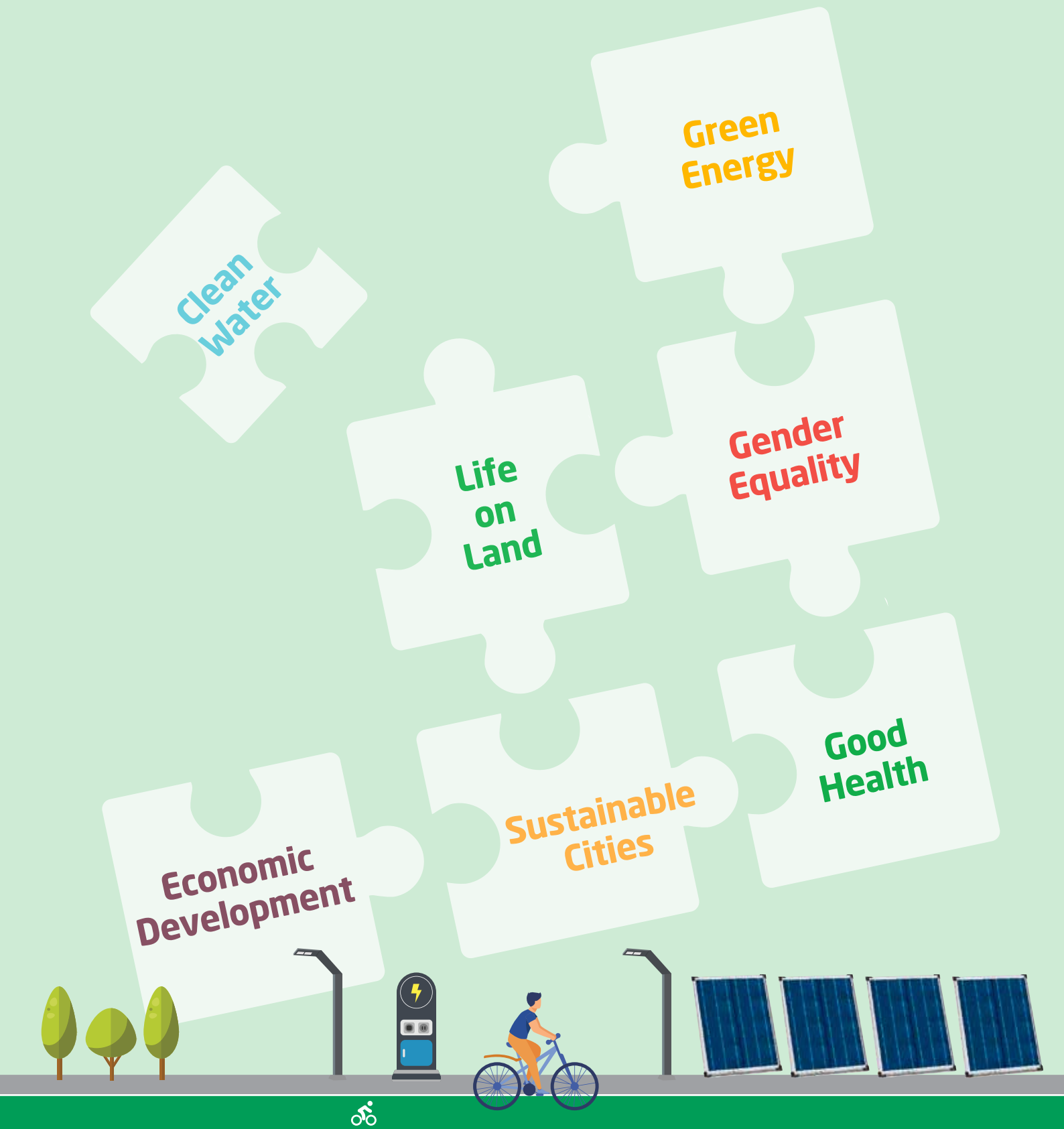


# BDF

BETHLEHEM  
DEVELOPMENT  
FOUNDATION

# 20 21





# INDEX

<b>Board of Trustees Message .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>BDF Stakeholders Lunch .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Completed Projects .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>BDF Governance .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>The Impact of the COVID-19 .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Heavenly Bethlehem Calls for Action Here and Now .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Nativity Church Restoration Exhibition .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Projects 2020-2021 .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Towards Sustainable Streets For All .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Towards Green Street Lighting .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Mother &amp; Child Community Center .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Cultural Bethlehem .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>AFBDF Message .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Together We Give .....</b>	<b>38</b>



***“We reconfirm our commitment to the Nativity Church full restoration and glory. We will target sustainable initiatives and community projects, hoping to restore some peace, love and joy to the people of Bethlehem and the surrounding towns”***

***Chairman  
Board of Trustees  
Samer Khoury***





# Board of Trustees Message



## Dear Patrons, Trustees, Directors and Friends,

Although 2020 was a difficult year for BDF and Palestine in general, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the world economic slowdown, I am happy to report that we have managed to navigate the storm.

BDF's activities continue in the completion of existing projects and in securing funding for new projects. We are grateful to all those who have contributed to these successes.

We are pursuing our funding efforts throughout the Arab world and through our affiliation with the American Friends of the Bethlehem Development Foundation ([www.afbdf.org](http://www.afbdf.org)) and we are hopeful that we will achieve our targets.

Our likely target development areas for the next two years shall be:

- Continued commitment to the Nativity Church by showcasing it and supporting its full restoration and sustainability.
- Focus on green projects.
- Focus on community-based women empowerment projects.

In addition, we shall be investing more effort in promoting the development of digital ecosystems, such as virtual visit apps to Bethlehem to keep the tourism industry's interest peaked until the world is able to travel safely after the pandemic containment in the coming two years. These virtual visits will most certainly act as promotion teasers for the subsequent physical visits and contribute to the return of tourism normalcy.

I thank you all for your continuous support and look forward to meeting you in Palestine once the pandemic is over.

Sincerely,  
**Samer S. Khoury**  
Chairman of the Board of Trustees





# BDF Stakeholders Lunch

*By Mazen Karam, BDF Managing Director*

On March 1, 2020, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees Mr. Samer Khoury invited BDF patrons, trustees, directors and other stakeholders to a private luncheon which was attended by the foundation's patrons his Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III and his Beatitude Patriarch Nourhan Manougian. Also in presence were Father Ibrahim Faltas, Discreet of the Custody of the Holy Land, Brother Peter Bray Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University, Governor of Bethlehem, Mr. Kamel Hmeid, Mayor of Doha, Mr. Raafat Jawabreh, Ambassador to the Holy See Mr. Issa Kassissieh and the Archbishop Theofilaktos of the Church of Nativity.

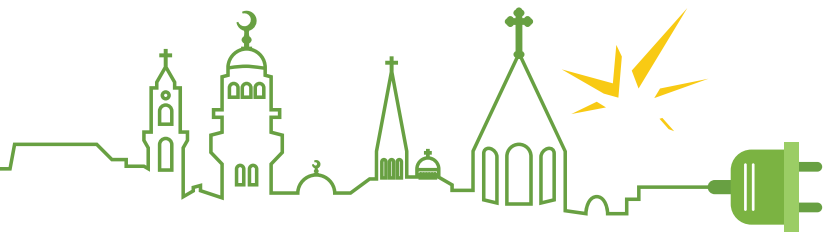
The Board of Trustees was represented by Vice Chair, Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, Secretary Dr. Varsen Aghabekian and

trustees Mr. Suheil Sabbagh, Mr. Walid Salman, Mr. Akram Bader and Mr. Sami Mroua. The Board of Directors was represented by Dr. Victor Batarseh, Dr. Saleh Jallad, Mr. Nafez Hussein and Mrs. Hind Khoury. In presence were distinguished members of the Presidential Committee for the restoration of the Church of Nativity and several esteemed community leaders.

The Chairman welcomed all present and briefed them of President Abbas' full endorsement of all efforts to support Bethlehem as the focus of the tourism cluster initiated by Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh.

Mr. Mazen Karam, Managing Director / CEO updated all about the status of the BDF.





In brief, BDF commissioned an external study to evaluate the relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of BDF's Development Action Plan (DAP) from its launching in 2013 till date.

The evaluation concluded that BDF has established itself as a professional non-governmental institution able to facilitate/coordinate the development of high-quality planning tools and was a pioneer in introducing spatial strategic planning for the Bethlehem area. BDF was able to mobilize resources for the design and implementation of its projects, henceforth, establishing itself as a credible and transparent vehicle for donors to implement projects. Moreover, BDF succeeded in extending its outreach to promote Bethlehem locally, regionally and internationally.

The study recommended that BDF:

- Institute a medium-term strategic planning & management system,
- Utilize its strengths and accumulated experience in future fundraising,
- Lay down a long term balanced partnerships with local stakeholders and
- Emphasize its role as a development and change agent.

In the next 12 months, BDF will focus on the Nativity Church Restoration works, social charity projects and area-wide economic development projects, solar street lighting and branding Bethlehem in support of the planned Ministry of Tourism Cluster Strategic Plan.







## Completed Projects

Since its establishment in May 2012, the Bethlehem Development Foundation has been keen on achieving its mission to create a sustainable economy and infrastructure for Bethlehem, which improves the quality of life for residents and acts as an attraction to visitors.

Over the years BDF has utilized great efforts to build fruitful cooperation bridges with local governmental units, donor agencies and international bodies. The Foundation is constantly progressing through three identified set tracks; private sector investments, public infrastructure projects and philanthropic schemes. The NGO's objective is to achieve a pipeline of sustainable projects.



