



*“Prayer is essential to accomplish our work.”*



*– Brother Andrew,  
Holy Land Institute  
for the Deaf*

## **Christ School: Academic Excellence and an Oasis of Peace**

You drive up steep, narrow roads through the heart of Nazareth to reach Christ School, perched on a hill overlooking Christ Church and the Old City. Founded in 1851 in three rooms in the Nazareth Old Market, the school has moved several times and grown to be a leading Christian school in Israel, with 1,120 students in grades K-12.

Like so many things in the Middle East, the situation for Christian schools in Israel is complicated. Christian schools consistently rank at the top of all Israeli schools for academic success. They have the highest matriculation rate (students eligible for higher education) in Israel. Yet Christian schools have seen their financial support from the Ministry of Education cut dramatically over the past several years. The Ministry also has put restrictions on tuition and fees for Christian schools, which it regards as “recognized but unofficial.”

These realities present challenges for head of school Archdeacon Samuel Barhoum and his staff, and for students and their families, many of whom struggle financially. More than 60% of Arab families in Israel live below the poverty line.

**“Our school is an oasis of peace. A place of dialogue and living together for Christians and Muslims.”**

When we visit Christ School, the students’ welcoming smiles and positive energy quickly move our attention from these challenges. We share lunch with the teachers and the conversation is about student successes, new programs and new projects.

We didn’t know that Christ School elementary (grades 1-8) is officially designated a Green School! Students have established a school recycling program and they use recycled materials for art projects. They plant and tend the flower garden spaces around the school grounds. As the first school in Nazareth to earn recognition as a Green School, Christ School now is mentoring another school which is starting the program.

The school is deservedly proud of its computer science program, which prepares students for careers in a variety of technology fields. Earlier this year, students in the program won an award in a Microsoft-sponsored competition for mobile phone apps that support the social good. Students were mentored by professionals in app design, coding and “pitching”. The Christ School team pitched their “Baby on Board” app, in



Showing pride in their school’s color

response to several recent cases where parents left babies in their cars and the children died. The app alerts parents that their baby is in the car and if there’s no response to the notification, the app alerts someone who’s been designated a contact. Congratulations to the Christ School coders!

Christ School offers the Weizmann Institute of Science program, sponsored by one of the world’s leading science research organizations. Christ School teachers are trained by Weizmann as mentors and scientists from the program lead lab work with students once a month. The school’s Young Entrepreneurs program pairs local university students with Christ School tenth graders who learn the full life cycle of starting a new business.

The school is in early-stage planning for several exciting new programs and facility improvements. They are working to expand their communications curriculum to become a certified Media and Communications program. The expansion will include courses in videography, video editing, photography, web site design and digital media. Upgrading the program will require purchasing

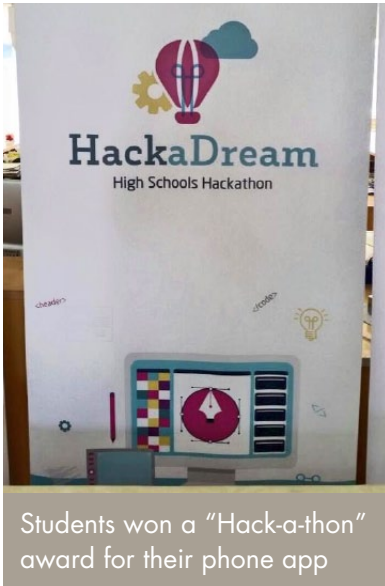
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The Elementary School has been designated a Green School

## Christ School *continued...*

computers, video and still cameras, editing software and sound and lighting systems, in addition to outfitting classrooms for the new courses.



Samuel Barhoum told us, "We're giving students the tools to express themselves in a positive manner and marketable skills they can use to get jobs in the media industry after university or right out of high school."

They also are working to create a new computer lab for elementary and middle school students, who currently use the high school lab. This is a priority project that will provide a 35-computer lab for younger students.

Academic excellence. Creative, forward-looking programs. Involved parents. Dedicated teachers. Christ School offers all of this. And the school is so much more, as Samuel Barhoum notes. "Our School is an oasis of peace, a place of dialogue and living together for Christians and Muslims. We empower students, providing the needed tools and a supportive, collaborative environment that prepares our students to be successful peacemakers and citizens."

Christ School deserves our support. Please make a gift to help sustain this vital Christian institution. This "oasis of peace."

