

**New Jersey Synod
International Servant Trip to Bosnia-Herzegovina**

2018 DEVOTIONAL BOOK



June 16-27, 2018

You are invited to join the 2018 Bosnia International Servant Team daily at noon New Jersey time (6 p.m. Bosnia time) when the team pauses for prayer.

This guide was aggregated and expanded from devotionals offered in previous years, with thanks to Pastors (and former Travel Team members) Wendy Abrahamson, Lauren Applegate, Maristela Freiberg, Sara Lilja and Jill Collict.

TRAVEL TEAM 2018

Bosnia International Servant Trip

New Jersey Synod, ELCA

CAMP NEW HOPE



Ella Peterson
St. Matthew, Moorestown



Nicole Krenz
St. Stephan-Grace, Newark



Cliff Konnerth
St. Timothy, Wayne

GAMES



Nicole Seitz
Hope, Freehold

Group Leader



Sarah Christensen
Nativity, East Brunswick



Jacob Henry
St. Paul, Hainesport

SERVANT



Andi Gerrard
St. Stephen, Woodbury

Group Leader



LuAnn Barnes
Holy Trinity, Manasquan



Kate Morrison

DRAMA



Wayne Olsen
St. Paul, Teaneck

Group Leader



Grace Burrows
Hope, Freehold



Jake Montgomery
St. Luke, Florence, SC



Rev. Gary LeCroy
St. Paul, Teaneck

INTERPRETERS / PREVODIOCI

Friendship Camp Team

Adna Hasanbegović ... Sarajevo
Lazar Jezdimir ... Banja Luka
Hana Hasić ... Mostar
Džan Bekrić ... Sarajevo
Faris Hasić ... Mostar

Camp New Hope Team

Azra Mehmedagić ... Visoko
Kan Peljto ... Sarajevo
Anur Peljto ... Sarajevo
Vesna Kvrđić ... Šipovo
Rijad Adžamija ... Sarajevo
Iva Stojić ... Mostar

BiH Coordinator



Vjeko Saje
Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herz.

BiH Coordinator



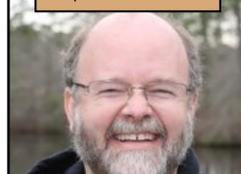
Azra Saje
Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herz.

Team Leader



Cindy Henry
St. Paul, Hainesport

Trip Coordinator



Jason Reed
St. Paul, Hainesport

MUSICIAN



Larry Olson
Emmanuel, Beresford, SD

If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. — Psalm 139:9

Today is the day we have been looking forward to! Today we will begin our trek from our home states, across the Atlantic Ocean, and on to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Leaving home, family and friends can sometimes be difficult, and this is something that your fellow travel team members understand. We hope and pray that as we depart from this place, the thoughts and feelings of sorrow that come with missing what is known may be overshadowed by the excitement of what is to come. We will be working for peace, not because we have to, but because we are called to. God has called each and every one of us to be a part of his team and to be a presence of God's love in this part of the world.

“We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make, which over time, add up to big differences we cannot foresee.”

— Marian Wright Edelman

Pray for: Patience

How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? — Psalm 137:6

Sarajevo is the capital of Bosnia Herzegovina and is the center of the country's economy, university education and culture. The city has numerous cinemas, art galleries and film production houses. It has a rich history that dates to 2400-2200 B.C. On a walk around town, you can see the influences of the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, Yugoslav and modern eras. During the war, Serbian forces surrounded the city and attacked residents with sniper fire and mortar shells. The siege lasted three years. At times, there was no electricity, water or food. Some scars from the war remain today, including a few Sarajevo "roses," holes in the sidewalks and streets that had once been hit by mortars and are now filled with red resin. In these scars we are reminded of the peace and reconciliation for which we pray and strive through our ministry here.

"Peace is not an absence of war; it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice."

