

LIVE PEACE!

2017 New Jersey Synod Bosnia International Servant Trip Devotional Guide



June 22 - July 3, 2017

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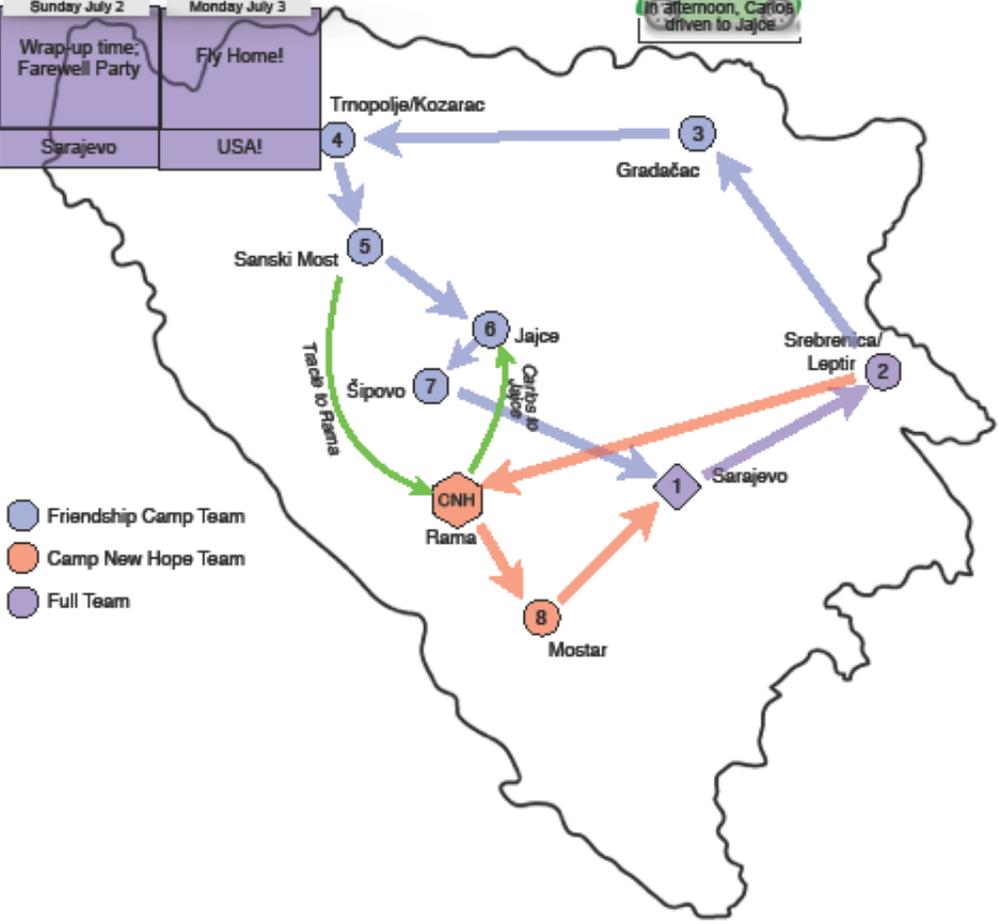
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**New Jersey Synod
Bosnia IST 2017
Itinerary**

	DAY 1 Thursday June 22	DAY 2 Friday June 23	DAY 3 Saturday June 24	DAY 4 Sunday June 25	DAY 5 Monday June 26	DAY 6 Tuesday June 27	DAY 7 Wednesday June 28	DAY 8 Thursday June 29	DAY 9 Friday June 30	DAY 10 Saturday July 1
Team Purple	Fly from Newark to Sarajevo	Arrive in Sarajevo	FC 1 Sarajevo Drive to Srebrenica	FC 2 Leptir	Drive to Rama. Prep for CNH	Camp New Hope				FC 8 Mostar
RON Room Over Night	on the plane!	Sarajevo	Srebrenica	Srebrenica	Rama	Rama	Rama	Rama	Mostar	Sarajevo
Friendship Camp Team					Drive to Gradačac	FC 3 Gradačac	FC 4 Trnopolje/ Kozarac	FC 5 Sanski Most	FC 6 Jajce	FC 7 Šipovo
RON Room Over Night					Gradačac	Kozarac	Kozarac	Jajce	Šipovo	Sarajevo

	DAY 11 Sunday July 2	DAY 12 Monday July 3
Full Team	Wrap-up time; Farewell Party	Fly Home!
RON Room Over Night	Sarajevo	USA!

In morning Tracie driven to Rama.
In afternoon, Carlos driven to Jajce.