*Rehabilitation of the Church of Nativity West and North External Facades, funded by the Arab Fund for Economic & Social Development, was completed in July 2017*

*"This initiative shall be planted in the heart of Bethlehem and its roots shall dig deep into the soil permanently reinstating peace and tranquillity throughout the land."*

**The Late Said T. Khoury  
Founder of BDF**

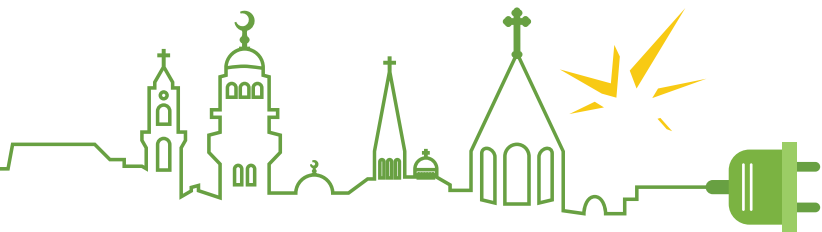


*Restoration of the Internal Plaster at the Church of Nativity, funded by the Arab Fund for Economic & Social, was completed in July 2016*



*Decoration of the Bethlehem Christmas tree and Manger Square was heavily supported by CCC from 2012 till 2019.*





*The Manger Square Rehabilitation and Beautification works, funded by the late Said Tawfiq Khoury, was completed in August 2016. The work included cleaning of facades, greening roofs and night-scape lighting of the two municipality buildings and the Peace Center and lighting of the Church of Nativity external facades.*



*The restoration of retaining walls and lighting of the Beit Sahour Mini Soccer Playground, funded by Consolidated Contractors Company, CCC, was completed August 20, 2015*



*The rehabilitation of Al-Salam Children Park in Beit Jala, funded jointly by CCC and Beit Jala Municipality, was completed in April 2016*



*The Indoor basketball court wood flooring, parking areas and landscaping at the Said Khoury Sports Complex in Beit Sahour, funded by the Said Khoury Family, was completed May 2016*



*Artificial turf and lighting of the Doha Mini Soccer Playground, funded by CCC, was completed in October 2015*



*The Solid Waste Management Project, funded by Arab Monetary Fund, was completed in March 2017. Intervention included a 20 year Master Plan, 12 Vehicles and 2833 waste bins*



# BDF Governance

## THE BOARD OF PATRONS

*The Board of Patrons is comprised of distinguished and highly reputable individuals who are responsible for overall guidance of the Foundation's boards.*



**HH Patriarch Kirill**  
*Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia*



**HB Patriarch Theophilos III**  
*Patriarch of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem*



**HH Pope Tawadros II**  
*Pope of Alexandria & Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church*



**HE Sheikh Muhammad A. Hussein**  
*the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem*



**HB Patriarch Ilia II**  
*Patriarch of All Georgia*



**HB Nourhan**  
*Orthodox Manougian Patriarch of the Armenian Church of Jerusalem*



**HB Michel Sabbah**  
*Patriarch Emeritus of Jerusalem*



**HE Cardinal Edwin O'Brien**  
*Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem*



**HE Bishop Munib Younan**  
*former President Lutheran World Federation*

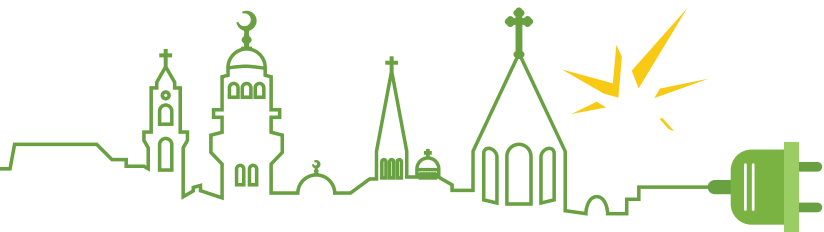


**HRH Prince Hassan Bin Talal**  
*of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*



**HH Sheikh Nahyan Mubarak Al Nahyan**  
*of the United Arab Emirates*





## THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

*The Board of Trustees is comprised of highly reputable and knowledgeable individuals who are responsible for overseeing the overall management of the Foundation.*



**Samer Khoury**  
Chairman



**Hanan Ashrawi**  
Vice Chairwoman



**Varsen Aghabekian**  
Secretary



**Abdel-Salaam  
al-Majali**



**Akram Bader**



**Faisal al-Alami**



**Fouad Kattan**



**Hamid Jaafar**



**Hani al-Hayek**



**Jihad Khair**



**Ibrahim Dabdoub**



**Mitri al-Raheb**



**Munir Anastas**



**Mitri Abu-Aita**



**Nabil Qaddumi**



**Nabeel Kassis**



**Nael Salman**



**Nicola Khamis**



**Odeh Aburdene**



**Ramez Jaraisy**



**Riad Al Sadek**



**Sabih al-Masri**



**Salah al-Tamari**



**Saleh al-Jallad**



**Sami Mroua**



**Samir Hazboun**



**Suheil Sabbagh**



**Vera Baboun**



**Walid al-Khalidi**



**Walid Salman**



**Zahi Khouri**



**Zuhair al-Alami**





# BDF Governance

## THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

***The Board of Directors is comprised of highly reputable individuals with close ties and thorough knowledge of the Bethlehem Region. They are responsible for overseeing the management of the Foundation.***

The Bethlehem Development Foundation General Assembly, in its Fifth meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March, 2020 at the Hasib Al Sabbagh and Said Khoury Convention Palace in Bethlehem, unanimously renewed the terms of the previous Board of Directors. Due to the lockdown following the Coronavirus pandemic, the board of Directors managed to meet at the Foundation's headquarters on Monday, May 18, 2020. Mr. Hani Abu Dayyeh was elected as the new Chairman of the Board of Directors and Dr. Kifah Manasra as the new Secretary. Mrs. Hind Khoury and Dr. Fadi Qattan retained their positions as Vice chairperson and Treasurer respectively. Mr. Nafez Hussein, Dr. Nael Abdel-Rahman, Mrs. Rana Khoury, Mrs. Elizabeth Kassis, Mr. George Al Ama and Dr. Saleh Jallad continue as board members.



### **Mr. Hani Abu Dayyeh | Chairman**

Mr. Abu Dayyeh is the VP of Netours and the GM of Net Transport. He chairs the board of directors of the Bethlehem University Tourism Institute (BUTI) and serves on a number of local, regional and international committees and boards. He holds a Bachelor in Science degree from Belmont College and a Bachelor degree in Chemical Engineering from Vanderbilt University. He obtained his Master's Degree at the School of Advanced International studies - SAIS of the Johns Hopkins University.



### **Mrs. Hind Khoury | Vice Chairman & Head of the Strategic Planning and Projects Committee**

Mrs. Khoury has a diversified professional career including chairman of Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ), Ambassador of Palestine to France 2006- 2010 and PA Minister of Jerusalem Affairs 2005-2006. She holds a bachelor degree in Economics from the American University of Beirut and a master degree in Business Management from Boston University.



### **Dr. Fadi Kattan | Treasurer & Head of Governance Committee**

Dr. Kattan is the Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration at Bethlehem University and Founder/ Director of the Master of International Cooperation and Development program (MICAD). He also chairs Bethlehem University Business Incubator. He holds a bachelor in Business Administration from Bethlehem University and PhD in Accounting from the University of Bradford, UK.



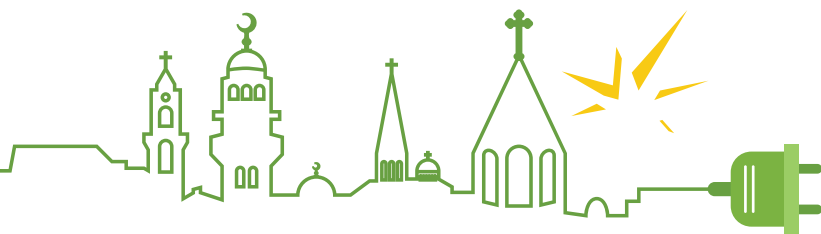
### **Dr. Kifah Mohammad Manasra | Secretary & Head of the Public Relations Committee**

Dr. Manasra, holds a Doctorate degree in Criminology from Mu'tah University in Jordan. She is Assistant Professor/ full-time lecturer at Istiqlal University in Jericho. She is an expert in family crime, a community-based activist in the field of combating community violence who worked for many years in the field of development through civil and international organizations. She is widely published in international journals.



### **Mr. Nafez Hussein**

Mr. Hussein is the VP of ICT & Digital Business at Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC). He is active in promoting Knowledge-Based economies. Board member of The Middle East Investment Initiative (MEII), Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), Partners for Sustainable Development, Education for Employment and the ArabAmeriCare Foundation. He holds a Bachelor degree from the American University of Beirut and a Master's degree from California State University - Sacramento in Management & Information Technology.



### **Dr. Saleh Jallad**

Dr. Jallad is a financial consultant at Consolidated Contractors Group CCC, Athens. Dr. Jallad is owner and Chairman of the Middle East Petroleum and Energy Publications established in 1957 in Cyprus and Beirut; Publisher of the Middle East Economic Survey "MEES", "Energy & Geopolitical Risk" Journal and "Sustainable Energy" Journal. He holds a bachelor degree in Economics from the American University of Cairo and a Ph.D. in Economics and Banking from the University of Notre Dame USA.



### **Dr. Nael Abdel Rahman**

Dr. Rahman is a full-time lecturer at the College of Educational Sciences at the Jerusalem Open University. He is the Director of Orphan Care Association in Bethlehem, General Director of Guidance and Training Center for Family and Children and the representative of the Palestinian Academic Council. He holds a Ph.D. in Educational Management from the Jordanian University in Amman, Jordan.



### **Mrs. Rana Khoury**

Mrs. Khoury is the VP for Development & Outreach at DAR al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture in Bethlehem, Palestine. Obtained her BA and MA degrees from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in Modern Middle Eastern and North African Studies. Founded several initiatives including The Civic Cultural Network, which focuses on the Palestinian youth; Shortlisted among six finalists for the 2014 Nelson Mandela-Graça Machel Innovation Award in South Africa. Has several publications on the role and movement of Palestinian women as well as adult education, and serves on a number of local, regional and international committees and boards.



