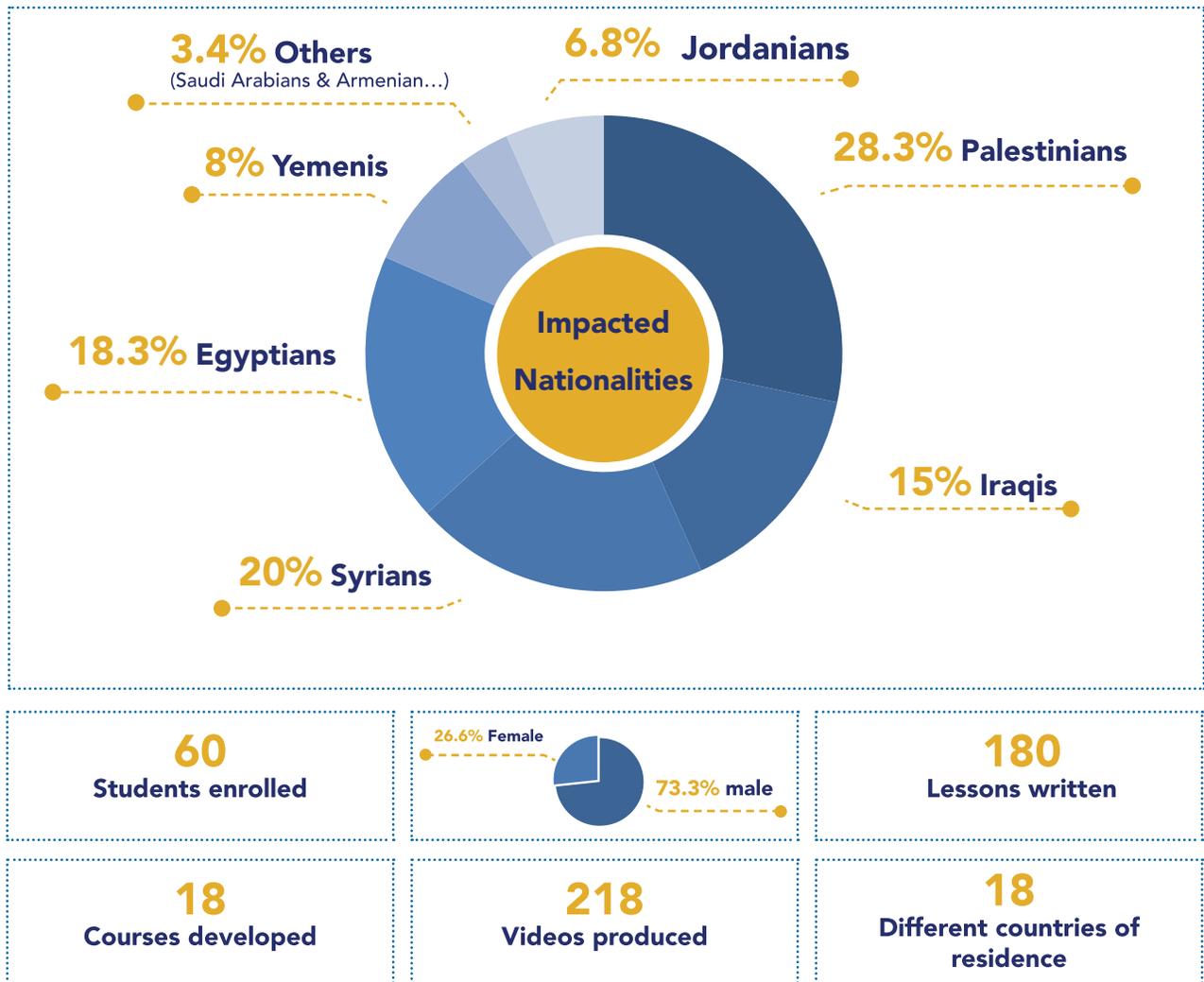


- Foreign contributions increased 2.2% in 2018 over 2017.
- Local income increased by 0.3%.
- Expenses decreased by 3.8% due to adopting cost reduction methods.
- Net income increased from a loss in 2017 to a small profit of \$6,909 in 2018.

