



STIFTUNGEN DER EKD IM HEILIGEN LAND
Evangelische Gemeinde Deutscher Sprache

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

Dear visitor – welcome to the Church of the Redeemer! Please come in and let the silence talk to you. Perhaps you would like to say a prayer or light a candle, or maybe you are adventurous enough to climb the bell tower (178 steps!). From its top, you will have some breathtaking views of Jerusalem. Afterwards, we invite you to visit also the medieval **cloister** and **St. John's Chapel** on the right side of the Church.

The atmosphere of this place is filled with prayers. **Three congregations** hold their worship services here on a regular basis: the **Arabic**-speaking congregation of the “Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land” (ELCJHL), the **English**-speaking congregation, which is a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and in the same time a vital part of the work of the ELCJHL, and the **German**-speaking congregation – a congregation of the “Evangelical Church in Germany” (EKD). From time to time, the **Danish**-speaking Lutheran congregation also worships in the chapel. The congregations at this church carry out their ministries working side by side in fellowship and partnership.

The **offices** of the congregations and their pastors as well as the local **head offices of the two churches** (the office of the **Propst of the EKD** and the office of the **Bishop of the ELCJHL**) plus the residence of the Propst are located next door in the “Propstei,” our church house.

„EVANGELISCH IN JERUSALEM“
– THE GERMAN PROTESTANT INSTITUTIONS IN
THE HOLY LAND

The Church of the Redeemer is an endowment of the “**Evangelical Jerusalem Foundation,**” one of the three foundations of the EKD (Evangelical Church in Germany) in the Holy Land. The other two are the “German Protestant Institute of Archaeology” (GPIA) and the “Kaiserin Augusta Victoria Foundation”. Together, we are “*Evangelisch in Jerusalem – The German Protestant Institutions in the Holy Land,*” headed by the Propst and by the Director General of the GPIA.

To most of our friends in Jerusalem, we are simply known as the German-speaking Lutheran Church in Israel, Palestine, and Jordan. However, technically speaking, we are not just Lutherans. As in the EKD in general, our members come from Lutheran, Reformed (Calvinist) and United backgrounds – and from a few more Protestant denominations as well.

Besides the **Church of the Redeemer** and the **Propstei** with its **German-speaking congregation,** the ministries of “Evangelisch in Jerusalem” are:

- The **Church of the Ascension** at the “Kaiserin Augusta Victoria Foundation” on the Mount of Olives (where you may climb our other bell tower with breathtaking views) – together with our **Center for Pilgrims and Tourists** and the famous “**Café Augusta.**”
- The “**Lutheran Guesthouse/Guesthouse of the Propst**” in the Old City.
- The GPIA with its **Archaeological Research Institutes** in Jerusalem and in Amman, Jordan.
- The Study Program “**Studium in Israel**” – one year at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- And of course, our **German-speaking Congregation in Amman, Jordan.**

SOME BACKGROUND AND HISTORY...

The Christian community of Jerusalem has always been multi-ethnic, diverse and multi-lingual. Here, you will find Greeks and Armenians, Syrians, Coptic Christians from Egypt, Ethiopians, Maronites with Lebanese background, Orthodox Russians, Palestinians, and Hebrew Christians praying side by side. As a **German-speaking Protestant Church,** we are a vital part of the ecumenical landscape of Christian churches in Jerusalem.

According to the tradition, the emperor **Charlemagne** received the land on which the church stands today as a gift from the **Khalif Harun al-Rashid** at the beginning of the 9th Century. In 1064, the property was transferred into the ownership of merchants from Amalfi. During these centuries, among others, the convent **Santa Maria Latina** and the **Hospital of St. John** were built here. This is also the place where in 1099 the **Order of the Knights of St. John** was established. During the century of the Crusades, these Knights took care of the sick and wounded, and at a certain time accepted up to 2000 patients in the hospital. Throughout the ups and downs of history and until present, the Order of St. John has been and still is strongly linked to the ministries of our church in this place.

In the 19th century, the Protestant awakening movements fostered a renewed interest of European Christians in the Holy Land. In 1841, the joint **Anglo-Prussian Bishopric** of Jerusalem was established, which continued to exist until 1886. In 1869, the then Crown Prince Frederic-William regained the eastern part of the old Muristan compound for Prussia. As early as in 1871, the **Chapel of St. John,** on the upper floor of the cloister (most probably the ancient refectory of the Benedictine monks who used to live here), was renovated and put into use for worship services of the German-speaking congregation. At the same time, **Friedrich Adler** – a renowned architect and scholar from Berlin – was appointed to rebuild the old Church Santa Maria Latina.