- Friendship Camp Team
- Camp New Hope Team
- Full Team

You are invited to join the journey of the 2017 Bosnia International Servant Trip in daily prayer. Each day at 6 PM Bosnia time (Noon New Jersey Time), the Travel Team stops for a time of prayer. You are invited to pray for us and to pray with us!

Thursday, June 22	Departure and Travel
Friday, June 23	Arrive in Sarajevo
Saturday, June 24	Sarajevo
Sunday, June 25	Leptir
Monday, June 26	Travel to Gradačac & Rama
Tuesday, June 27	Gradačac/Camp New Hope
Wednesday, June 28	Trnopolje-Kozarac/Camp New Hope
Thursday, June 29	Sanski Most/Camp New Hope
Friday, June 30	Jajce /Camp New Hope
Saturday, July 1	Šipovo /Mostar
Sunday, July 2	Wrap-Up & Farewell Celebration
Monday, July 3	Traveling Home (or just traveling...)

Join us in praying for PEACE—peace for Bosnia-Herzegovina and its God-beloved children, peace for the God-beloved children of our nation, all nations, and those who find themselves without a nation to call home.

Join us in praying for PEACE in all hearts, all homes, all communities, all corners of God's beloved Creation.

Join us in praying that in all ways, small and large, Jesus would lead and empower us to LIVE PEACE.

The space within each day's entry is there for you to draw, write, free-associate, doodle, or as a focus point for meditating on the Bible text, reflection questions, prayer, events of the day, or anything else that arises in our prayer time.

JUNE 22nd – “Leavings”

*The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in
from this time on and forevermore.*

Psalm 121:8, NRSV

“Leavings” are not easy for most of us, even if what we (or our loved ones) are moving toward is much anticipated. Today, as the Travel Team leaves for Bosnia-Herzegovina, there are goodbyes to be tended to. There are mixtures of joy and fear, excitement and hesitation, as an awesome adventure begins for those boarding an airplane and those getting into an emptier car to return home. We embrace the paradox that we will be separated physically but at one in Christian community and in our daily prayer—this is a joint venture, and we go to serve with one another and with the God who leads and strengthens us.

‡ When you hear that the LORD ***keeps*** our comings and goings, what do you see...feel...understand...imagine....hope?

‡ What will help you remember your unity with God and one another in the coming hours of travel and transition?

Good and Gracious God, you bless and keep us in our stayings and goings. We pray in thanksgiving for the communities who have brought us to this day, and we pray your blessing in all our encounters along the way. We entrust our journeys with you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

June 23rd—Sarajevo, City of the World

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. Then the LORD God will wipe away the tears from all faces...

Isaiah 25:6-8a, NRSV

In the winter of 1984, the world came to Sarajevo for the Olympics. Less than ten years later, a place set aside for peaceful games and inclusive community became a place of siege, a place of deep division and unspeakable violence. In the text above, the prophet Isaiah conveys God's vision of a Day of Peace when all nations will come together in God's life-restoring presence...in peace.

‡ Where today do you catch a glimpse—a small sign—that God's Day of Peace is on its way?

‡ Where do you observe lingering evidence of division, separation, brokenness?

Gracious God, grant peace among nations. Cleanse from our own hearts the seeds of strife: greed and envy, harsh misunderstandings and ill will, fear and desire for revenge. Make us quick to welcome ventures in cooperation among the peoples of the world, so that there may be woven the fabric of a common good too strong to be torn by the evil hands of war. In the time of opportunity, make us to be diligent; and in the time of peril, let not our courage fail; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (ELW prayers.)

June 24th—Brought Together

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

*It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.*

*It is like the dew of Hermon
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the LORD ordained his blessing,
life forevermore.*

Psalm 133, NRSV

Our first Friendship Camp in Sarajevo brings together people who would otherwise be separated. Children from two schools—one from either side of the war-time siege line—will laugh and learn and play together today, along with kids from the Joy of Life program for disabled children. The Psalmist holds living with kindred “together in unity” to be a most precious blessing, but we know how difficult it can be to live in peace even with those closest to us, our families and friends. We pray and look for God’s blessing not just on today’s Friendship Camp but hoping today will contribute to a firm foundation for unity and peace among new friends, their families and communities.

‡ Oil running down a beard is a biblical (and hard-to-relate-to) image of what a super-great blessing is like. What image comes to your mind when you think of unity and peace that would make God happy for God’s children?

‡ Did you see anything today that would make a great “picture” for a joy-filled psalm of unity?

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; and that, with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (ELW prayers.)

June 25th—Unbound Life

Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this so that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

John 11:39-44, NRSV

Today's Friendship Camp is near Srebrenica, a place where the "stench" of death still lingers. Yet, we are reminded that God continues to call life to emerge from the least likely places. The kids we will most definitely fall in love with today are gathered by an organization called Leptir, or butterfly—a creature that has been released from the bonds of a cocoon to live a more free, beautiful life.