### **Mr. George Al Ama**

George Al-Ama is a native Bethlehemite who has worked to preserve and champion Palestine's visual history. Mr. Al Ama is a researcher, academic and collector of Palestinian material culture and contemporary art. He Currently works as an advisor for the Bank of Palestine, founder of Dar Al Sabbagh Diaspora Studies and Research Centre and has led the Research & Training Unit at the Centre for Cultural Heritage Preservation. Mr. Al Ama's experience includes consulting for the Scientific Committee for the Terra Sancta Museums and lecturing at Dar Al Kalima University College. He sits on the board of the John Paul II- Middle Eastern Foundation.



### **Mrs. Elisabeth Kassis**

Mrs. Kassis is a businesswoman with a passion for horses; she is currently a member of the Federation of Chilean Horse Breeders and manages family ranch in the breeding of Arabian, Chilean and Frisian horses. Director in several family businesses group companies (Cial Alimentos S.A, Inmobiliaria Sinergia, Agroindustrial ALKA). She was responsible for the restoration of her ancestral family home in Bethlehem, Dar Al Sabag Diaspora Studies and Research Centre. Studied Business Administration and Visual Arts. Producer and hosted horse-related TV shows. In 2017 her film "Artax a new beginning", which deals with current problems and the use of hippotherapy in the treatment of Asperger's disease, was screened at the Palestinian Film Festival in 2018 in Bethlehem, Ramallah and Nablus. In 2019 her band, Diáspora Trío, which rescues traditional and ancestral Palestinian music and transforms it into contemporary music. They performed 12 concerts in Palestine.



# BDF Governance

## THE EXECUTIVE STAFF

*The Executive staff key positions were carefully selected from CCC staff per the wish of the founder, Mr. Said Khoury, RIP. They bring on extensive experience in the field of construction and development.*



### **Eng. Mazen Karam | Managing Director / CEO**

Mr. Karam comes from CCC with over 44 years of experience in construction of heavy civil, petrochemical and general building projects. He is responsible for the program and construction management of BDF projects since 2013. He is a member of the boards of the Bethlehem Business Incubator BBI, the Bethlehem University Tourism Institute BUTI, the Hassib Sabbagh IT Center for Excellence at the Arab American University of Palestine in Jenin and chairs the board of the Ramallah Friends School. He holds a bachelors in Civil Engineering from the American University of Beirut (1972-1974) and Baghdad University (1974-1976).



### **Mr. Ahmad Hifnawi | Development Engineer**

Mr. Hifnawi plays a major role in the alignment and implementation of BDF's Strategic Action Plan with area strategic plans since 2013. He helped Beit Sahour Municipality in preparing the Local Economic Development Plan 2015-2019, and the Bethlehem Governorate in preparing the Spatial Development Strategic Framework 2016-2022. He holds a Bachelor of Agricultural Engineering & Rural Development, and a Masters in Economic & Regional Development from the University of Athens, Greece.



### **Mrs. Basma Alhusseini | Urbanist & Design Coordinator, Special Assignments Unit**

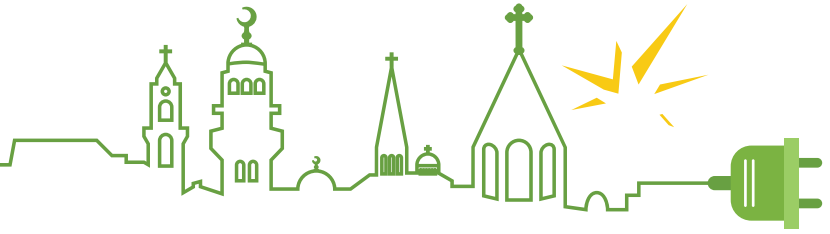
Mrs. Alhusseini leads the Special Assignments Unit at CCC which coordinates urban design and sustainable development. Held positions in the public, private and nonprofit sectors in Asia, UK, Europe, Greater Amman Municipality, Amman Institute for Urban Development, Symbiosis Designs Ltd. and S333 Architecture + Urbanism. She holds a BA in Arts, Design and the Environment from Central Saint Martin's College of Arts and Design and an MA in Housing and Urbanism from the Architectural Association, an MA in Architecture with a focus on sustainability from the University of Nottingham.



### **Mr. Ibrahim Abedrabbo | Project Engineer**

Mr. Abedrabbo joined "Bethlehem Development Foundation" in late 2020 with over 19 years of diversified experience in across multiple Civil Engineering Sectors. He manages the recently awarded projects funded by -the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development. He served CCC in Sultanate of Oman for 8 years in several Mega Projects like the Extension of Muscat Airport. He holds a Bachelor degree with distinction in Civil Engineering from Birzeit University, Palestine since 2002.





**Mr. Marwan Saca | Head of Administration & Accounts**

Mr. Saca worked for CCC on the Administration and Human Resources of several mega projects. He joined BDF in 2013. He holds a bachelor degree of Business Administration from the City University of Seattle, Athens and a diploma for Understanding the Human Resources Functions/ Expert Rating Solutions, in London. He is an HR Pro Certify 2018 from the Human Resource Professional Institute.



**Mrs. Grace Sabat | Secretary**

Mrs. Sabat has worked with BDF as secretary and personal assistant to the CEO. She holds a diploma in filmmaking from Dar al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture in Bethlehem, Palestine.



**Mrs. Charlene Hazboun | Accountant**

Mrs. Hazboun manages the books works in the accounting department at BDF since 2014. She holds a diploma of Library Management from Amman, Jordan and a bachelor degree in Accounting from Bethlehem University.



**Mr. Mohammad Asakreh | Office Assistant**

Mr. Asakreh is the caretaker of the BDF office and manages the day-to-day errands. He holds a high school diploma in Arts.





# The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Tourism Industry in the Bethlehem Region



Photo by Elias Halabi

BDF clearly understands the impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry in the Bethlehem region and hopes to contribute towards the accelerated regeneration of tourism post pandemic. The Bethlehem region's share amounts to 64% of the total Palestinian tourism sector. Unlike other Palestinian localities, 15% of the working population are employed in the industry accounting to 65% of the city's economy.

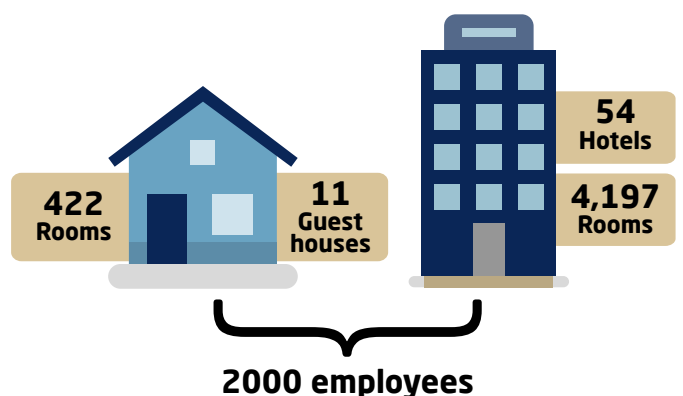
## The Health of Employment in the Bethlehem Region

In 2019, five new hotels and guest houses were opened in the Bethlehem region, bringing the total hotels to 54 comprising 4,197 rooms and religious Guest houses to 11 comprising 422 rooms. The number of persons employed was 2000 employees.

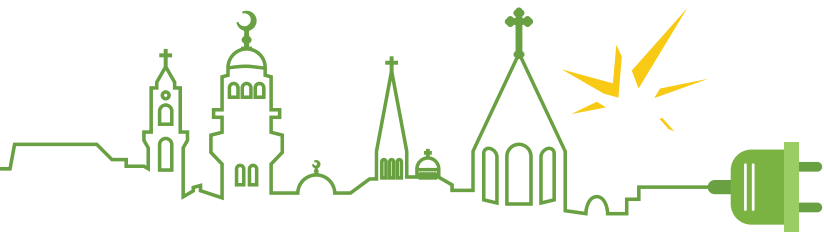
## The Health of the Bethlehem Tourism Sector

During the year 2019, Bethlehem witnessed a large surge in inbound visitors, resulting in 1.4M tourists, an increase of 17%/23% compared to the same periods of 2018/17 respectively. Hotel guests in the first half of 2019 spent 653,805 nights in Bethlehem an increase of 21%/40% compared with the first half of 2018/17 respectively.

<b>2019</b>	<b>1.470.833</b> tourist	<b>653,805</b> nights
<b>2018</b>	<b>1.124.330</b> tourist	<b>540,335</b> nights
<b>2017</b>	<b>1.003.295</b> tourist	<b>467,003</b> nights



There are 93 licensed Souvenir and Craft shops in Bethlehem, a very important sector in tourism, employing 447 workers. This does not take into account the actual producers of these souvenir and craft products, mainly small family workshops. Additionally, there are 267 licensed guides and 75 tourist licensed street pedlars. A vast number of restaurants and coffee shops that serve

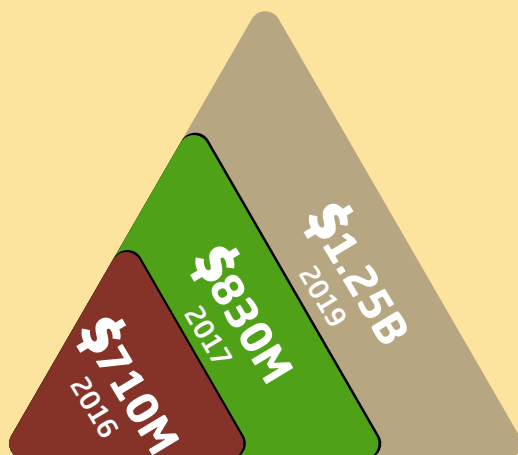


the locals and the tourists provide large employment opportunities. The people working in food and beverage service activities comprise 63% of the total number of employees within the tourism industry.