Internet: www.evangelisch-in-jerusalem.org

Please join us for worship:

Daily prayers in the German language: Monday to Friday, 12:00 am, Church of the Redeemer.

Sunday Worship Services:

- **Arabic**-speaking congregation: Sunday, 9:00 am, Church of the Redeemer
- **English**-speaking congregation: Sunday, 9:00 am, St. John's Chapel
- **German**-speaking congregation: Sunday, 10:30 am, Church of the Redeemer
- **Danish**-speaking congregation: St. John's Chapel, worship hours according to prior notice.

Opening hours of our offices: Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, phone (02) 6266 800,
Email: propstei@redeemer-jerusalem.com

In 1893, the **foundation stone** of the present Church of the Redeemer was laid. During the following years, the building was re-erected on the foundations of the old medieval church, very much according to its original design. On Reformation Day, **October 31st, 1898, the church was inaugurated** in the presence of the German emperor William II and his wife, Augusta Victoria.

The 19th century also saw the establishment of several educational institutions with a German-speaking Protestant background – notably the Syrian Orphanage (Schneller School) and the Talitha Kumi School of the Kaiserswerth Deaconesses. While the Church of the Redeemer wasn't itself active in mission among the Palestinian Arabs, former pupils of these educational institutions and others soon established the first Arab-speaking Lutheran congregations. In 1959, these congregations were officially recognized by the Jordanian King as the "Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan" (ELCJ), today the "**Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land**" (ELCJHL).

In 1979, the Synod of the ELCJ elected its first own Bishop, and thereby became fully independent from the German Propst. A church-to-church partnership was developed during the following decades and sealed by a formal agreement between EKD and ELCJHL in 2007. Today, the ELCJHL has six congregations throughout the Palestinian Territories and Jordan as well as a thriving educational work. In Jerusalem, the ELCJHL continues to use the Church of the Redeemer side by side with the German-speaking congregation.

THE CHURCH INTERIOR

The inside of our church has been changed considerably during the last decades. When the main sanctuary was renovated in 1970, the colourful decorations of the walls were removed – except for the precious **mosaic** in the apse above the altar showing the face of Christ the Redeemer. At the same time, **altar** and **pulpit** were modified considerably, while underneath the church, **archaeological excavations** were undertaken.

The **stained glass windows** were created by the Jewish glass painter Anna Andersch-Marcus. They reflect the verse from Psalm 130: "*Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!*" The **organ**, which today has its place on a balcony above the main entrance (the previous organ stood in the northern nave), was built in 1971 by Karl Schuke in Berlin. It has 21 registers, connected to two manuals and the pedal. The **baptismal fountain** was recently placed underneath the apse of the northern nave. Behind it, you will find a modern **processional cross** which was created in 1998 by the German sculptor Hubertus von Pilgrim. The **icon** underneath the apse of the southern nave was written by the Benedictine sisters on the Mount of Olives for the ecumenical church gathering ("Kirchentag") of German-speaking Christians in Jerusalem in 1991. It illustrates the history of Noah and shows Jesus Christ as the image of the Father, putting the rainbow into the clouds as a sign of peace.

THE GERMAN-SPEAKING PROTESTANT CONGREGATION OF JERUSALEM

As a German-speaking Church ministry, we reach out to long-term and short-term residents of this country – but also people who have established themselves here for good, maybe through marriage with a Palestinian or Israeli partner. Those who live here for several months or more can become **members of our congregation**.

The **congregation council** ("Kirchengemeinderat"), together with our pastors and many volunteers, is in charge of the congregational life. We hold **worship services** in Jerusalem, Ein Bokek (on the Dead Sea), Latrun, and Amman, Jordan. Through our **social committee**, we provide financial assistance for healthcare to the needy – Palestinians and Israelis alike.

We maintain close relations with different **religious orders and communities**, as well as with our German-speaking **Catholic brothers and sisters** in this country and with the congregations of our partner church. Fostering coexistence among some 60 different Christian churches in the Holy Land is an on-going challenge. Our mission strives for the unity of the body of Christ in the diversity of its members, through ecumenical encounters and joint prayers.

Our German background and history also presents a deep responsibility: The **renewal of Jewish-Christian relations** is of utmost importance for us. We cannot explore our Christian faith in its fullness without a deep knowledge of its Jewish roots nor without face-to-face encounters with Jews of different backgrounds. At the same time, we are committed to dialogue with **our Muslim neighbours** in this city. Through our work and our prayers, we try to contribute to peace, justice, and reconciliation among the societies we live in – Israeli, Palestinian, and Jordanian.

In all of our ministries, we depend on the support and the prayers of our friends all over the world. In this spirit, I wish you God's abundant blessings and peace for your stay in Jerusalem.

+ Dr. Uwe Gräbe, Propst