‡ Where today did you see children (of any age!) being unbound?

‡ Have you experienced Jesus calling YOU to be released today?

Good and Gracious God, open our ears to hear you calling us by name into new life. Open our ears to hear you calling us to unbind one another. Call each heart, each family, each community, each nation, each corner of creation into freedom and peace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

June 26—On the Road Again

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them...

Luke 24:13-15a, NRSV

After three full days in Bosnia, today we will travel, and we will have time to “catch up” with ourselves and look back on what we have experienced. As we rest and reflect, we may remember moments of “heart burn”—that is, close encounters with Jesus that stick with us and keep working on us. Jesus surely walks by our side!

‡ What moment or encounter from the past three days is sticking with you?

‡ Looking back, what is the most beautiful thing you have seen along the road?

God of our walking and of our wandering, open us up to your companionship along the road. May our encounters with you leave our hearts burning to live and share the way of forgiveness, love, and peace. In the name of the One who opens us up to YOU. Amen.

June 27—New Hope

But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope:
The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.
“The LORD is my portion,” says my soul,
“therefore I will hope in him.”

Lamentations 3:21-24, NRSV

While the Friendship Camp team arrives in Gradacac, some children from Gradacac will be with our other teammates at Camp New Hope in Rama. What a beautiful sign of God's steadfast love! Jeremiah tells us that God's mercies are new every morning. We can count on God's faithfulness and God's over-the-top love for us—for ALL of us. God's love is where our HOPE comes from.

‡ What new thing did you experience today?

‡ Describe or imagine your hope for tomorrow. It may be a hope that is simple and local or grand and all-encompassing.

Good and Gracious God, your over-the-top love and mercy are new every morning, and our hope in you is our rest every night. May each day bring us closer to your Day of Peace. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

June 28—Holy Ground

“Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”

Exodus 3:5, NRSV

In Trnopolje, the school where our Friendship Camp is held—where children learn, where today we play games and sing—served as a concentration camp during the war. Sometimes we find ourselves on ground made so holy by horror, by love, by resurrection, that we must take off our shoes and be still in God’s presence.

‡ At the winding down (or in the midst) of an active day, what comes to you in this moment of prayer and stillness?

‡ Where have you found yourself on holy ground today?

Good and Gracious God, you call us onto holy ground—places and encounters both exciting and frightening, where history and hope intersect, where sorrow and joy coexist, where the old and the new combine to give rise to new life. Through activity and through stillness, bring peace to birth on this holy ground and beyond. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

June 29—Refuge

In those days when there was again a great crowd without anything to eat, he called his disciples and said to them, "I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way—and some of them have come from a great distance.... Then he ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples to distribute... They ate and were filled.

Mark 8:1-3,6,8, NRSV

At Camp New Hope, friends who have traveled from a distance will again today sit down together and be fed. At Sanski Most, the Friendship Camp team will gather with many children of families who are refugees, who fled here from a distance during the war. We have come a great distance to sit down alongside these new friends, fed by the One who knows our deepest hunger.

✚ Has there been a time when God has called you to share yourself in order to meet another's need?

✚ Has there been a time when Jesus has fed you through the hands of another?

Good and Gracious God, feed the hunger of your children with the Bread of Life. Quench the thirst of your children with Living Water. May all eat and be filled. Envelope this world you so love—and especially the most vulnerable—with your presence, your protection, your peace. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

June 30—Steadfast Love

[Jesus said:] “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

John 3:16-17, NRSV

Today, our Friendship Camp is held in Jajce, where children attend “two schools under one roof,” a broken and deplorable reminder that the deep divisions and devastations of the war will continue to take time to heal. Today is also the closing day of Camp New Hope, where the bonds of friendship have had the time and space to deepen beyond one day. Today we reflect on the fact that the love, respect and peace built among people takes time, effort, space, and patience, and is a reflection of the perfect, over-the-top, tougher-than-Crazy-Glue love of God. When Jesus says that God loves the world, he uses the word *cosmos*, which means the whole messy, dirty, lovely, complicated, broken and beloved reality of what *is*. In Jesus, God is loving us into *what can be*.

‡ How have you been part of God’s peace—God’s *what can be*?

‡ Where have you observed acts of peace today?

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; and that, with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (ELW prayer.)

July 1—Common Humanity

“...But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’”

Luke 10: 33-36, NRSV

An injured man is helped, not by leaders of his own community, but by a Samaritan, a member of a community the man would normally avoid out of hatred and suspicion. The encounter of the Samaritan with the injured Jewish man reminds them of their common humanity, which is God-given, and deeper than their divisions. Today is the largest and longest-running Friendship Camp of the week in Šipovo—the only town to welcome our team each and every year of the Bosnia International Servant Trip despite the fact that, initially, the Bosnia IST presence was met with mistrust. A Friendship Camp is also held today in the city of Mostar, still strongly divided along ethnic lines and reeling from these divisions. We pray that each Friendship Camp participant experiences our shared humanity, and that we may each bring this truth back home to our families and communities.