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS

E-LEARNING

2nd Year After Launch



Three years ago, Bethlehem Bible College initiated its Online Diploma in Biblical Studies with Arab students living all around the world. By the end of 2018, which marks the second year after its launch, we were able to recruit 60 students (the infographic above shows demographics and course information). The program is fully online and has been successful so far in supporting believers with an effective academic approach, transformed lives, and students equipped to serve the Lord in their own communities.

From Grace al-Zoughbi Arteen (lecturer): "Although I have never met her in person, I deeply love Amal, a young Egyptian student that recently joined the program. She suffers from muscle atrophy due to a herniated disc. As a result, she struggles daily with severe physical challenges and constant pain and has very limited movement. (Her healing would require an operation that would cost tens of thousands of dollars). Amal lives in Upper Egypt where local people have to toil and labor for their daily bread.

"Amal's sister, who had the same physical problems as Amal, passed away recently, Amal continues to hold on to her faith and finds comfort and peace from the Lord.

I am amazed at the testimony of this young believer. She lives for the Lord and He has answered her prayers in opening the door for her to pursue this online degree through Bethlehem Bible College. Amal dreams not only of a diploma in Biblical Studies, but also a Bachelor's degree. Because Amal can only access her coursework through her phone, a laptop from BethBC has been allocated to her to facilitate her studies. 'I love watching your online classes, Ms. Grace!' she often tells me."

Below is some of her poetry translated to English:

*Lord, I rejoice in you
You are the reason for my joy
When I am sad, I find you close
Your hands wiping my tears
I am attached to you, Lord, beyond words
It feels like I am in heaven day and night when I am in your presence
Regardless of my pain and suffering
When I call out you
You reach out to me
Even in the silence without words
You come and stretch your hand out to me
I thank you for your love to me
My years are between your hands
I promise you I will always be yours*

Amal has this great opportunity to share her Arabic poetry and songs on social media and certain local TV stations where many people are encouraged and blessed by her short Christian writings.

TOUR GUIDE PROGRAM

BethBC's Tour Guide Program is a multi-disciplinary program that focuses on a wide range of topics: history, geography, nature, and much more. The tour guide program also focuses on the Bible and its connection to all the sites, adding these facts and spiritual narrative to the land. We host visiting and international professors as well, like Peter Walker, with 25 years of experience working in the field of tour guiding, who shared his personal insight on how to excel in guiding and explain the religious stories at a number of sites such as Bethlehem, Jerusalem and the Galilee. This serves to enrich the students' knowledge and experience.

To prepare the students for the profession of tour guiding at the highest level, the Tour Guide Program at BethBC organizes field trips and classroom lectures. Most recently, the group traveled to the northern West Bank and visited the cities of Jenin, Nablus and Ramallah. These field trips are essential to the program and facilitate greater learning and ability to transfer classroom knowledge into real-world scenarios on the ground. One student said, *"Not only are we able to see the sites, but our instructors and guest speakers challenge us to guide differently. They implore us to be prepared to speak about the context of the site holistically, including other aspects of modern-day elements that the audience may have questions about. They're challenging us to think critically and have an open mind to whatever may be asked about a place we are visiting."*

GAZA STUDY CENTER REPORT

The Gaza Study Center is entering its sixth year of operation and bringing education in areas such as language (TEFL), computer studies, and child care within a Christian ethos through local leaders from various denominations.

The Christian population has decreased to approximately 900 Christians in Gaza (out of 1.9 million) and more Christians continue to leave. In spite of the continued exodus of Christians from the Gaza Strip, students continue to study for their MA and BA degrees. But the continual lack of electricity makes evening studies very difficult on their laptops and the continued military action creates fear and anxiety which is not conducive to studying. Students would like to attend seminars and conferences in Biblical Studies in the West Bank, but it's very difficult to get permission to travel, therefore many are enrolled through our Online Diploma in Biblical Studies. There are 12 students registered for courses in the Bible College, a mixture of both male and female. Please pray for the future of the Center, for growth and diversification.

Hanna Massad is an alumnus of the college in Gaza, and a previous teacher at the Center, now living in the USA. We are always proud of our graduates, and Hanna has just written a book about his experiences under the title of 'Pastor from Gaza' which gives an interesting history on the Christian community in Gaza.

CONFERENCES

“ Conferences pave the way for fellowship, growth, build bridges and communication with local and international community. ”

The 5th Global Leadership Summit at BethBC: “You Have Influence!”

