



“Your generosity made an immediate difference in the lives of students at our school.”
– Dua’a Bisharat
Saviour School, Jordan

Building Hope in Our Holy Land

www.afedj.org • Spring 2018

Let Every Voice Be Heard

Building a Brighter Future for Palestinian Youth in Nazareth

On our visit to Christ School last fall, we met with the school’s director Samuel Barhoum and a group of students who hope to pursue careers in media and communication fields. We were prepared for a conversation about the latest video and social media tools. Instead, the students wanted to talk about the importance of becoming effective communicators in order to tell the world about the reality of Arab Palestinians living in Israel.

Director Barhoum started the conversation by stating, “Israel is more diverse than many people realize. It is a country of people with many different narratives about politics, borders, society and religion. As Arab Palestinians living in Israel, our young people need to properly understand their situation and the daily challenges that occur in their lives and community. They need training and skills to be able to act and react in a healthy and positive manner. Young Palestinians must be ready to articulate the issues, present the Palestinian perspective and



Director Samuel Barhoum and media program students

effectively communicate solutions. It’s our responsibility as educators to ensure that our students have the training and the tools to be effective communicators of their own narratives.”

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He explained the plan to enhance their curriculum to meet this challenge. “In order for Christ School to prepare students for the future, we need to expand our current Media and Communications program. The program will build high school students’ communication skills and train them in using a range of digital media tools – video, social media, graphic design, photography and animation. Also, the program will help graduating students to find jobs out of high school, allowing them to help pay for their higher education, which is a

heavy financial burden for their families in our difficult economic situation.”

The high schoolers we met currently are in Christ School’s 5-unit media and communications program and hope to complete their high school education with 10 units. One young man told us, “We’re excited about the expanded program because the new courses will go beyond theory and give us practical, hands-on experience. There are so many fields we can consider with the skills we’ll learn - graphic design, photo journalism and videography.” Another student explained, “I want to create films about the Arab minority in Israel. It’s important that the voices of Palestinian young people living in Israel are heard. We need more Palestinian journalists. Journalists can change the world.”

Christ School has offered a 5-unit Communications course of study for several years. The school plans to expand the curriculum to 10 units and offer students in grades 10-12 a fully-accredited Media and Communications program, starting in the fall of 2018. The additional units will provide all-important hands-on training and real-world practice with the latest digital media tools, including new high-end computers that run the latest video editing, animation and design software and state-of-the-art digital video cameras. The school also needs to renovate media and communications



Girls who hope to enroll in the expanded program

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Let Every Voice *continued...*

classrooms with high-speed network infrastructure and new furniture, and provide teacher professional development to help Christ School teachers implement the new curriculum and stay current on new information technologies. Please make a gift today to support this important initiative.

You can help Christ School develop the next generation of Palestinian leaders



With your help, Christ School can build its media and communications program. Your generosity gives young people media skills to be powerful advocates for their community. Your gift prepares young Palestinians in Israel for good jobs and productive futures. Please make a gift today on our website www.afedj.org or by sending a check to our mailing address.

Princess Basma Kitchen and Dining Hall Ceremony



Lorraine Reeder, former AFEDJ trustee and active supporter of the Diocese of Jerusalem, was honored in early April at a festive ribbon-cutting ceremony for the renovated kitchen and dining hall at Princess Basma Center in Jerusalem. Archbishop Suheil Dawani (pictured here with Lorraine) acknowledged the generous contributions to the project by Lorraine and her parish, St. Matthew's Episcopal in Bedford, NY. Many thanks to all who supported this wonderful renovation. You all are making a difference in the lives of children and staff at Princess Basma!

Your Gifts Empower Blind Children in Jordan

Saviour School in Zarqa, Jordan isn't much to look at from the outside. But as soon as you enter the school you feel the positive energy that tells you this is a place where students and teachers want to be. Saviour School enrolls 300 students, mostly from poor families who struggle to get by in the fragile Jordanian economy. Saviour is the only school in Zarqa, the second largest city in Jordan, that is equipped to serve blind and low-vision children. The school's highly-trained teachers meet the special needs of these children and effectively integrate them into the regular academic program.