Before the Corona Virus Pandemic, the unemployment in Bethlehem recorded a rate of 23% while Gaza reached 53%. In 2020, following the Pandemic, tourism employees were mostly laid off bringing the unemployment rate to unprecedented levels.

### The Financial Health of the Tourism Sector

The final findings of the Tourism statistics for 2017 indicated that total income generated from inbound tourism was \$830M, an increase of 17 % from 2016. This income is generated from both the overnight stay and the same day visitors. This increase in income was due to the increase in the number of overnight stay visitors by 23%. If we extrapolate the income for 2019 from the increase of about 20% overnight stays during the first 6 months of 2019, then the expected income generated from tourism for 2019 should be about \$996M. With the addition of 10% more rooms, it was forecasted to have at least a 25% increase in overnight stays in 2020 to an estimated income of \$1.25B. Extrapolated to the whole of the Palestinian Economy, the total loss of the economy of the Bethlehem region for 2020 is \$1.95 Billion. That, along with the potential value-added incomes, constitutes a devastating loss to the economies of the Bethlehem region and of Palestine.



### The Aftermath of the Coronavirus Pandemic

The hotels and guest houses will be carrying the brunt of this loss. With 54 hotels comprising 4,197 rooms, one is looking at a total assessed minimum investment of approximately 2.1 billion dollars sitting idle. These investments came from major family savings and from bank loans. To assess the real damage to the economy one has also to take into consideration the investment in the souvenir shops and restaurants.

There is no doubt that the traditional faith-based tourism inflows will return but will take time before they reach the numbers witnessed in 2019. Moreover, the recently developed and nourishing alternative tourism will suffer longer. The whole tourism industry worldwide will look different post the COVID-19 Pandemic

### Conclusion

Faith-Based Tourism in Palestine, through the ages, has proven to be very resilient indeed. History has shown, that this sector always returns back after breakdown due to political disturbances or natural disasters throughout the past two millennia.





# The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Tourism Industry in the Bethlehem Region

By Hani Abu Dayyeh, Chairman of BDF Board of Directors

## Planning Ahead Post Coronavirus Pandemic

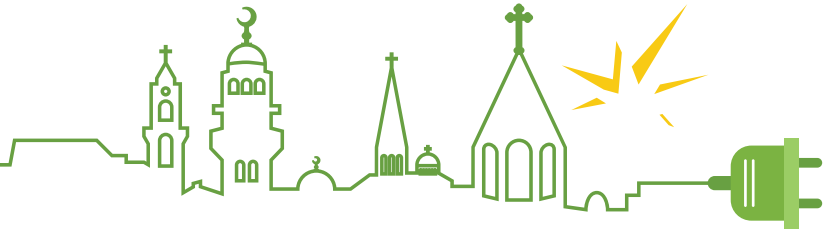
BDF is recommending that the Palestinian tourism Industry, in cooperation with the religious authorities, the public sector, the academic and tourism training centers and the civil society, plan together as to what can be effectively done to revive the tourism industry in an accelerated fashion while also making sure that all the tourism sectors provide the best services to the end clients, including:

***To issue, in cooperation with the religious leadership, an invitation letter to encourage the pilgrims to return to their spiritual homeland.*** This is because the Palestinian Tourism Industry is heavily based on Faith Based tourism;

***To focus immediate efforts on promoting internal tourism and our Palestinian 48 community.*** This segment of tourism will be the fastest to return and is the largest contributor to the total number of visitors to Bethlehem. The Bethlehem region should be planning from now for various activities and potential top performances for the year 2021, starting with the Lighting of the Christmas Trees in the three cities of Bethlehem, Beit Sahour and Beit Jala that BDF has sponsored for a few years past, along with a very active Christmas market that will appeal to the Palestinian community.

***To Undertake international marketing campaigns;*** to this end BDF is sponsoring "Bethlehem Reborn", The





wonders of the Basilica of the Nativity between art, history and faith” exhibition which was first exhibited in Rome then in Rimini, Italy. BDF is planning to take this exhibition to other strategic cities in the world. This exhibition is undertaken in collaboration with the Embassy of the State of Palestine, the Higher Presidential committee of Churches Affairs in Palestine and the Presidential Committee for the Restoration of the Church of the Nativity.

**To update training for the general guides** focusing on the socio-cultural development of the Bethlehem region. Here, BDF is supporting an effort that will extend the time spent by the tourist in the area of Bethlehem

and the informational content they receive to showcase the very rich cultural heritage of Bethlehem which will hopefully lead to a greater expenditure by the tourist in the various Bethlehem establishments.

**To help improve the visibility of Bethlehem through media.** The tourism industry will need the best media coverage possible pre-Christmas 2021 and beyond. It also needs the best reports from the end clients that can be shared widely on the social media and other Information and Communications Technologies.

Hoping to see you at the Lighting of the Christmas Tree 2021







# Heavenly Bethlehem Calls for Action Here and Now

*By Hind Khoury, Vice Chairwoman of BDF Board of Directors*



*Photo by Elias Halabi*

More than any other time, the Holy birth in Bethlehem 2020 years ago beckons us to build a more humane world, to harness goodness, and to overcome despair. *"Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God,"* said Prophet Micah. This is how we labor towards equality and peace for all.

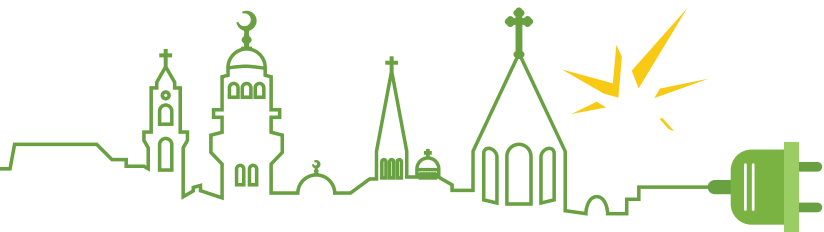
It is in this spirit that the BDF was established nine years ago. With significant achievements on its record, it perseveres in its vision to showcase the city of Bethlehem and its

surroundings to the world. Together with its partners, the BDF is ready to face the challenges ahead, most notably a global pandemic that has brought the pilgrimage market to a standstill and crippled an already besieged economy.

Three areas will require our close attention:

1. Expanding the tourism offer
2. Stimulating the demand for pilgrimage
3. Moving Forward





# 1

## Expanding the tourism offer

The region has a rich history that goes back to the Paleolithic age. It witnessed the beginning of agricultural and human settlement; Roman water systems and Aqueducts. It is where prophets walked, where Jesus was born, and where the first church was built. It is where Christianity started followed by an extensive monastic movement as of the second century B.C. and still ongoing and witnessed the development of the Earliest Christian theology "PhiloKalia", the love of beauty and goodness. It is where Caliph Omar visited and prayed and where Crusader kings were crowned. It is where Christian missions from all over the world established their presence. The region and its Church survived invasions and occupations. Throughout a tumultuous history, the local people were steadfast in their resilience and guarded faith, land and traditions.

The BDF will tap into this rich history to help widen the choice of sites, itineraries, and narratives provided to pilgrims. We want to enhance the experience of local and international visitors, while bringing economic and social benefits to the local population.

Expanding the choice of visitation sites will require training guides, teachers, and students to better showcase the region and strengthen its sense of identity. The BDF has already started on such initiatives in cooperation with Dar El Nadwa cultural center, and it plans for more.

Together with its partners, the BDF will contribute to rehabilitating unexplored areas of our region's crown jewel—the Church of Nativity and its compound. It will seek more private sector investments in the Old cities of Bethlehem, Beit Jala, and Beit Sahour. The management of the BDF will continue to review projects from the 2010 urban plan and promote those that remain relevant and viable.

The BDF also seeks a more cohesive approach to the Bethlehem region by developing links between urban and rural centers. The city of Doha, for example, strategically connects Bethlehem, the Solomon Pools, the village of Al Khader (St George), and the south to Hebron. This is why the BDF is presently constructing a mother and child center and working with the municipality to develop the area further.

A cohesive regional policy will also involve developing surrounding rural areas. Because of increased Israeli colonization, we have been confined to city centers. We need to spread out and guarantee sustainable growth. We must capitalize on the untapped potential of rural areas and relieve urban centers from their high population density. This will require building new road networks, communal services and housing facilities. Hopefully, such a regional policy will generate jobs, develop local skills, and expand the economy in ways that bridge the growing divide between urban and rural areas.

BDF is also keen on contributing towards a Green Bethlehem region—a stated goal of the Foundation's Strategic Action Plan and of the Bethlehem Governorate. Early BDF efforts addressed solid waste management. Today, it is working on equipping areas with solar street lighting thereby cutting energy costs while brightening our roads.



# Heavenly Bethlehem Calls for Action Here and Now



## 2

### Stimulating the demand for pilgrimage

Bethlehem has been a renowned pilgrimage site for centuries. It is the subject of sermons and theological engagements worldwide. Every year during Christmas, the Christian world turns towards the little town of Bethlehem.

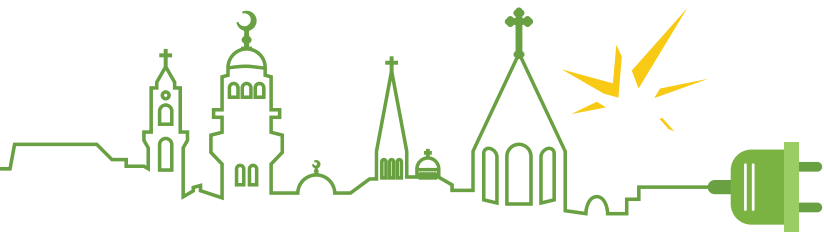
BDF can help stimulate demand for pilgrimage through the good auspices of its board of trustees, which includes distinguished members of diaspora

Palestinians, friendly churches, and other partners in the Christian world. It is hoped that the “Bethlehem Reborn” exhibit, presently on display in Assisi, will tour various capitals to introduce Bethlehem to a broader public and showcase the treasures of the Nativity Church following over eight years of extensive restoration.