The GLS is a leadership event telecast LIVE in HD from Willow Creek’s campus near Chicago to hundreds of locations in the world. Bethlehem Bible College has been hosting and organizing the summit for 5 years now under the subtitle of “You Have Influence!”. More than 150 leaders from different professions and backgrounds attended the summit from all over Palestine. The College was thrilled to receive Christian and Muslim leaders from Bethlehem District, Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah District, Jerusalem, and Galilee.

The College hosted two local speakers at the conference; Coach Ashraf Kortam is a trainer and lecturer, a pioneer in human development in Palestine. Mrs. Souad Yunan is a Director of Helen Keller School in Jerusalem with outstanding experience of 23 years. Both have enriched the conference with their expertise and inspirational speech.

Bethlehem Bible College is honored to serve the Palestinian community with events that empower leaders to sharpen their skills and develop the people they lead. We are excited for our next Leadership Summit in 2019.

Christ at the Checkpoint in Bethlehem and the USA

“ May Christ be at the center of our faith, advocacy and mission. ”
- Bishop Efraim Tendero

The 5th Christ at the Checkpoint Conference themed as ‘Christ at the Center’ took place on May 28, 2018 in Bethlehem for 5 days. It is a rare opportunity for Christians throughout the world to hear Palestinian voices integrate theological reflection into their present day-to-day circumstances. However, we also host a rich array of global speakers from North America to Asia. This year we had nearly 400 attendees of which 300 global Christians attended from about 20 countries. One of the Conference highlights was the participation of our students in the Conference itself, as well as in a separate interactive program with international students.

New ground was broken as the premier Christ at the Checkpoint – US Conference was held in Oklahoma City, October 15-18, 2018. Nearly 200 participants gathered for this event that contained the same message as CATC-Bethlehem, but didn’t require the long trip to the Middle East. Several speakers came from Bethlehem Bible College, Rev. Jack Sara, Rev. Dr.

Munther Isaac, Dr. Alex Awad, Grace Zoughbi and Michael Arteen, as well as BethBC Board Members Jonathan Kuttab and Sami Awad.

The Conference's theme, "Holy Land Realities and Our Response", described how Bethlehem has faced occupation after occupation throughout its history, and now faces criticism for crying out for peace and justice. Many Palestinian Christians have lost hope after the recent actions taken by the US administration.

The US Conference included diverse voices around the covered topics. Speakers included Dr. Mark Braverman and Rabbi Michael Davis, both of whom spoke from a Jewish perspective. Dr. Isseldin Abuelaish, a Muslim Nobel Prize Nominee and physician who, in spite of losing his 3 daughters to Israeli bombs in 2009, testified to his commitment to forgiveness as the solution to the conflict and catalyst toward peace. Other speakers represented African-Americans and Native Americans. Another highlight was hearing from Archbishop Elias Chacour, three-time Nobel Peace Prize Nominee and author of *Blood Brothers*, who spoke about his life's journey through the establishment of the State of Israel until now.

At the end of the Conference, listeners were reminded that there are faces and names behind the conflict; that it is easy to theologize, but sometimes hard to empathize. They were encouraged to pray for the situation and fellow believers in the Land, and give support, "so that your hands will help." Participants were challenged to both "come and see" and "go and tell" about what they learned.

A Pot in His Hand Women's Ministry

A Pot in His Hand, the Women's Ministry of Bethlehem Bible College, welcomed the new year in a special event with a large group of women from the Bethlehem area and Jerusalem. The evening was opened by the worship leader Nizar Francis with time of worship and praise as well as his life changing testimony about how he chose to devote his life, talent, and voice to the Lord. Dr. Madleine Sara, the founder of A Pot in His Hand Ministry, shared a sermon of how God has chosen courageous and powerful women to change history. As such, we can change history and the future through our relationship with the Lord Jesus, which impacts the lives of other women through the completion of God's call on our life.

In addition to large group meetings, A Pot in His Hand is a counseling and guidance ministry for women, founded by Dr. Madeline Sara, a guidance specialist and Christian counselor. The ministry provides a number of activities including awareness and educational sessions, individual counseling sessions, and monthly educational lectures.