## Pilgrims Gather in Support of Christ Church Projects

Returning pilgrims love to get together and relive their transformational journey to our Holy Land. In March, 35 pilgrims from five parishes in New York and Connecticut were hosted by St. John's Episcopal Church in Pleasantville, New York and its Rector, Mary Gregorius. The group shared great food, wonderful stories and renewed friendships.

The Rt. Rev. Andrew Dietsche, Bishop of New York, shared some of what he learned about our Holy Land and its people while on pilgrimage and how it has impacted his ministry. Anne Lynn, President of AFEDJ, reminded each pilgrim that they are now a catalyst for change because they can directly impact struggling families and stabilize communities. The Rev. Dr. Deborah Dresser, former Chairman of AFEDJ's Trustees, offered the chance to do just that through support for Christ School in Nazareth. Pilgrims donated over half of the funding needed for a \$26,000 project to create safe play spaces at the school.

If your pilgrim group would like to host a reunion, no matter when you traveled, AFEDJ may be able to help. Let us know!



## AFEDJ 2016 Giving Report

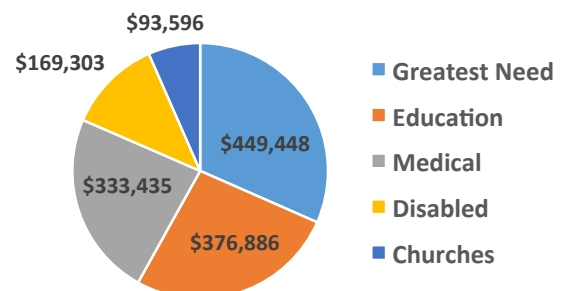
There was no slowdown in the challenges confronting the Diocese of Jerusalem's schools, hospitals and clinics in 2016. Refugees continued to put enormous stress on the people and institutions of Jordan. Government funding levels for Christian schools in Israel remained uncertain. Families in Gaza struggled to provide the most basic life necessities. AFEDJ donors responded to the needs of our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land with remarkable generosity. We thank all of our donors for your support.

Archbishop Suheil Dawani moved the Schneller School to the top of the Diocese's priority list and you responded to the needs of this wonderful school outside Amman, Jordan that serves orphans and refugee children. Gifts of more than \$200,000 renovated classrooms and a playing field and provided scholarships.

Support for Princess Basma Center for Children with Disabilities in Jerusalem made it possible for hundreds of young children with disabilities to receive expert assessments and therapy and provided training for their mothers. Scholarship aid went to needy students at Christ School in Nazareth, St. George's School in Jerusalem, Saviour School in Jordan and The Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training School in Ramallah.

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### Who We Helped



## Meet a Missioner: Anne Derse



AFEDJ Missioner Anne Derse

Anne Derse first visited the Holy Land while she was a diplomat for the U.S. State Department. After a 30-year career, capped by serving as U.S. Ambassador to Azerbaijan (2006-2009) and Lithuania (2009-2012), Anne explored a vocation in the church, which led to a call to join a new deacon class in the Diocese of Washington DC.

In 2014 Anne went on her first pilgrimage to the Holy Land, led by Sari Ateek, the Palestinian American rector of her parish of St. John's Norwood in Bethesda, MD. The experience was transformative. "We met with the Archbishop in Jerusalem and visited Diocese schools and hospitals. We had a chance to see with our own eyes the problems that people face in the Holy Land – people of all faiths. This was my first exposure to the great humanitarian needs, particularly when we traveled to the West Bank.

## *Making a Difference in People's Lives – Today!*

"After having my eyes opened to the reality on the ground, I learned about the work of AFEDJ. I knew right away how important it is to have an organization that rallies support from churches in America for the schools and hospitals that are open to everyone. This is an outstanding form of Christian witness in that part of the world and a great way to live our values as Christians.

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**We need to do something active, something affirmative to help.**  
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"Many of us who've visited feel the need to do something active, something affirmative to help. And we believe that perhaps a political path is not going to bring that kind of result. I think it's so important that people who want to help in that part of the world have an organization like AFEDJ to help them address humanitarian problems.

"I was pleased to volunteer to serve as a Missioner. I've worked with my parish to establish an international outreach program. When parishioners returned from their pilgrimage to the Holy Land, they wanted to stay involved in some way. We'd visited the city of Nablus and we now support nurses' salaries at St. Luke's Hospital. Our parish is going again to the Holy Land in 2018, when we plan to visit St. Luke's and connect with the people we're helping."