#### **Business growth:**

In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and the Bethlehem Business Incubator of Bethlehem University, BDF will encourage business startups, focusing specifically on women and young people. Job creation is of utmost importance in a society where half of its youth suffer from prolonged unemployment.

In an unpredictable region, it is very important for BDF to promote and encourage locally produced products and services. This is necessary to help our people to achieve a normalized decent living.



# 3

## Moving Forward

The strength of BDF has been its capacity to secure seed money for infrastructure projects that empowered the foundation and its independence. However, we still have many challenges ahead. Overcoming these challenges will require finding unusual, creative, and multilateral sources of funding.

In the post-pandemic world, developmental funds will most likely target humanitarian aid and weakened public institutions. BDF will continue seeking seed funding for meaningful project development. It will also seek more support from the Arab Fund and

other donors for project implementation. It is hoped that crowdfunding and efforts of the BDF's board of trustees will help secure further financing.

When it was first established, BDF shared with local representatives its urban plan for the Bethlehem region. It projected quality and confidence. It brought strong operational capacities and solid know-how in project management. It created a vast network of friends and acquaintances that included politicians, parliamentarians, business personalities, and church leaders. This is why the local community welcomed its work with trust and great enthusiasm.

We are aware of the difficulties ahead, but Bethlehem continues to inspire in us a message of hope. Over the last two millennia, this message has transformed the world; why should it stop now? We will deliver on our promises and carry on with ongoing plans, unshaken in our belief that Bethlehem is a spiritual and human center for all.



*Photo by Salam Ibrahim*





# Nativity Church Restoration Exhibition in Rimini

At the end of unprecedented studies and renovations that lasted almost ten years, the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem has been restored to its original beauty. A symbol of humanity has been given back to the faithful who venerate the birthplace of Jesus Christ.

Through the discoveries of new archaeological excavations and complex restoration works, a story of renewed devotion is written from the time of the first Christians who venerated a simple cave to the age of the Byzantine emperors who built the most magnificent basilicas of antiquity, later fortified and lavishly decorated by the knights who founded the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem.

The Exhibition showcases the long period of neglect and deterioration that had seriously jeopardized the ancient structure. Thanks to the historic agreement which allowed the establishment of the presidential committee for the restoration of the Church of Nativity, thereby harmonizing the aspirations of the three religious communities. The State of Palestine, the Palestinian people and international donor organizations contributed considerable financial support to the conservation and renovation program of the Church of Nativity.

The Exhibition uses the nearly completed restoration project as a thread that stitches together an even greater history; that of the oldest monument in continuous use in Christendom.

For the first time in history we can reconstruct, through restoration works and archaeological excavations, a broader and deeper story that embraces the entire space of the basilica, from the system of grottos to the roof, and develop chronologically from the oldest periods up to the present day. It is a story that goes beyond the history of politics and art to reveal, through the voices and accounts of pilgrims, the story of religious pilgrimage with its various rituals, prayers, and journeys of the faithful who have visited the basilica throughout the centuries. This rich history accompanies visitors today, helping them to rediscover themselves as modern pilgrims.

Bethlehem, the city of the Nativity, is one of the unique heritage and cultural cities of the world and a "must see" destination for millions of pilgrims, tourists and visitors. The Exhibition intends to reinvigorate and support the local communities the natural, legitimate and rightful custodians of this place of spirituality.

The Bethlehem Development Foundation supports efforts to carry the exhibition to other countries such as Germany, Austria, America and Chile.





**Bethlehem Reborn:** *An invitation to discover the wonders of the Church of the Nativity as an anticipation of a journey towards Bethlehem and Palestine: the birthplace of Christianity.*





# Projects 2020-2021

By Ahmad Hifnawi, BDF Development Coordinator

## Toward Sustainable Streets For All

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, public spaces, including streets, squares and parks, have become a central priority for local authorities trying to reassess how the users interact with these spaces.

A year later, the way we look at and deal with public spaces has shifted. These places, which once acted as a stage for local authorities, are now being repurposed to serve the community in a way that resonates with the "new normal". The ways in which the users previously interacted with these spaces, and their subsequent impact on the adjacent places, brings to question how they will be used moving forward.

As people were locked down, they soon realized the importance of being able to be mobile by engaging in regular exercise, walking and participating in outdoor recreation. Now, more than ever, we see the need to provide the community with a clean, safe and free environment throughout the governorate of Bethlehem.

In response to this need, and in collaboration with the Beit Sahour municipality, BDF put forward a design proposal to ameliorate the environment of the public

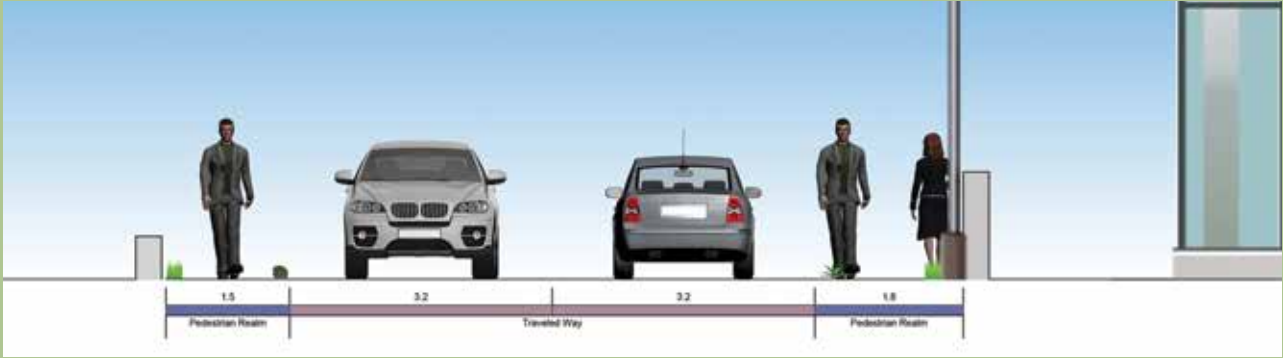
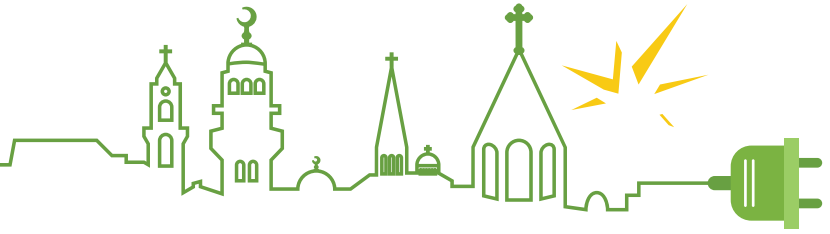
space by creating the first sustainable roadway. Based on international standards of design, Shepherds Street will be the main link to the historic and touristic area that takes into consideration pedestrians, cyclists and motorists safety and comfort.

This urban intervention, the first phase of the street rehabilitation program in Beit Sahour, will provide a safe and smooth link to the historical sites in the city and will encourage visitors to spend more time to experience the city. This will also create new opportunities for the communities and visitors to interact in a new way. It will also encourage and support both the urban and economic development of the city.

In order to materialize this vision, the urban practitioners at the Bethlehem Development Foundation (BDF), have studied global guidelines in order to put forward a locally viable proposal that creates a multi-use and sustainable products that meets the needs of the community. The street also includes the use of progressive street furniture such as smart benches, which offer important tourist information and the installation of green solar canopies that provide power for streets lights and other public spaces.







### Site analysis:

Shepherds Street is the longest lateral street linking the main street of Beit Sahour and Shepherd's Field, the town's primary touristic area. It measures 506 meters in length and 11 meters in width. Aside from the Shepherd's Field Church, the area is well known for its abundant touristic restaurants and souvenir shops. Due to the high traffic of tourists, the municipality built a central bus station, which receives around 50 tourist buses, daily.

The area was once considered strictly residential, but is now home to other businesses such as hotels, wedding halls, supermarkets, restaurants and service facilities.

In line with the municipality's vision to encourage touristic development in Shepherd's Field's adjacent area, the BDF has identified the need to create a pedestrian zone, increase the space dedicated to street furniture and trees and build a bicycle path that follows international guidelines to ensure the safety of both pedestrian and cyclist traffic.



## Adopted Street Side Guidelines

### Sidewalks

In commercial and downtown areas, sidewalks form the foundation for a vibrant community. They will be safe, comfortable and attractive infrastructure that

accommodates people of all ages and physical abilities. The sidewalk is divided into two zones, the pedestrian and the landscaped with furniture zone.



# Projects 2020-2021

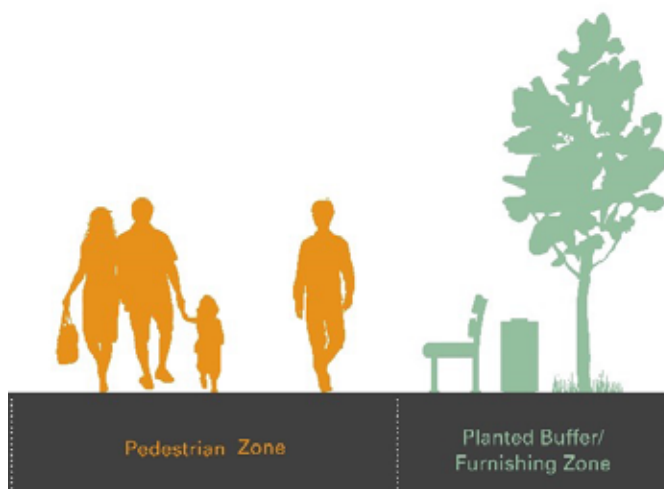
## Street Trees

Street trees generally improve the pedestrian experience, enhance the streetscape, provide shade and form a buffer between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. These can have a traffic calming effect and help define the character of the street and provide shade, reduce the heat island effect and energy consumption, and help to absorb and cleanse rainwater. Trees also absorb and filter pollutant gases while enhancing not only the visual aesthetic character of a street, but also by dramatically improving the physical environment of the corridor.