God, our refuge and strength, you have bound us together in a common life. In all our conflicts, help us confront one another without hatred or bitterness, to listen for your voice amid competing claims, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (ELW prayer.)

July 2—"Peace I leave with you..."

[Jesus said:] "But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

John 14:26-27, NRSV

Our days in Bosnia have been filled with "hellos" and "goodbyes," with comings and goings. These can take a toll. Today we celebrate the joys and the shared sorrows, the friendships and the acts of peace, the fervent (and continuing) prayers for the people of Bosnia. Jesus promises that we neither celebrate nor separate on our own, but always with his transforming and reassuring presence through the Holy Spirit. As we make space in this day to simply BE, to take in closing moments of this journey, you may wish to pray, meditate, draw, write, or otherwise respond to these words of Chinese philosopher Lao-Tse:

*If there is to be peace in the world,
There must be peace in the nations.*

*If there is to be peace in the nations,
There must be peace in the cities.*

*If there is to be peace in the cities,
There must be peace between neighbors.*

*If there is to be peace between neighbors,
There must be peace in the home.*

*If there is to be peace in the home,
There must be peace in the heart.*

And God's people say...AMEN!
Let it be!

July 3—Pray for the Peace...

*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem;
“May they prosper who love you.
Peace be within your walls,
And security within your towers.”
For the sake of my relatives and friends
I will say, “Peace be within you.”*

Psalm 122:6-8, NRSV

As we depart for home (or for other destinations), and as our families, friends and congregations prepare for our return, we know that our journey is not really over, but just beginning. We will share and listen to one another's stories. We will invite others into the Bosnia International Servant Trip ministry, and into the work of peacemaking in every place. We will continue to pray for Bosnia, this time with the faces and photos of friends new and old joining us in our prayers. Pray for the Peace of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, of Israel and Palestine. Pray for the Peace of Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Pray for the Peace of the United States. Pray for Peace in our nearest dwelling places and our furthest imaginings. Pray for the Peace of all Creation.

‡ What does Peace look/smell/sound/feel like to you now?

*As you go on your way may Christ go with you.
May he go before you to show you the way.
May he go behind you to encourage you,
beside you to befriend you,
above you to watch over,
within you to give you peace.
(John Ylvisaker)*

Bosnia International Servant Trip - New Jersey Synod, ELCA

TRAVEL TEAM 2017

<p>SERVANT</p>  <p>Group Leader Tara Zigler Hope, Freehold</p>	<p>Team Leader</p>  <p>Cindy Henry St. Paul, Hainesport</p>	<p>BIH Coordinators</p>  <p>Azra Saje & Vjeko Saje Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina CNH Coord.</p>	<p>Trip Coordinator</p>  <p>Jason Reed St. Paul, Hainesport CNH Leader</p>																					
 <p>Shelby Matoli Prince of Peace, Marlton</p>	<p>GAMES</p>  <p>Group Leader CNH Carlos Cuevas Christus, Camden</p>	<p>DRAMA</p>  <p>Group Leader Wayne Olsen St. Paul, Teaneck</p>	<p>Friendship Camp Interpreters</p>  <p>Lazar Jezdimir Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herz.</p>	<p>CAMP NEW HOPE</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Jason Reed</td> <td>Vjeko Saje</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ela Peterson St. Mathew, Moorestown</td> <td>Dino Muratović Zenica, Bosnia-Herz.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nicole Krenz St. Stephen-Grace, Newark</td> <td>Željka Mitró Šipovo, Bosnia-Herz.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sarah Ponsini Fath, Hillsborough</td> <td>Džan Bekrić Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herz.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Azra Mehmedagić Visoko, Bosnia-Herz.</td> <td>Iva Stojčić Mostar, Bosnia-Herz.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carlos Cuevas</td> <td>Bishop Tracie Bartholomew</td> </tr> </table>	Jason Reed	Vjeko Saje			Ela Peterson St. Mathew, Moorestown	Dino Muratović Zenica, Bosnia-Herz.			Nicole Krenz St. Stephen-Grace, Newark	Željka Mitró Šipovo, Bosnia-Herz.			Sarah Ponsini Fath, Hillsborough	Džan Bekrić Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herz.			Azra Mehmedagić Visoko, Bosnia-Herz.	Iva Stojčić Mostar, Bosnia-Herz.	Carlos Cuevas	Bishop Tracie Bartholomew
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