— Baruch Spinoza

Pray for: Healing

Monday, June 18

**Friendship Camp Team to Srebrenica
Camp New Hope Team to Rama**

If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. — 1 Corinthians 12:26

Srebrenica is a small town in the far east of Bosnia-Herzegovina, very near the border with Serbia. It is the site of the most deadly attack and genocide during the war. Over the course of just a few days in July 1995, more than 8,000 unarmed civilian men and boys were killed. This was the largest massacre in Europe since World War II. The victims' remains were buried in mass graves that were then excavated and reburied numerous times as a way to hide the evidence of what had happened. Srebrenica still suffers psychologically, physically, socially and spiritually.

Visiting the memorial site in Srebrenica can be a breathtaking experience. In the center of the memorial site, there is a space for prayer, as well as a monument that displays the names of those who died. The museum has film footage and photos used as evidence in the war crime trials in The Hague. Every July, on the anniversary of the genocide, thousands of people gather to pay their respects to those who died, to witness the remains found in the past year being entombed, to stand in solidarity as a presence that will not allow things such as this to ever happen again, to no one and nowhere.

Camp New Hope will welcome students and teachers to the House of Peace at a Franciscan monastery at Rama. The monastery, founded in the 15th century, is situated beside a manmade lake created in 1968 during the Tito era. The monastery is known for its religious artwork, its iconic cross by Mile Blazevic, and inclusive Last Supper sculpture by Divo Grabovcev.

“Saints have a heart full of justice.” — Thomas Aquinas

Pray for: Justice

The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have not need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. — 1 Corinthians 12:21-24a

At Leptir Camp, we will work with children and their families who are affected by physical and/or developmental disabilities. Programs like Leptir, which translates to butterfly, are uncommon in the country. Leptir offers children and families support and attention that they otherwise would not receive.

“Compassion is a foundation for sharing our aliveness and building a more humane world.”

— Martin Lowenthal

Pray for: Compassion

Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. — Hebrews 13:2

Gradačac was a town severely bombed during the war. It is located at the narrow northern corridor that connects two major portions of the Bosnian Serb entity Republika Srpska. Gradačac became part of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war. The school seems to be thriving, but we're told that students with mixed parentage are often bullied. Gradačac Castle is a popular tourist attraction. It's a fort with 60-foot walls, built between 1765 and 1821, and a 72-foot watchtower, built in 1824. The original foundation was made by the Romans, and the castle was finished in the 19th century. The fortification was instrumental in the 19th century when the Bosnians rose against Turkish occupation and drove the Ottomans to Kosovo.

"We are made for goodness. We are made for love. We are made for friendliness. We are made for togetherness. We are made for all of the beautiful things that you and I know. We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders. All are welcome: black, white, red, yellow, rich, poor, educated, not educated, male, female, gay, straight, all, all, all. We all belong to this family, this human family, God's family."

— Desmond Tutu

Pray for: Inclusiveness

The light shines in the darkness, and darkness did not overcome it. — John 1:5

Kozarac is an area that experienced “ethnic cleansing” early in the war. Nearby Trnopolje was the site of one of the concentration camps and rape houses held by Serbian forces. The area was given the name of the “Heart of Darkness” during the war. In the time we have spent here, we have heard the survival stories of many who endured rape and torture within these confines. We have also learned about the lives of those who did not make it out of these camps. In the years since the war, there has been pressure for people not to speak of what happened then. The damage caused by this inability to speak and to process the past is only made worse by a memorial that has been installed for those who lost their lives while performing acts of torture on prisoners.

“Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength.”

— Arnold Schwarzenegger

Pray for: Endurance

The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest. — Isaiah 32:17,18

Jajce is famous for its beautiful waterfall. It also has the ruins of St. Luke's, a church reputed to have once held the actual bones of the Apostle Luke.

Before the war, the population of Jajce was diverse with all the ethnic groups well represented. Because of its position between the predominantly Serbian-Orthodox population in the north, the Bosniak-Muslim presence in the southeast, and the Croat-Catholic population in the southwest, the territory containing Jajce was in high demand, and therefore changed hands multiple times during the war.

The school that we work operates as “two schools under one roof.” The children of different ethnicities attend classes in the same building but at different times, in different rooms, with different desks and chairs and even different history curriculums, This arrangement perpetuates the separation that was hoped for during the war. These children have little to no interaction with one another, despite the fact they live in the same town and attend the same school.