Given the width of street, BDF proposes planting 200 Ficus trees on both sides in order to provide shade. A long-term maintenance plan will be put in place to ensure their aesthetic and function as they merge into a canopy over the pedestrian and cycling zones.

## Street Furniture

Street furniture encompasses a variety of amenities that enhance the aesthetics and functionality of the sidewalk and the roadway environment. The well designed and placed street furniture will make the sidewalk a comfortable, convenient, and inviting place. Benches and other seating options will facilitate gathering, provide a place for rest and create an attractive spot to have street cafes. The well distributed and maintained waste bins will help keep a street clean. The latest technology and smart design benches will offer a unique experience for tourists and locals alike. Illuminated by solar power, the benches will offer visitor information, free WiFi spots, and mobile charging outlets.

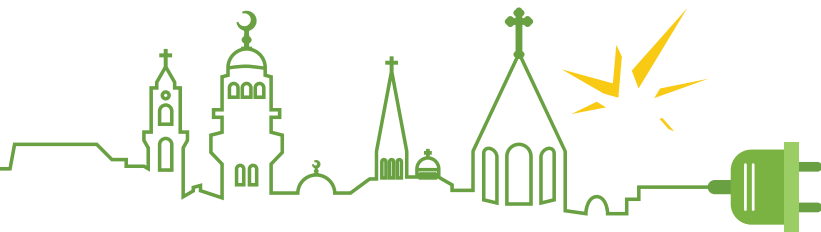


## Street Lights

Pedestrian and roadway lighting covers all zones of the street including crossings, commercial areas, or other locations where night-time pedestrian activity is likely. Pedestrian scale lighting, improve pedestrian safety, security and comfort. To optimize efficiency, the street poles will be solar powered and evenly distributed. Light fixtures will reflect the character and urban design of the street.

To maintain the character and design of the street, the design adopts different types of lighting methods to light up the different travel lanes. These include remotely controlled lighting poles, chargeable bicycles and indirect lighting features.





## Travel Lanes

Width of the travel lane width has a large impact on the design speed of a roadway. Traditionally, roads have been designed with wider travel lanes to create a safe buffer for drivers, particularly in high-speed environments. Wider lanes encourage higher travel speeds, while narrower travel lanes can effectively manage speeds thus increasing safety.

## Bicycle Lanes

The provision of bicycle lanes is critical to promoting cycling as an essential form of transportation. However, such lanes must be properly designed and implemented in order to ensure that they are safe, comfortable, and useful to its users. The guiding principles to achieve this is the implementation the "Five Cs:" continuous, connected, convenient, complete and comfortable.

Bicycle lanes provide an exclusive space for cyclists through the use of pavement markings and signage. They are usually designed for one-way travel and are typically located on both sides of a two-way street, or on one side of a one-way street. This exclusivity enables cyclist to ride at their preferred speed without the interference of motorists.

BDF proposes a 1.5 meter bicycle lane, marked with thermoplastic painting and according to the international signage standards. Moreover, and for the cyclist's safety, a metallic fences will be placed to separate the pedestrian path from the bicycle lane. On the other side special delineators with metallized reflectors will be installed at the edge of the lane to separate it from the roadway.

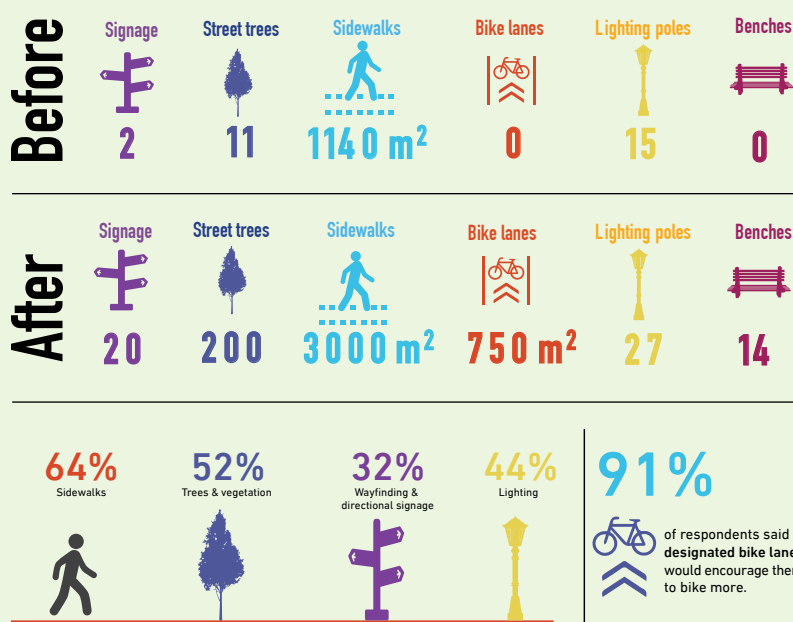


## Project Output

Project outputs can be divided into two categories, short and long term.

**For the long term:** From sectorial perspective, the project will create economic development Corridor. Since the planning phase, many applied to get the needed permissions to build two hotels across the street, offering additional 300 hotel rooms in the touristic area of Beit Sahour.

**For the short term:** The project encourages Beit Sahour Municipality to reconsider the street rehabilitation standards. Our design guidelines were adopted for two more street rehabilitation projects, and the overall outcome in the area will be a network of more green streets, with safe pedestrian zones, and with bicycle tracks.







# Projects 2020-2021

## Towards Efficient Street Lighting



Over the years, street lighting expense in Bethlehem has become a growing burden on the local authorities, even though part of it is directly paid by the residents. Especially during Christmas period, the cost of street lighting reaches \$40,000 monthly. Additionally, the condition of the street lighting networks needs continuous maintenance often requiring new parts.

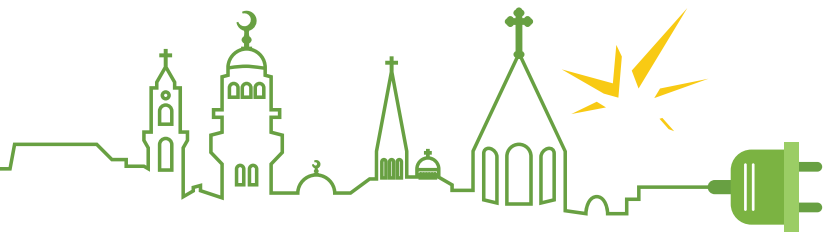
These facts drove BDF to promote efficient street lighting efforts with solar energy. Starting with the main streets of Bethlehem Governorate, a needs assessment study was carried out by BDF to identify the needed electricity to light 28 kilometers of main and rural streets.

The study identified the need for working on three levels in parallel. The first one is to design and install

the needed PV solar farms, the second is to replace sodium lamps with high consumption of energy with LED lamps and last to install new lighting poles as needed.

A project proposal was developed and submitted to the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), and in August 2020 AFESD approved to fund the first phase of the project.

BDF agreed with the municipalities of Bethlehem, Beit Jala, and Beit Sahour to prioritize the streets that need lighting according to its touristic importance and to the current condition of the existing lighting network. Priority was given to the historical core area of each city.



In the first phase, approximately 2.5 kilometers of the historical downtown of Bethlehem and Beit Jala cities will be lit with solar energy and LED lamps offering 50-60% saving of the consumed energy. State-of-the-art solar panels will be placed on top of pergola structures offering shade and a gathering area.

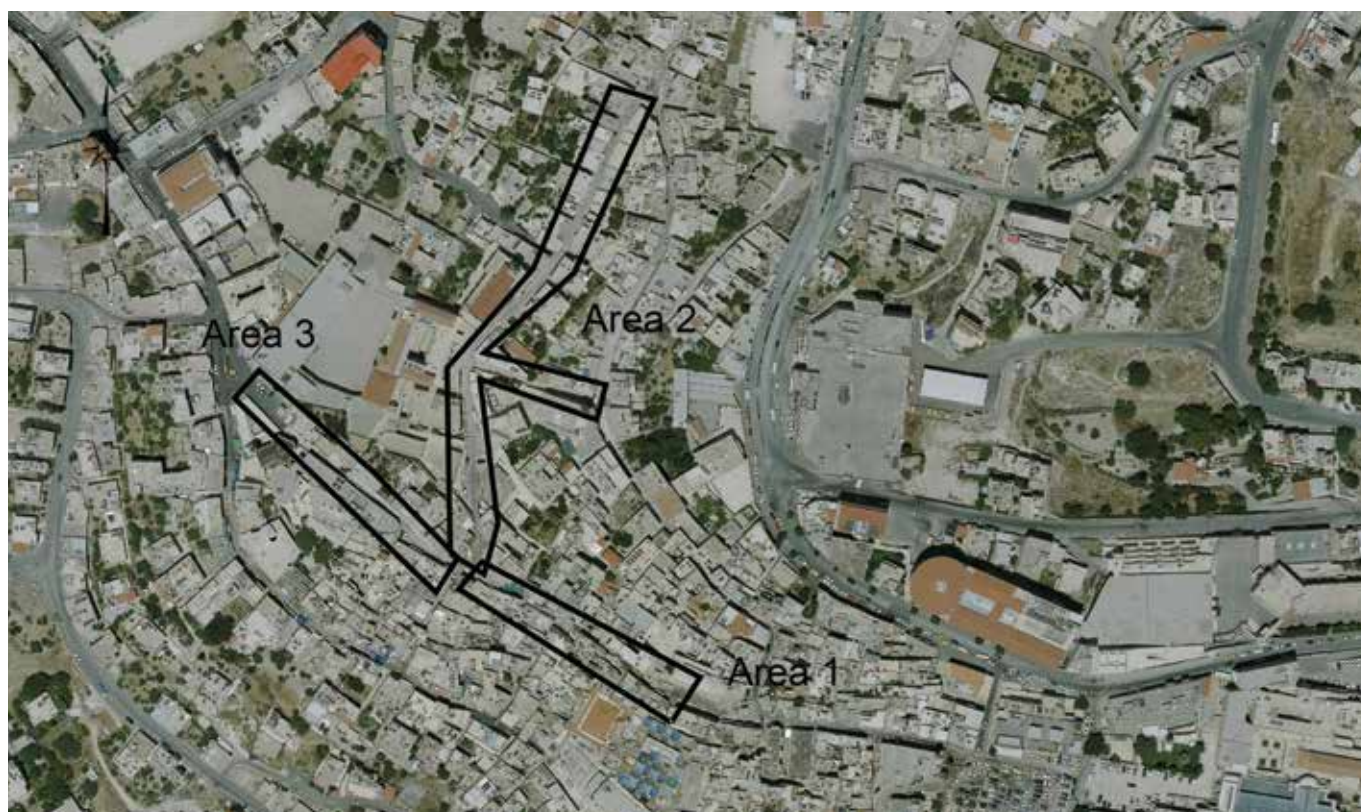
As for Beit Sahour, BDF will contribute to the municipality program for changing the street lighting of the city into LED. Two streets of the touristic area were proposed to be part of the program. The streets are the most walkable by tourists and locals, and new lighting system will help in offering a safe and pleasant experience for residents and tourists who would like to walk around the area.

