



American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem



AFEDJ

American Friends of the
Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

Building Hope in the Holy Land

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Transforming lives of the vulnerable and displaced in the Middle East through support of schools, hospitals, and centers for children with disabilities

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

In 1988, at the time of the first Palestinian Intifada, Episcopal leaders in the U.S. and Jerusalem saw the need to offer sustained support to the humanitarian institutions owned and operated by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. American Friends (AFEDJ) was born.

A nonpolitical, nonsectarian 501(c)(3) organization, AFEDJ is dedicated to raising financial support for more than a dozen schools, hospitals, and centers for children with disabilities in the Middle East.

These institutions serve everyone, irrespective of their religion, ethnicity, or ability to pay. They build hope for all in the Holy Land. The Christian values of equity, justice, and respect for the dignity of all are at the heart of our efforts.

Cover: Because graduation was cancelled due to the pandemic, last June Iyad Rafidi, headmaster of the Arab Evangelical Episcopal School in Ramallah, visited each graduating senior at home to present a diploma.



"Jerusalem is the city of hope, the city of the resurrection, and we are entrusted with this mission in the Holy Land - to be a beacon of hope, love, and peace in this world. I am hopeful because of the help and support we get from our friends."

— The Rt. Rev. Hosam Naoum, Bishop-Coadjutor of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem
Click on the Bishop's photo to hear more about hope.

93,059

The number of lives improved by the institutions supported by AFEDJ donors in 2020

\$2,236,264

Dollars contributed by individual donors, churches, and foundations to support 17 institutions in 2020.

33 YEARS

American friends with generous hearts have supported the Christian witness of the Diocese of Jerusalem humanitarian ministries in the Middle East

WHERE WE SERVE

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem currently operates humanitarian institutions in the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon. These institutions are powerful examples of Christian witness in this conflict-torn region.



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM



Since 1964 St. Luke's Rehabilitation Center in Beirut has offered impoverished children with disabilities a supported academic environment in which to thrive. Until the pandemic, its chocolate factory provided vocational skills to its day and boarding students - and provided much-needed income to sustain the school. In 2020 the center's leaders struggled to find ways to continue to support vulnerable students and their families. The generous outpouring of support from AFEDJ donors after the Beirut explosion in August 2020 has allowed St. Luke's to continue remote learning for its students and provide assistance for families facing food insecurity due to the current economic crisis in Lebanon.

Click the photo to listen to our "Live from Beirut" interview.

In 2020 AFEDJ donors supported these institutions:

- Ahli Arab Hospital, Gaza
- Arab Episcopal School, Irbid, Jordan
- Arab Evangelical Episcopal School, Ramallah, West Bank
- Birzeit Home for the Elderly, West Bank
- Christ Episcopal School, Nazareth, Israel
- Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training Center, Ramallah, West Bank
- Holy Land Institute for the Deaf, Salt, Jordan
- Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre
- Jofeh Community Rehabilitation Center, Jordan Valley, Jordan
- Penman Clinic, Zababdeh, West Bank
- St. George's College, East Jerusalem
- St. George's School, East Jerusalem
- St. John's School, Haifa, Israel
- St. Luke's Hospital, Nablus, West Bank
- St. Luke's Rehabilitation Center, Beirut, Lebanon
- Saviour's Episcopal School, Zarqa, Jordan
- Theodor Schneller School, Marka, Jordan

[The virtual program] “gives me the chance to join my son in all activities with his teachers and therapists. I’m developing my own experience through these sessions. I feel so blessed to have my son in good hands with such a professional and loving team.”

— Kafaya, mother of Yamen



OPPORTUNITY FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Children with disabilities and their families face extraordinary hurdles in the region. In the West Bank and Gaza, restrictions on movement constrain access to therapy and rehabilitation services.

In 2020 the pandemic brought new challenges for schools and rehab centers and the children and families they serve.

Without the services offered by Diocese of Jerusalem institutions, many children with disabilities would remain at home with no hope for a productive future. In response to the pandemic, each center and school has developed creative ways to continue to serve all children in their care.

JERUSALEM PRINCESS BASMA CENTRE VIRTUAL/RESIDENTIAL FAMILY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

Mount of Olives

The Family Empowerment Program serves West Bank children with disabilities and their parents in a three-week residential program. Parents participate in their children’s therapy and are trained to continue working with their children when they return home. In early 2020 pandemic-related shutdowns caused leaders at JPBC to use available technology to continue to offer therapeutic services to children in their care.

After a three-month shutdown, over the summer 85 families took part in a new virtual and in-person hybrid program. In the past, families might return for multiple residential stays for reevaluation and to update their child’s therapeutic plan. Now follow-up therapy sessions are virtual. This hybrid model avoids the difficulty of arranging for travel and childcare for other children in the family.

Thanks, in part, to AFEDJ supporters and several diocesan Sustainable Development Goals grants, children with disabilities who live outside of East Jerusalem now have the opportunity to continue therapy online and stay on a path toward rehabilitation and promise.





"The healthcare situation in Gaza is deteriorating. We are so grateful to our American friends who share with us the responsibility of saving the lives of thousands of the poorest Gazans."

— Suhaila Tarazi, Ahli Arab Hospital Director



ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE QUALITY HEALTHCARE

Travel restrictions are a daily reality for Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. For thousands of families across the region, the charitable hospitals and free community clinics of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem are their only healthcare options.