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

— the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Pray for: Friendship

... the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house!' And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. — Luke 10:1-6

Šipovo is a small town in central Bosnia-Herzegovina with an almost exclusive Serb Orthodox population. For a short time during the war, the townspeople were driven out by Croat forces, who burned and flooded homes upon their retreat. Šipovo is located in the Republika Srpska, which has received little to no international aid to rebuild since the war. Many of the children we work with in this area are live in poverty. Our first Friendship Camp, in 2000, was met with some mistrust, but since then, the people have graciously opened their homes to us. This is the only school we have held a camp every year of our ministry.

“Everything that is in the heavens, on earth, and under the earth is penetrated with connectedness, penetrated with relatedness.”

— Hildegard of Bingen

Pray for: Connection

Be still, and know that I am God! — Psalm 146:10

How Shall I Pray by Ted Loder

How shall I pray?

Are tears prayers, Lord?

Are screams prayers,

or groans

or sighs

or curses?

Can trembling hands be lifted to you,

or clenched fists

or the cold sweat that trickles down my back

or the cramps that knot my stomach?

Will you accept my prayers, Lord,

My real prayers,

rooted in the muck and mud and rock of my life,

And not just my pretty, cut-flower, gracefully arranged

bouquet of words?

Will you accept me, Lord,

as I really am,

messed up mixture of glory and grime?

Lord, help me!
Help me trust that you do accept me as I am,
That I may be done with self-condemnation
 And self-pity
 and accept myself.
Help me to accept you as you are, Lord:
 mysterious
 hidden,
 strange,
 unknowable;
And yet to trust
 that your madness is wiser
 than my timid, self-seeking sanities,
And that nothing you've ever done
 has really been possible,
So that I may dare to be a little mad, too.

Pray for: Acceptance

So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. — Ephesians 2:17-21

Mostar is the largest city in Herzegovina and is situated along the Neretva River. At the center of Old Town Mostar, one of the most beautiful and well known bridges in the world, Stari Most, divides the city into east and west. The bridge was built in the 1600s, destroyed during the war, and reconstructed in the 2000s. During the war, Mostar experienced multiple divisions, changes in power among the ethnic groups, and war crimes. To this day, tensions between east and west (Bosniak and Croat, respectively) remain.

“If you want real peace in the world, start with children.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

Pray for: All of God’s children

[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

Our last camp brings together people who would otherwise be separated. Children from two schools — one from either side of the wartime siege line — will laugh and play together, along with kids from the Joy of Life special needs program. The East Sarajevo school is near the airport, just across the border in Republika Srpska. Both the neighborhood and school were heavily bombed during the war.

To the home of peace
to the field of love
to the land where forgiveness and right relationship meet
we look, O God,
with longing for earth's children
with compassion for the creatures
with hearts breaking for the nations and people we love.
Open us to visions we have never known
strengthen us for self-givings we have never made
delight us with a oneness we could never have imagined
that we may truly be born of You
makers of peace.

— John Philip Newell

Pray for: Reconciliation

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake — for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me and I will make you fish for people.’ And immediately, they left their nets and followed him. — Mark 1:16-18

Jesus called Simon and Andrew to leave their daily lives, and in that calling and the experience of Jesus’ ministry, their lives were changed forever. So, too, were you called to travel to Bosnia-Herzegovina, to sing, play, eat and teach children. How has your life changed?

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.