Anne represented AFEDJ at the Diocese of Washington DC convention in January. "I met people from many congregations who are looking for ways to effect change in people's lives in the Holy Land in a way that's consistent with their faith. They know that there's no easy political solution in sight but still want to do something now that makes a difference.

"We need a general raising of awareness of the needs of people in the Holy Land. There are so many needs in the world and churches can put their efforts into so many good causes, but this one strikes me as uniquely deserving of our attention, simply because it's the Holy Land.

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**This is not political work. It's work of faith. It's work that bridges the divide.**  
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"The work of AFEDJ is non-political and non-partisan. It's open to people on every side of the political argument. This is not political work, it's work of faith. It's work that bridges the divide. And it's open to everyone. We need to be doing this work right now, every day even as others are working on what will be a long-term, difficult project to find a political solution."

If you feel called to become an AFEDJ Missioner, please contact Betsy Wilson, manager of the AFEDJ Missioner program – [bwilson@afedj.org](mailto:bwilson@afedj.org).



### AFEDJ's Mission

As a non-political, independent nonprofit, AFEDJ acts as a partner with the Diocese of Jerusalem by helping to increase its capacity to teach and heal. AFEDJ promotes and raises program and infrastructure funds for the humanitarian work of the Diocese of Jerusalem and its institutions so it may better serve the needs of all people in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Israel. AFEDJ is devoted to equity, respect and human dignity.

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**Message from the Chairman**  
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## **Bringing Peace and Hope to All**

The Princess Basma Center in East Jerusalem has been offering its life-changing services for more than fifty years. The Mission Statement of the Center captures the essence of all the educational, health, and training facilities that are a part of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Gaza. The Statement reads:

*The Princess Basma Center, established in 1965, works on the integration and empowerment of children with disabilities and their families in their communities through physical rehabilitation, inclusive education, the development and dissemination of best practices, and influencing policy and legislation.*

Each and every school and hospital and clinic that is supported by gifts given through the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem works with similar lofty goals and high standards—bringing peace and hope to all who are the inhabitants of the Holy Land. These institutions are beacons of light transforming hearts and minds, healing bodies and souls, and ministering to all people.

I have visited all the institutions—many of them several times. I come away from each visit with a heart filled with joy and admiration, and with an awesome awareness of what is being done in building relationships that are filled with love and mutual respect for one another. Our support of such abundant ministry is an essential aspect of *our* calling to serve the Lord and His children!

My second and final term on the Board of Trustees concludes at the end of May. Serving on this Board has been a highlight of my life. My fervor for the work of AFEDJ will not abate as I step back for others to take leadership roles. We are all blessed as we share ourselves with others!

+Barry R. Howe



The Rt. Rev. Barry R. Howe, Chairman of the Board of Trustees (left) and Archbishop Suheil Dawani

## **Update from Gaza**

By Anne K. Lynn, President, AFEDJ

Gaza is off the front page, but the suffering continues. No potable water, very sporadic electricity, sky high unemployment and 100,000 still homeless. But Suhaila Tarazi, Director of Ahli Arab Hospital, reminded us that something little is something big to suffering people.

AFEDJ support has brought critical diagnostic equipment to Gaza and helps keep the Community Clinic doors open to everyone. As the director of the only remaining full service Christian hospital in Gaza, Suhaila spoke of the Christian presence there as “a drop in the ocean, but we bring the light of Christ. We are small in numbers, but large in impact.”

We met Ibrahim, one of the 20 to 30 children with severe burns they see each day. These are caused by the open fires which must heat homes and cook food when no other source is available. Ibrahim suffers incredible pain bravely and with dignity — and broke my heart.

We talked with mothers who bring their underweight and malnourished children to the free clinic. Some have rickets, anemia, diarrhea, parasites. The clinic assesses their condition and follows them for several months to insure proper growth.

Ahli spends \$80,000 a year on fuel to keep the ancient generator going. Imagine running a hospital with constantly interrupted power. Refrigeration, lighting, ventilators, incubators, all precariously running. They see 32,000 patients a year, to which Suhaila added, “Don’t ask me how.”