Besides lighting the main streets, the project in later phases aims at providing houses in isolated areas, deprived of electric power, service with stand-alone

solar panels for generating basic electric power for lighting, cooking and food preservation to help the residing farmers survive in their land. A total of 35 houses west of Beit Jala will be provided with the needed power to help resident farmers to survive on their lands while helping them to protect and preserve their heritage.

The photovoltaic panels, installed on the existing poles, will convert the solar energy to electrical energy during day time. The produced electrical energy will be fed directly to the electric grid through a bi-directional electrical meter which will measure the produced electrical energy during the day time.

During the night time, the street lighting will consume energy from electric network through the electric meters. This "Surplus Net Metering System" will not need batteries for energy storage.





# Projects 2020-2021

## Hussam and Suhair Abu Issa Mother & Child Community Center

The Bethlehem Development Foundation and the Doha Municipality are developing an operational plan for the Hussam and Suhair Abu Issa Mother and Child Community Center. The Foundation has used the expertise of its board members and external experts to survey community needs in and around Doha to determine the purpose of the center and the optimal services it can provide. There was consensus on the need for the center to serve women, as a tool for empowering them socially and economically, through programs and projects that BDF will seek in partnership with the municipality. An in-depth

study that clearly sets out the vision and objectives, an operational plan and an organizational structure that will gain the center sufficient confidence and standards that qualify it to present these projects to local and international donors.

The cooperation that started 6 years ago, between the foundation and with the Municipality of Doha is still ongoing to develop an implementation plan with clear steps and a timeframe that allows the Doha Municipality to maximize the potential benefit for the whole allocated component.

### About the project

The Mother and Child Community Center was made possible by a generous donation from Hussam & Suhair Abu Issa.

The 600 square meter center, completed on November 11, 2020, mediates the city of Doha. It is located in the municipality garden which also houses a 7x7 mini soccer court donated by the Said Khoury Family.

Despite the onslaught of the pandemic and due to the dedication of all parties, the municipality, the contractor and BDF the building was completed on November 11, 2020.

The initial concept for the project was to serve 15,000 residents of all ages. Due to identified lack of women-oriented services the concept was transformed to serve women of Doha and surrounding areas while taking care of their children also. The belief in women equality and child protection is the pillar of building strong and empowered communities.

### The Vision

We envision that the center will help to contribute to the social justice and gender equality within the Palestinian community.

### With a Mission to

- Contribute to the maintenance and development of social justice.
- Improve the quality of life for all women, especially the marginalized.
- Strengthen social cohesion through community empowerment.

### And Goals Set to

- support the development of community coherence;
- provide training to enhance empowerment of women.
- provide a development basis for children,
- create networks among women-based community organizations that share same values

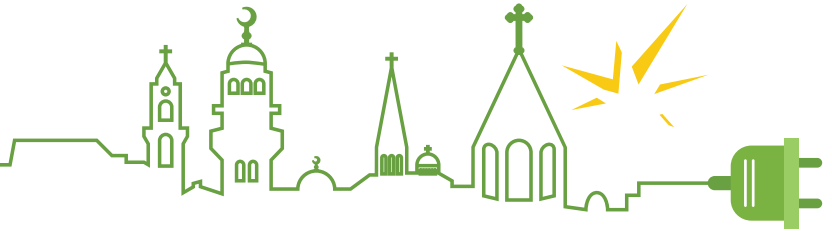
### Mother-Child life transforming Program

Part of the constructed building will be used by the women of the community for physical exercise and indoor sports using specialized training equipment to help improve the physical and psychological wellbeing of the women of the community.

### Community Based Preschool Education Program for Children

Skills such as naming colors, showing affection, and hopping on one foot are called developmental milestones.





Developmental milestones are things most children can do by a certain age. Children reach milestones in how they play, learn, speak, behave, and move (like crawling, walking, or jumping).

### **Women Physical and Health Empowerment -Sports Center**

In the community center Health and Fitness section we offer a superb variety of exercise classes, sports lessons, fitness groups and leisure activities for all women. We help them gain confidence and wellbeing, but most of all helping them to enjoy exercise and sports.

### **E-learning Program**

The aim of the capacity-building intervention is to initiate skill development and introduce foundational concepts in support of engaging online learners.





# Cultural Bethlehem, A Special Tour for Palestinian Guides

By Mazen Karam, BDF Managing Director



*An initiative launched by the Bethlehem Development Foundation BoD Chairman Mr. Hani Abu-Dayyeh was conducted October 27 and 28, 2020.*

"The whole project's purpose was to introduce the guides to the Socio-cultural development of the Bethlehem region and the latest findings at the Church of Nativity. The opinion here is to showcase Bethlehem with all its historical and cultural richness. Hopefully, this will slowly lead to groups spending more time in the Bethlehem region and also walking through its rich historic core, partake in what the region and city can offer thus contributing more to the local economy". *Hani Abu Dayyeh*

The success was possible with the full support of Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb President of Dar AL Kalima University and a member of the BDF Board of Trustees, Mr. George Al'ama Director of Dar el Sabbagh Diaspora Studies and Research Center and a member of the BDF Board of Directors.

The day started with a transfer from the Ambassador hotel in Jerusalem to Catholic Roundabout (Duwwar El Amal) followed by a walking tour with Mr. George Aama in Star Street, focusing on the cultural development of the core city of Bethlehem. The group visited the recently restored historic Dar El Sabbagh building which houses the Diaspora Studies and Research Center. Mr. George Al'ama gave them a tour of the center and explained the Vision and Mission of the Center. The group then walked through the old city down to the Church of Nativity, for a special tour of the restoration works recently completely by the Presidential Committee for the Restoration of the Church of Nativity. The tour was conducted by Mr. George Al'ama to explain the work that was undertaken by the Italian company Piacenti and final findings. Dr. Georg Rowekamp the director of DVHL commented on the religious symbolism of the mosaic and the theological exegesis.

In the afternoon the group of guides attended the book launching of Bethlehem: A Socio-Cultural History and the Ismael Shammout Award Ceremony.

A special biblical dinner was hosted by Dar al-Kalima University (DAK) in the presence of the Palestinian Minister of Culture. Visiting guides from the north stayed overnight at Bethlehem City Hotel.

The second day started with a lecture by Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb at Dar Annadwa on the Bible through Palestinian Eyes followed by a visit to the cave below the room for an explanation of the Nativity Scene drawing on the continuity of the Biblical Culture in Bethlehem and the surrounding villages.

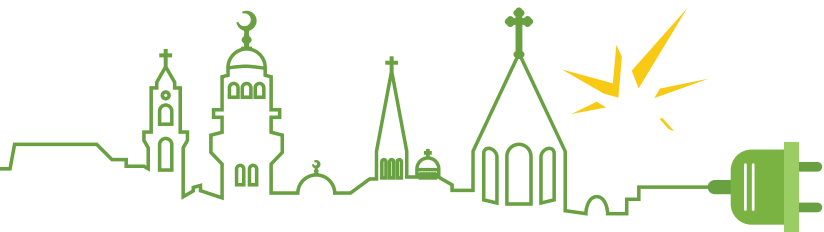
The group then walked through the old city down to the Church of Nativity, for a special tour of the restoration works recently completely by the Presidential Committee for the Restoration of the Church of Nativity. The tour was conducted by Mr. Gianmarco Picianti, CEO of Piacenti the Italian Contracting Company who undertook the works. tour of the Church of Nativity to explain their work and final findings. Dr. Georg Rowekamp the director of DVHL commented on the religious symbolism of the mosaic and the theological exegesis.

The tour ended at Dar al-Bad Museum, a historic house donated by the Arab Orthodox Benevolent Society and restored by Agence Francaise de Development (AFD). The museum portrays the daily life of our forefathers with emphasis on olives and oil.



*Mr. George Al'ama introducing guides to Dar El Sabbagh Diaspora Studies and Research Center.*





## Testimonials

Dear Mr. Hani,

We all participated guides in the two-day course, would like to thank the main organizer of the event:

Mr. Hani, President NETOURS and Chairman of the Board of Directors at the Bethlehem Development Foundation

for encouraging us to have a cultural view about Bethlehem organizing this two-day tour. Also, our appreciation goes to Pastor Dr. Mitri Raheb Dar El Kalimeh College, who offered us the dinner and the presentation. A big thanks to Mr. George AlAma, Dar Al Sabagh Diaspora Studies and Research Centre. Not forgetting also, NETours who hosted us at the Ambassador City Center and offer us all what we need for all participants, they show us as usual their generosity, THANKS. The course was very informative and enriching one. We learned lots of new facts about Bethlehem, which will enhance our work while guiding tours and pilgrimages in Bethlehem!

