



photo: Megan Bradfield/ELCA Global Mission

A place to belong

WEST BANK — In 1984, Lydia Mansour felt called to begin a ministry to visually impaired Palestinian women. Lydia, herself visually impaired, knows firsthand how women and girls with disabilities are often challenged by double discrimination for their disability and their gender. Education, life skills, and adequate housing are difficult to access as a woman with a disability living in the Holy Land.

Lydia knew of women and girls who were not receiving education because they were visually impaired. Her dream was to provide not just a place to learn but a place to belong.

The Peace Center for the Blind is an independent Palestinian Christian social organization in Jerusalem serving women of the West Bank. Women participate in programs of basic literacy in English and Arabic, Braille instruction, vocational training, and basic life skills.

Regular health examinations and counseling are available to women residing in the residential facilities at the center.

From a small initial contribution of only \$200 given by friends and neighbors, Lydia had faith that a place of education and empowerment would emerge. The Peace Center for the Blind has grown to assist over 50 women at any given time. So far over 100 women have been empowered to live independent lives, participating as a voice in the campaign for equal rights for women and people living with disabilities. They act as role models for other women hopeful of finding a place where they too belong. Most importantly, the Center provides friendship and fellowship to women in the margins of society.

Your gifts to ELCA World Hunger support the Peace Center for the Blind and many other ministries around the world and close to home.



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