St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Washington DC has generously supported student scholarships at Saviour School for many years. Last year St. Alban's made a special gift to the school of an electronic Braille machine, which is an important literacy tool for the school's blind students.

One of Saviour's blind students wrote a letter to her friends at St. Alban's. "Thank you for giving the new Braille machine to help me with my daily studies. For me as a blind student, Braille is an important tool. I use it to read all of my favorite books. The Braille machine lets me use my fingers to transform my ideas onto paper that I can read and that other blind people and my teachers can read. Thank you for thinking of me, a small blind girl in Jordan."

"Thank you for thinking of me, a small blind girl in Jordan."

A teacher of the blind students wrote to St. Alban's. "As a teacher at the inclusive Saviour school, I can say that the Braille machine really makes the difference for our blind students. We expect all students to learn how to read and write. Of course we expect this of our blind students, too. Speech feedback or other digital tools are not a substitute for Braille; listening alone is not enough. I thank you for the opportunity to help blind children be equal and active learners. Your generosity made an immediate difference in the lives of students at our school."



"Braille helps me to learn on my own"

You Can Make Summer Special for Kids in the Holy Land

Like kids everywhere, children and young people in the Middle East look forward to time off from school during the summer months. But the opportunities for safe, organized and productive summer fun are very limited for Palestinian children and for poor kids in Jordan.

The Diocese of Jerusalem has a solution. It runs seven summer camps in Palestine, Israel and Jordan and a series of week-long residential youth conferences in Nazareth. Camps run 2-3 weeks and feature swimming, sports, crafts, Bible lessons, health and nutrition activities and field trips.

The youth conferences are for young people ages 12-20. The conferences bring together Christian youth of common age groups from across the West Bank and Jerusalem under one roof for a week. They work

together to discuss and develop mission and vision statements for their local Christian communities and parishes. They also work on creating leadership roles for youth in their parishes.

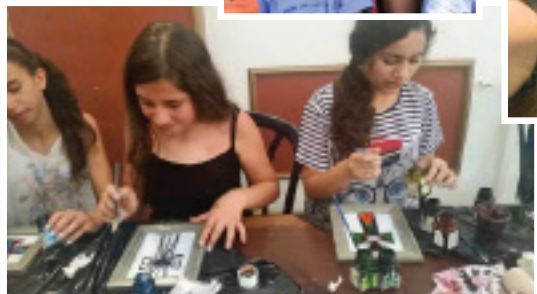
The Diocese will welcome more than 1,000 young campers this summer! Most of these Palestinian and Jordanian children need your financial help to attend camp.

Give a child the gift of summer camp in the Holy Land!

You can sponsor a camper for \$250. You can send a student to Youth Conference for \$450. Please send a check today to the AFEDJ office or make a gift on our website: www.afedj.org



Sawsan Aranki-Batato, Programs Development Officer for the Diocese, told us "Our camps and youth conferences demonstrate to young children that the church cares for them and will continue to be a part of their life. They promote Christian values and interfaith reconciliation by teaching empowerment, personal responsibility and respect for all. Camps build children's confidence and self-esteem so they can continue to develop their skills and become leaders in the future. We hope our American friends will help the Diocese make camp possible for every child."



Helping the Neediest in Troubled Nablus

Political tension in the West Bank city of Nablus continues to create challenges for St. Luke's Hospital. Roadblocks make it difficult for patients to reach the hospital. Political strife and violence strain the already fragile local economy. Dr. Walid Kerry, St. Luke's General Manager, sends this message to the AFEDJ community, "We need support from all of our friends so that we can maneuver and overcome our problems and remain as a witness of Christian acts, demonstrated by love and care for all needy patients. We ask for your prayers and support so we can continue to help the poor, wounded and traumatized people of Nablus."