Taking this opportunity we would like to thank Mr. Hani as he promised us to try organize another full day tour to continue highlighting the crossing point between Scriptures and the Palestinian Landscape.

**Sincerely Thanks,  
May God bless your mission in this land,**

The Guides, Daniel Daniel, Yousef Mazawi, Sufian abu Hana, Tobasi Jacob, Maroon Sader, Muna abu lasal, Pierre Tannous, Naser El Deek, Bishara Daniel Sahwani, Foteh Mickel, Faris Azar, Mnayer rami, Manarious Daoud, Makari Samer, George Zambil, Shady Mansour, Simon Asmer, Suhil Odeh, Andre Hadad and Yorgo Hermantiz

Dear Mr. Hani

Warm greetings from Nazareth the city of the Annunciation. I was very pleased to meet you. thank you for sharing all the information, which was unknown to most of us . The west bank 2-day experience was so rich in cultural and historical elements, that will always make me feel so blessed I received it. Thankfully yours, God bless you with all the best,

**Mona Abo Elassal - Christopoulos**







# AFBDF Message

The American Friends of the Bethlehem Development Foundation (AFBDF) is deeply committed to support BDF efforts in Bethlehem.

Following on the success of our events of 2018 and 2019, in 2020 and only weeks before the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic, AFBDF held two awareness events in support of the restoration of the Church of Nativity and other community-based projects.

The dinner of January 31, 2020 at the Lotte New York Palace and the breakfast of February 7, 2020 at the Museum of the Bible, were attended by enthusiastic supporters' representing various churches and societies in America.

The pandemic increased our resolve and commitment to support BDF. On December 1<sup>st</sup> AFBDF hosted the first ever Giving Tuesday. Proceeds helped supply Christmas gifts to challenged school children in Bethlehem and to support the restoration of the Church of Nativity.

We are extremely excited for 2021, we cannot wait to see what blessings are in store. We look forward to sharing some new projects that BDF has lined up to help restore Bethlehem to its rightful place of being the beacon of Hope.

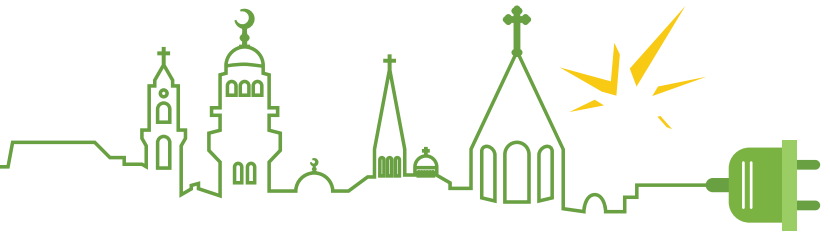
**George Salem**  
**President**



## **The American Friends of the Bethlehem Development Foundation New York Dinner**

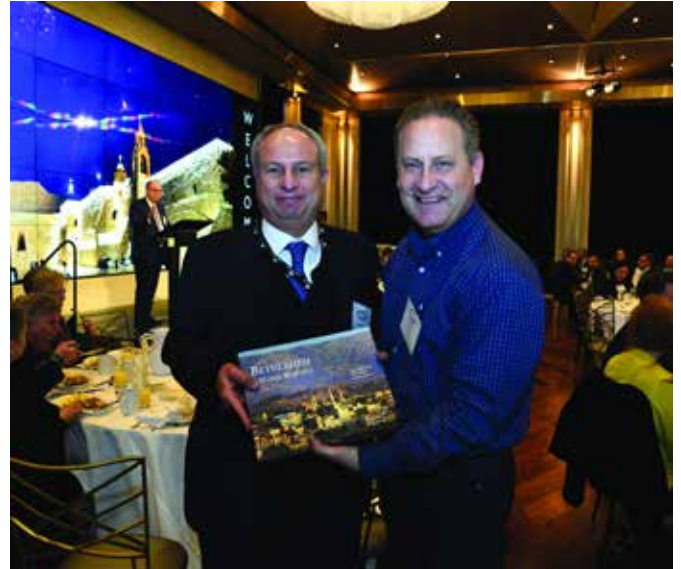
(New York, 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2020) AFBDF held its dinner on January 31, 2020 at the Lotte New York Palace in New York. The dinner was attended by over 75 enthusiastic supporters.





**The American Friends  
of the Bethlehem Development  
Foundation Washington DC Breakfast**

(Washington, DC. February 7th, 2020) AFBDF held its breakfast on February 7, 2020 at the Museum of the Bible. The Breakfast was attended by over 76 enthusiastic supporters.



*"We are thrilled by the outpouring of support from our American friends and their commitment to help revitalize the Church of the Nativity where Jesus Christ was born. The AFBDF breakfast was an uplifting demonstration of the enthusiasm in the United States for the Holy City of Bethlehem"*

**AFBDF President  
George Salem**



# Together We Give



## Giving Tuesday Dec 1, 2020

On December 1, 2020 AFBDF hosted its first Giving Tuesday. The proceeds helped to provide Christmas gifts for challenged students in Bethlehem schools and also to help fund the restoration of the Church of the Nativity.

At a time when we are all experiencing the pandemic, generosity is what brings people of all races, faiths, and political views together across the globe. Generosity gives everyone the power to make a positive change in the lives of others and is a fundamental value anyone can act on. We all have gifts to give, and with social media, online giving, delivery, mail, and phones, there are limitless ways to use your generosity to support others.

**Thank you for your continuous support to this noble cause.**



## Christmas Charity Concert

The Bethlehem Development Foundation sealed the last Christmas observed in Bethlehem with a superb performance by outstanding Palestinian musicians organized by the Jafra Music Productions.

Le Trio Joubran playing traditional Palestinian music together with the and Oud Al-Nad Choir Group, performed at the Christmas Charity Concert held in the chapel of the St. Francis Church in the Nativity Church Complex. The concert attracted hundreds of people over two days. The proceeds of the concert were donated equally to the School of Joy in Beit Sahour and to Children Without Borders Association in Bethlehem. The event was made possible through the collaboration and support of the Custodia Terræ Sanctæ, Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC) and Bank of Palestine.





*The Bethlehem Development Foundation  
is a Non-Profit Organization  
registered under Palestinian Law No. 1  
On Charitable Associations and Civil Society  
Organizations, Ministry of Interior.*



**NGO Registration Number** BL-3347-SD

**Principal Office** Bethlehem Development Foundation  
P.O.Box 26, Bethlehem, Palestine  
94, Milk Grotto Street

**Chairman of the BoT** Samer Khoury  
**Chairman of the BoD** Hani Abu Dayyeh  
**Managing Director / CEO** Mazen Karam

**Contact Details**

**telephone** +972 2 275 8877 / 9

**fax** +972 2 275 8878

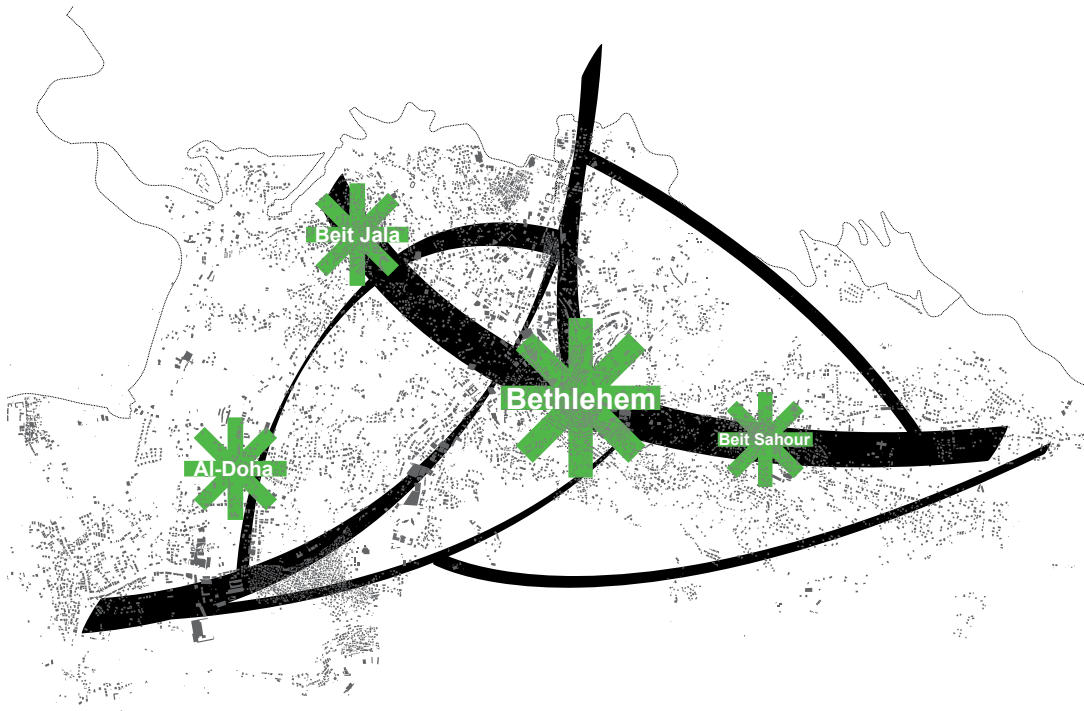
**e-mail** info@bethlehemdevelopment.org

**website** www.bethlehemdevelopment.org

**facebook** Bethlehem Development Foundation

**YouTube** Bethlehem Development Foundation

**External Auditors** Ernest & Young



Bethlehem



مؤسسة تطوير بيت لحم  
Bethlehem Development Foundation

**BDF** | BETHLEHEM  
DEVELOPMENT  
FOUNDATION **20  
21**