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**The doors of Ahli can only stay open if we help.**  
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Funding from the United Nations and the World Health Organization has been cut, cut, cut. The doors of Ahli can only stay open if we help. The Minister of Health, a Muslim, told us that “This hospital is the phenomenon of Gaza. Everyone knows it, and it presents Christians in such a positive way. We are proud of our relationship.”

We should each be very proud of what Ahli can do with our support. Please consider becoming an Angel of Ahli and provide a family with healthcare for only \$30. They need our help now.



Ahli Hospital treats more than 20 children with severe burns every day.

# New Technology Lab Transforms Learning at Saviour School

As Duaa Bisharat and her teachers led us into the room, they made us close our eyes. "Open!" Duaa called out. We were standing in the middle of Saviour School's brand new technology lab. Duaa and her teachers were beaming with pride. High performance computers with large-screen monitors, interactive Smart boards, laser printers, and a powerful server loaded with digital curricula — all in a completely renovated room with new tile walls, floors and furniture. Wow!

Duaa has a vision for transforming teaching and learning with technology and the new lab is a key part of her plan. Every student at Saviour School, from kindergarten through high school, uses the school's new technology center. Learning is becoming more personalized for each student. Watching students rush into the lab and get right to work, we smiled at their engagement and the excitement in the room.

All of this became possible when Cotty Peabody, an AFEDJ trustee, learned about Duaa's plan and thought it aligned with the mission of the Louise Harkness and David S. Ingalls Foundation, a Cleveland-based family foundation. Cotty has a relative on the foundation's board and he brought the Saviour School transformation opportunity to their attention.

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**Learning is becoming more personalized for each student**  
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"Increasing educational opportunities for underserved children is a priority for us," said Dr. Barbara Brown, President of the Ingalls Foundation. "We support causes that our family members are passionate about and the Saviour School project really resonated with us. We were especially impressed with the work Saviour School does to provide inclusive

education for blind and low-vision children. AFEDJ did a wonderful job of making the case for how our gift would transform learning for these students." We thank the Ingalls Foundation for their generous support of Duaa and her students!

Saviour School is in the middle of Zarka, Jordan, a large, industrial city. Many families struggle to pay the tuition. Yet they find ways to keep their children in the school because they value the ethics that are taught and they know that Duaa and her staff are committed to their children's success. Duaa has plans to add more technology in regular classrooms and continue to support teachers' professional growth. We can't wait to visit again and report back on next steps in realizing her vision for her students.



## AFEDJ 2016 Giving Report *continued...*

Thousands of children and families in Gaza continue to receive free medical care through Al Ahli Hospital's community health clinic, which you supported with more than \$300,000 in gifts. Mobile clinics roll out to villages from St. Luke's Hospital in Nablus every week, thanks to your generosity. And nurses at St. Luke's continue to serve their patients because you helped pay their salaries.

We visited these institutions regularly during 2016 to monitor the impact of your gifts and to witness the everyday acts of courage, perseverance and hope that sustain them. We return with full hearts and renewed energy for our mission to educate and inspire a growing group of supporters who pray for our Holy Land, visit if they're able and financially support the life-changing work of the Diocese.

These schools and medical facilities are expressions of Christian presence, serving all, regardless of religion, ethnicity or financial means. Thank you, thank for your generosity and your prayers. You are building bridges of compassion between different religions and diverse communities in our Holy Land. You are bringing hope and building peace.

Please visit our website [www.afedj.org](http://www.afedj.org) to get a copy of our full 2016 Annual Report.



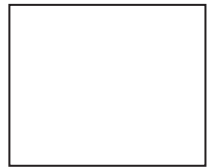


# AFEDJ

American Friends of the  
Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

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Give a gift that lasts forever

An invitation to join the  
Jerusalem Saints Legacy  
Society

Contact [jlent@afedj.org](mailto:jlent@afedj.org)

## Help renovate dorms for orphans and refugee children. Donate today!

The Schneller School in Jordan needs our help. And we've moved into the digital age to do it! Visit our special Schneller Campaign website – you can click through from our web home page [www.afedj.org](http://www.afedj.org). Watch the video and you'll see why this campaign is so important and urgent. Please join us in improving the living conditions of these vulnerable children.



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*Your friendship, prayers and financial support help us sustain our mission and ministry through the parish work and through our schools, hospitals and institutions for people with special needs.  
Thank you!*

*– The Most Revd Suheil S. Dawani, Archbishop in Jerusalem*



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