St. John's Episcopal Church in Chevy Chase, MD has focused their giving for the past three years on St. Luke's Hospital. They now pay the salary of a St. Luke's nurse and the parish has established a wonderful bond with Mervat Sawalha, the young nurse they support. In a recent letter, Sawalha thanked St. John's and told them she's "hoping that you will stay as a witness of love and care, giving support for all of the needy in Nablus."

If you or your church or organization would like to learn more about how you can support a nurse at St. Luke's, please contact John Lent at jlent@afedj.org.



Mervat Sawalha
Practical Nurse, St. Luke's Hospital

Online fundraising gives your personal network an opportunity to help

Like many pilgrims to the Holy Land, Randy and Doni Heyn-Lamb returned home with a radically altered view of the reality on the ground in Israel and Palestine. And they felt a deep urgency to stay engaged with the Palestinians they'd met. They'd seen the important work of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem schools and hospitals and decided that working with AFEDJ was the best way to establish and sustain long-term relationships with the people of the region and the humanitarian institutions that serve them.



Randy and Doni Heyn-Lamb share the work of the Middle East Ministry

It was exciting to check our fundraising page and see how generous people are

We recently spoke with Randy and he told us, "We learned that the best way to make a direct impact on people's lives is through your organization. We can easily designate our gifts and AFEDJ provides a layer of transparency, so we're confident that our donations go where we direct them. I work in the healthcare field and we usually donate to support the hospitals, medical clinics and centers for children with disabilities.

"We became involved with the Middle East Ministry (MEM) at All Saints Church in Pasadena, CA. It's a group that's committed to exposing people to the circumstances on the ground in the Middle East – beyond what people get from traditional media. We're about education and advocacy. We're individuals looking for opportunities to help make a difference in people's lives.

"When AFEDJ started an online campaign to support Ahli Hospital last fall, we decided to do our own fundraising. We launched a fundraising

page on the AFEDJ platform and sent emails to every member of our MEM group. Thanks to an anonymous matching gift of \$1,000, we gave people an added incentive to give. We weren't sure how people would respond. We weren't at all sure we'd match the \$1,000 challenge gift.

"And then the gifts started coming in. It was really exciting to check our fundraising page and see how many people were touched by our appeal and how generous they are. The numbers just kept climbing. We were amazed and overwhelmed by people's generosity.

"I'd encourage everyone to become a fundraiser for AFEDJ's next online campaign. The way it's set up makes it easy to reach out to the people in your network who care about the turmoil of the Middle East. People who care about the lives of Palestinians. You're giving your network a concrete opportunity to help. I think you'll be gratified by the response."

We thank Randy and Doni and members of the All Saints Middle East Ministry for their support. They raised over \$6,000 for the Ahli Hospital Community Clinic. If you'd like to do your own online fundraising for AFEDJ's next campaign, please contact Betsy Wilson, bwilson@afedj.org; 203-655-3575.



The online campaign supported Ahli Hospital's Community Clinic

YOUR GIVING CHANGED LIVES IN 2017

Your generosity and support of the families and children served by the Diocese of Jerusalem reached new levels in 2017. You continue to have a profound impact on the lives of students attending Diocesan schools, patients visiting hospitals in Gaza and Nablus, children and adults with disabilities who receive loving, expert care at institutes for the disabled, and the Christian community in the Holy Land.

You are catalysts for change in the Middle East. You provide essential financial support that directly improves the education and medical care at Diocesan institutions in Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Israel and Lebanon. You educate people in the U.S. about the humanitarian work of the Diocese of Jerusalem and the reality on the ground in the Holy Land. You pray for peace and reconciliation and for the safety of all in this volatile region. Thank you for your financial gifts and for your determination to make a difference for the people served by the Diocese of Jerusalem.