— Chinese philosopher Lao-Tse

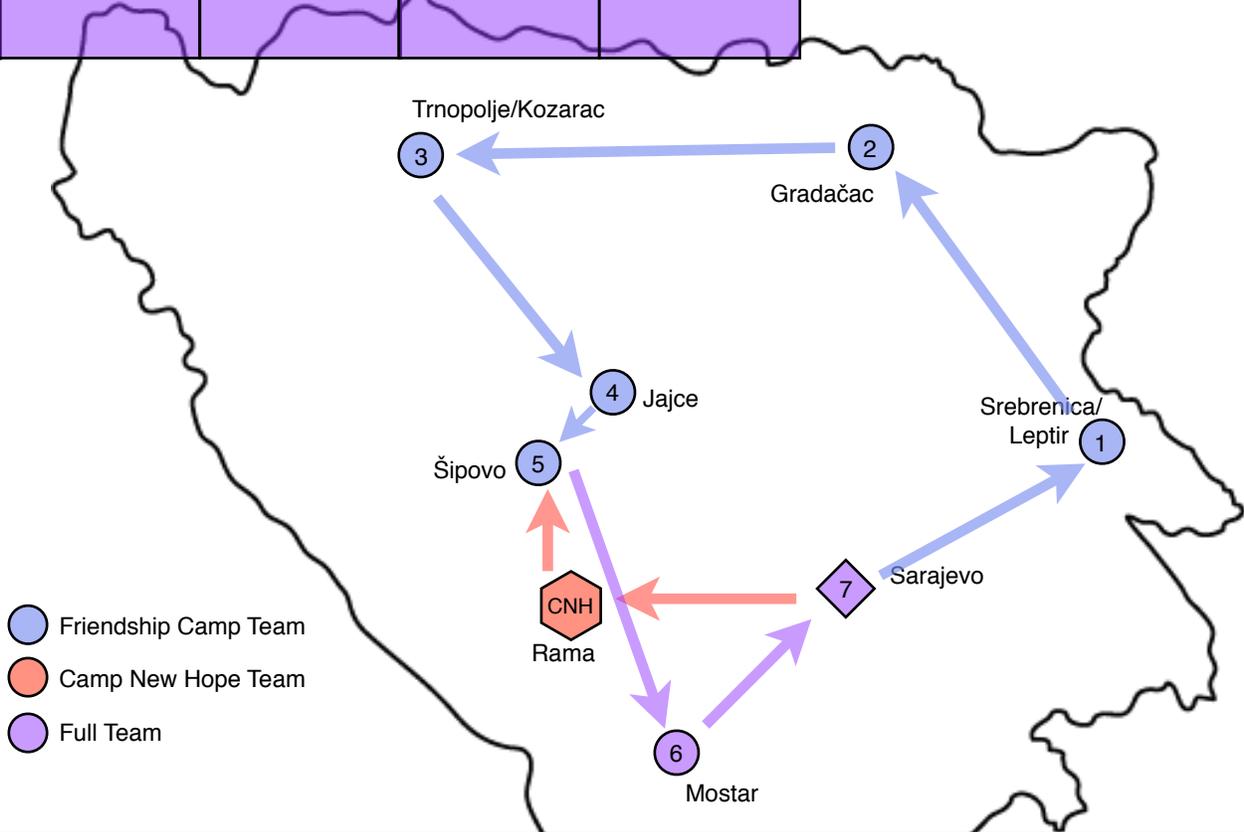
Pray for: Peace

New Jersey Synod Bosnia IST 2018 Itinerary

DAY 1
Saturday June 16
Depart New Jersey

	DAY 2 Sunday June 17	DAY 3 Monday June 18	DAY 4 Tuesday June 19	DAY 5 Wednesday June 20	DAY 6 Thursday June 21	DAY 7 Friday June 22	DAY 8 Saturday June 23
Camp New Hope Team	Arrive in Sarajevo	Drive to Rama. Prep for CNH	Camp New Hope		Camp New Hope		Drive to Šipovo
Friendship Camp Team		Drive to Srebrenica	Leptir FC Drive to Gradacac	Gradacac FC Drive to Kozarac	Kozarac FC Drive to Jajce	Jajce FC Drive to Šipovo	Šipovo FC Drive to Mostar

	DAY 9 Sunday June 24	DAY 10 Monday June 25	DAY 11 Tuesday June 26	DAY 12 Wednesday June 27
Full Team	Day Off in Mostar	Mostar FC Drive to Sarajevo	Sarajevo FC Pack up; Farewell Party	Fly Home!



Please pray with us!

Every day of the trip we will pause in our journey at 6 PM CET (Central European Time), which is 12 PM EDT (Eastern Daylight Time), for prayer. We'll pray for our safety, the children and other people we are with in Bosnia-Herzegovina, our ministry, for our loved ones and Home Team members back home, and for peace in the world. Please pray with us!

June 16-27 • 12 PM EDT/6 PM CET • Prayer Time!