'Celebrate Your Life' is the title of A Pot in His Hand's 11th Magazine issued in November. The issue focuses on joy and its importance in our lives. Happiness is a unique state in which hope, vitality, activity, optimism and all the emotions that elevate our behavior and relationships reflect a state of harmony with the outside world we live in. This issue has rich stories of strong women who overcame their situations and chose joy and life despite everything.

STUDENTS

“ We build leaders and give them opportunities to be part of a team ”

At Bethlehem Bible College, we encourage our students to work hard with diligence and integrity both inside and outside the classroom. It is essential to raise up leaders that are competent in engaging with the issues of our world today in a Christ-like way. As the only evangelical Christian college in Palestine, BethBC strives to implement holistic methods of teaching that will equip our students for life-long ministry wherever they go.

While Christians are becoming a minority in the land of Christ, we proceed to motivate young theologians to stay and serve in their community. BethBC empower Christians by supporting their vision and ministries.

It is an encouragement to see our current students as well as alumni continuing to give back to the community, our country and the world. Their involvement with local ministries is a testament to the lasting impact of Jesus' love.

BethBC's Students Around the World in Summer 2018!

Our students went all over, sharing love from Bethlehem to the world! Many of our students were blessed to travel within Palestine or outside the country to participate in summer camps and conferences for spiritual growth.

- Alfred and Alaa, both Biblical Studies student and an alumnus, participated in a full week conference in Italy where they had the opportunity to minister to refugees from Iraq and Syria. Alfred expresses:

“ I was in Italy last week, in a city named Sicily in Catania (southern Italy). I participated in a camp called Mission Camp through which I met many people from different nationalities and different languages in the world. Despite the differences, we were able, little by little, to know more about each other until we became close friends – even a family. We shared everything with each other, we joked together, we played, we danced, we sang, we laughed, we even got upset about things together. We ate together, and we shared experiences and stories; but the most important thing for me was praying together. We were one body in Christ, our foundation, through whom we built bridges instead of walls. The goal of the camp was not just to have a relaxing time and enjoy the city, but it had a spiritual goal through serving refugees by being by their side, accepting them, hearing their pain and understanding the difficult circumstances of their suffering, and listening to the horror and torture they encountered, which our minds sometimes could not comprehend.”

- Elias and Khader Handal, both Mass Media students, traveled for a whole month to Italy to participate in a Christian theological summer camp. They got to know more about different cultures and got connected with God and fellow believers.
- Four of our Biblical Studies students went to a discipleship conference that was held in Jenin, in northern Palestine, by Life Agape Ministry. The main goal of the conference was to be trained in Christian discipleship. Our students were trained by our very own faculty member Carlos Zelfo and his wife Jane who are both part of Life Agape.
- Adham Al-Araj, a Biblical Studies student, travelled to Italy and Germany for 3 weeks, visiting youth groups in churches in both countries, praying, building bridges and growing in faith with them.
- Students attended Catalyst Leadership Conference that took place in Jordan. They enjoyed and benefited from the workshops on how to disciple others, how to fundraise for their ministry, how to make attractive games for their team and youth groups, and leadership training.
- Last June, 15 of our staff and students went to England for an enriching cultural exchange program with YMCA – Sutton Coldfield. It was an extraordinary experience for our students, and for some of them this was their first time to travel; they had the chance to get to know new people from a different culture. Networking helped our students develop their English skills, gain confidence and expand their knowledge.

We are very proud of our students who are eager to learn and never miss a chance to go and see the world and participate in events in order to grow!





«We Love to Serve»: Students Taking Initiative

“We love to serve”, said Ala Khair, a BethBC Alumni now. Another student adds, “We are studying the Word, and we want to put it into practice.”

You can see the heart of our students in their consistent endeavor as they visit the Syrian and Iraqi refugees (in their communities in Jordan) who left their homes and countries because of war and persecution. The students’ heart is contagious, and their creativity in finding ways to make ends meet is inspiring. They held fundraising activities, including hosting a breakfast at the College. They had a booth at Christ at the Checkpoint Conference to sell items. The purpose of these fundraisers was to help provide basic resources for the refugee families, but the students also put on an interactive program for the children of the refugee families.

Through the Shepherd Society’s initiative, we are a source of blessings and are very blessed by our students who captured the true essence of their mission and have turned it into something that truly radiates Christ’s love. We are so thankful for everyone that helped our students have this experience, and mostly we are thankful for those families who welcomed them into their humble houses with a warm smile, and for teaching our students what it is to be strong in facing a life crisis with hope and joy.