2017 presented many challenges for the Diocese of Jerusalem and the medical and educational institutions you so generously support. Refugees from the war in Syria continue to put enormous stress on the people and institutions of

Jordan. We thought the appalling living conditions for families in Gaza couldn't get much worse. Yet political strife and blockades have made Gaza nearly unlivable for most. Government funding for schools and hospitals in Israel, Palestine and Jordan is not a reliable revenue source due to political and economic realities.

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You are catalysts for change in the Middle East
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Your support of Schneller School outside Amman, Jordan continues to transform the school and the opportunities it provides to orphans and refugee children. Your gifts of more than \$150,000 paid for much-needed building renovations and provided scholarships for Palestinian children living in the Marka Refugee Camp and for Syrian refugees.

You gave the gift of quality, respectful medical care to thousands of children and families in Gaza through your support of Al Ahli Hospital's community health clinic. You made a remarkable 322 gifts to Ahli Hospital in 2017, for more than \$125,000.

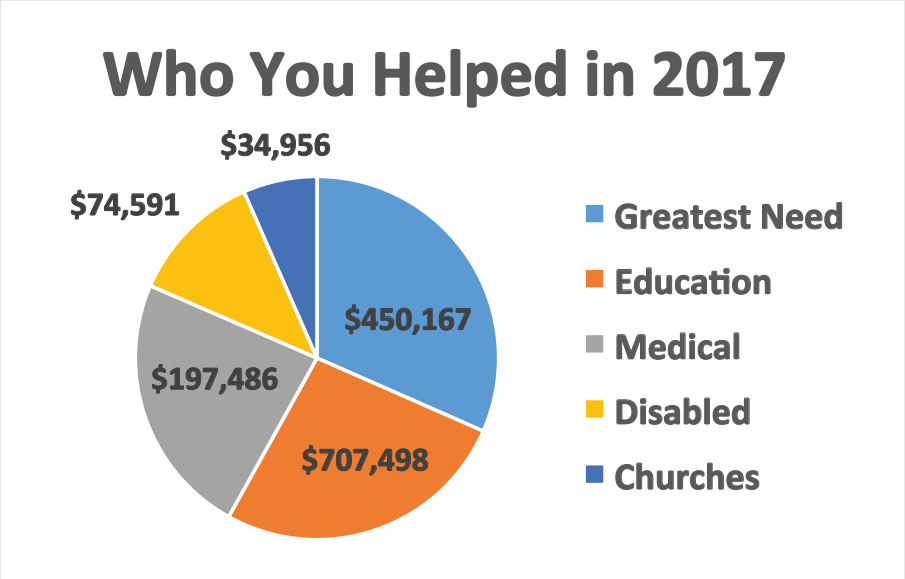
You made it possible for hundreds of young children with disabilities to receive

expert assessments and therapy and provided training for their mothers at Princess Basma Center for Children with Disabilities in Jerusalem. You provided scholarships for children from poor families at Saviour School in Jordan, Christ School in Nazareth and the Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training School in Ramallah. You purchased electronic braille machines for blind and low vision students at Saviour School. And nurses at St. Luke's Hospital in Nablus continue to serve their patients because you helped pay their salaries. You responded to these challenges and to the needs of our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land with remarkable generosity.

We visited these institutions during 2017 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 financially support the life-changing work of the Diocese.

Thank you, thank for your generosity!

Please visit our website www.afedj.org to see our full 2017 Annual Report.





AFEDJ

American Friends of the
Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

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You can give a gift that lasts forever.
Join the Jerusalem Saints Legacy Society.
Contact John Lent at jlent@afedj.org

Join Us on Social Media

We're active on social media and we know many of you are too! Like and follow us on your favorite social platforms. We're sharing updates on the impact of your donations, news from the Diocese of Jerusalem and the AFEDJ community and photos from pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Send us your photos and videos that we can share.



At Facebook we are American Friends
of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem



At Instagram we are [afedj_](#)



At Twitter we are [afedj_](#)



Our social media promise – faces of children you're helping!

***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



We've received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, which means we're accountable, transparent, and financially healthy!

Sign up for the AFEDJ e-newsletter
and give securely online at www.afedj.org