

A MONTH FOR WOMEN

March is a month for women in Palestine. Every March, the women of Jerusalem organize and invite the community to the World Day of Prayer celebration, which began in 1920 with women in Canada and the US. This year's service is written by women of South Africa and is based on Luke 21:5-38 and Revelation 21. March 8th this year is also the International Day for Women across the globe. The Jerusalem Center for Women and the Women's Coalition for Peace will both coordinate activities here. In ELCJHL churches, services on the first Sunday in March are led by women.

But March is probably best known for Mother's Day, which is celebrated in Palestine on March 21st. Of course, a favorite activity is to visit one's mother, but here that is not as easy as it sounds. Last year, one of my friends who lives less than 10 kilometers from her mother couldn't visit her because of "the situation." The year before that, she and her family trudged over the hilltop –

laden with their presents and good shoes – in order to reach her mother. This year will prove to be even more of a challenge for mothers, daughters and families because of the new "Israeli-only passages." With new orders just issued, Palestinians will have only 11 authorized checkpoints between all of the West Bank and "Israel," (which includes East Jerusalem, although that is part of the West Bank). The other dozen or so smaller checkpoints in the Jerusalem/Ramallah/Bethlehem area are now "Israeli-only passages," and internationals and Israelis can no longer take Palestinians in their cars. The gradual separation of East Jerusalem from the West Bank is quickly being completed with new policies like this, further fragmenting Palestinian life, economy and society and undermining the life and ministry of organizations like the ELCJHL



ELCJHL Schools' Secretary Sawsan Musallam and her daughter Celina.



The signs say "Passage for Israelis Only," and give details of the restrictions.

New England Synod Calendar

/ April 2006

(*event at Synod House, Worcester, MA)

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| 1 | | *Women of the ELCA |
| 4 | 9 am | Renewal of Vows for Rostered Leaders at Trinity, Worcester, MA |
| 5 | noon | Ribbon cutting at Antrim Girls Shelter (LSS) at Antrim, NH |
| 8 | | *Consecration Training |
| 14 | | <i>Good Friday – office closed</i> |
| 16 | | <i>EASTER – Christ is Risen Indeed!</i> |
| 18 | 10 am – 12 | * Lutheran Methodist Dialog |
| 18-20 | | Retired Post-Easter Retreat – Calumet |
| 20 | 9 am-3 pm | Spring Theological Convocation at Concordia, Manchester, CT |
| 21-23 | | Learning Ministry Retreat – Calumet |
| 25 | 9 am-3 pm | Deans at Emanuel, Worcester, MA |
| | 3 pm | *Mutual Ministry |
| 26 | noon | *Nominating committee |
| 27 | 7 pm | *Calumet Children's Program Planners |
| 29 | 9:30 am-4 pm | Healing the Wounds Community at Good Shepherd, Westboro, MA |
| 30 | 4 pm | ELCA/UMC Eucharist at Wesley Methodist, Worcester, MA |
| 30 – May 2 | | Church office worker retreat at Calumet |

Gracious God, we thank you for the women in our lives, for mothers, daughters, sisters and friends. Give them wisdom and strength for their continuous witness, and bless all families as they celebrate Mother's Day and other festivals. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

**Note:
Clergy
Spouse
Retreat for
2006
is canceled**

Upcoming dates: 2006 Synod Assembly June 8-10 at DCU Center, Worcester, MA

GME Event July 27-30 at Amherst, MA