Alumni Give Back

We celebrate the accomplishments of our hard-working students this summer with twenty-three graduates in summer 2018! We congratulate them. Yousef Khoury is, one of many, an alumnus who is giving back to the community and College. Yousef now is an instructor at BethBC who graduated with an honors degree in his Masters of Divinity with a concentration in Missions at Nyack Christian College, the Alliance Theological Seminary in Nyack, New York. Yousef and his wife Merna came back to Palestine to serve their people in the land of Christ.



Index of Other News

Solar Panels System

Since October, our 64 installed solar panels system has been running well. We are shifting from non-renewable energy to solar power for our campus. According to our calculations, for the next twelve months we should be receiving 33,660 kilowatts per hour, which will save us just under 80% of our usual payments on electricity bills! This will allow the funds saved to be appropriated elsewhere for our students and ministry. Further, this development is also a step in the right direction toward caring for and looking after the earth. Non-renewable energy is the main source of power in our society today, and these small steps toward sustainability and stewardship over creation move us in the right direction.



Caring for all of God's creation, both humanity and the earth fall under our mandate as citizens of the Kingdom of God. We are eager to implement more projects and lifestyles here at BethBC that fall in line with these calls of restoration and reconciliation of God with ourselves, others and His creation. As BethBC continues to train up leaders of the next generation, we can do so in a more life-giving, sustainable manner that also positively contributes to the care of our environment.

Ta'Shuf Tours: One-year Anniversary

Ta'shuf Tours' mission is to help people to "Come and See" the Holy Land and all its history, culture, and tensions while introducing them to the work of Bethlehem Bible College and meeting the living stones of the land. Every year we are blessed with hundreds of visitors from around the world who want to know more about the Palestinian church. Whether they are Evangelical, friends who are revisiting or tourists visiting for the first time, we relish every opportunity to share the powerful stories of God's work through our ministries and introduce you to our staff, students, and faculty.

Nils von Kalm, someone who was touched by Ta'shuf Tours shares: "There weren't many days on this tour that I didn't want to just sit and cry, either in sadness at the reality and brutality of the current occupation, or in awe, joy and hope at the peacemakers I saw in front of me.

If you want to make a trip to the Holy Land, I would recommend Ta'Shuf Tours to anyone. The way it was structured was with a thoughtful blend of heavy experiences, topped off at the end with some lighter historical exploration. I might just have to do it again one day!"



The Star Bazaar Gift Shop

Items sold here at the Star Bazaar Gift Shop are all made in Palestine by local artisans. As anyone who has visited the Middle East knows, shopping is more than just a transaction. It's about relationships. As a connecting point between customers and our local artisans, purchases directly support the local communities in Palestine as well as fund Bethlehem Bible College student scholarships and pay for general upkeep expenses. This supports our threefold mission which is to build God's Church around the world, provide a Palestinian Evangelical perspective, and develop the local community.

As a fair trade shop, artisans are fairly compensated for their work, and no commission is added to purchases thereby inflating the price. We assist in product development with marginalized artisans in order to help their business as well as offer exclusive items to those that shop with us. Our hope is to further expand the reach of the Bible College to be a blessing to our community and the world.

Thank you...

The College is very grateful for your support. Your generous gifts give us much to look forward to! Through the training of Christian leaders who are sent out to be pastors, teachers, and ministers in the community at large, we are reminded of the importance of this ministry. We could not do this without the support of our Christian brothers and sisters around the world who have a similar vision for God's work in this land. The Christian presence is very vital to peace and stability in this region.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-26

Bethlehem Bible College exists to:

- Train people to serve Christ in the world.
- Advocate a Palestinian evangelical perspective.
- Model Christ through community development.

Our President Emeritus, Dr. Bishara Awad, Founder of BethBC, had a dream that began to grow in his heart in 1979: an evangelical, inter-denominational Bible college in Palestine, where students could study and serve in their native land. And that's how the College started, with a small idea and a very big faith.

With a team of highly qualified local faculty and staff, Bethlehem Bible College has come a long way in preparing educated Christian Palestinian leaders who are serving their local communities. As Dr. Bishara Awad would say, "the Church is now awake" in Palestine, and BethBC plays a vital role in serving its needs in the face of numerous political and social pressures.