The Diocese of Jerusalem operates two full-service hospitals - Ahli Arab Hospital, founded in 1882, in Gaza City, and St. Luke's Hospital, founded in 1900, in the northern West Bank city of Nablus - as well as community clinics in the West Bank.

These institutions welcome all patients without regard to their religion, ethnicity, or ability to pay. Everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

AHLI ARAB HOSPITAL COVID-19 READINESS

Gaza City

As one of the world's most densely populated areas, the Gaza Strip is particularly vulnerable to the spread of the Coronavirus.

In February Ahli Arab Hospital leaders began to prepare for the inevitability that infections would rise. Two public hospitals were designated to treat COVID-19 cases and 27 primary healthcare clinics in Gaza were closed.

These actions created an increase in demand for Ahli Arab Hospital's services, especially its free community clinic. The Ministry of Health specifically asked Ahli to step up its care for diabetic patients who were left without care because of the closure of public hospitals.

Your donations to AFEDJ's emergency appeal helped both Ahli Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital prepare for the pandemic and continue their care for indigent patients.

Click on the photo to listen to our "Live from Gaza" interview.



"Thank you for keeping your connection with Christians in the Holy Land and for keeping us in your prayers. We hope that soon you can come and see our school in Ramallah."

— Giovanni Anbar

Director of the Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training Center, Ramallah



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY

Youth unemployment rates in Palestine have hovered at 40 percent for many years. With the onset of the pandemic and the further destabilizing of the economy, it rose even higher in the first half of 2020. In Jordan, young Syrian refugees and children whose families have lived in Palestinian refugee camps for generations have few opportunities for stable employment as a path to economic and social success.

The secondary schools of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem that serve the most vulnerable students have made vocational training for high-risk students a priority. Whether it is the metalworking workshop at the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf or the hybrid car repair course at Schneller School in Jordan, the schools of the diocese recognize that real-world job skills provide the chance for meaningful employment and economic gains for marginalized young people.

EPISCOPAL TECHNOLOGICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER GUESTHOUSE EXPANSION

Ramallah, West Bank

For years, Giovanni Anbar, the founder and director of the Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training Center (ETVTC) in Ramallah, has depended on the Center's guesthouse for a steady income stream to help cover operating expenses.

Before the pandemic, ETVTC's ten-room guesthouse offered students in the hospitality program the opportunity to practice skills in culinary arts and hotel management with an international clientele and provided income to subsidize 30 percent of tuition fees.

In early 2020, Giovanni and his staff launched an effort to expand the guesthouse by another 11 rooms to accommodate up to 45 guests and double the revenue that supports student fees. Then the pandemic arrived and the summer's full slate of bookings for rooms, conferences, retreats, and children's camps disappeared overnight.

Giovanni wasn't deterred. Thanks to the generosity of many American Friends, work on the guesthouse was able to proceed. The hard-hit hospitality industry in Ramallah will open up again, and ETVTC will be ready.

Click on the photo to listen to our "Live from Ramallah" interview.





“Acceptance of women in the workforce is limited due to societal attitudes. With the lack of domestic helpers, public transportation, and a low minimum wage, even educated women feel it makes more sense to stay at home and serve the family.”

— Dua’a Bisharat, principal of Saviour’s School in Zarqa, Jordan

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY FOR GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN

In a region where political turmoil and economic distress are part of the daily landscape, families often choose to educate their sons but pull their daughters from school. Without an education, women are encouraged to marry early and, if they do enter the workforce, their employment options are limited.

Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem schools offer opportunities for all female students to reach their highest potential and become leaders in their communities.

THEODOR SCHNELLER SCHOOL COSMETOLOGY VOCATIONAL PROGRAM

Marka, Jordan

The Theodor Schneller School in Marka, Jordan, just outside of Amman, is a unique school for orphans, children from broken homes and refugees.

The school serves children of displaced families from Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Yemen, Ethiopia and Somalia and runs special programs that address refugee children’s trauma and other psychological challenges. Rebuilding Schneller’s vocational training programs, which once were the finest in Jordan, is a priority for Schneller School.

Because many fields are not yet open to women in Jordan, cosmetology was a natural program to launch first.

Young women enrolled in Schneller’s cosmetology course gain a high school diploma and a certificate endorsed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labor. Whether they go to work in a salon or start their own home business to supplement family income, young women are empowered to take their place in the world with a stable career and a productive life.



“As a teacher of English language, interactive projectors and whiteboards make possible for us to do what before was impossible. Integrating technology in the classroom makes a significant difference in our teaching methods. It enhances the way we teach as it enhances the way students learn.”

— Najwa Kreitem, English teacher at St. George’s School



NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP

Students throughout the region face many barriers to success: limited access to post-secondary education and employment opportunities, travel restrictions, political turmoil, and impoverished family circumstances.

Parents seek out schools run by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem in Jordan, Israel, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, because they offer a rigorous academic program and they teach and model Christian values of peace, reconciliation and respect for all. These schools’ 6,500 students graduate with the skills and the positive, hopeful outlook to become leaders in their communities.

ST. GEORGE’S SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY UPGRADE East Jerusalem

Established in 1899, adjacent to St. George’s Cathedral, St. George’s School is known for its many notable alumni. Originally a school for boys, St. George’s now serves 700 boys and girls by providing an excellent education at affordable costs for Jerusalem families.

George’s School’s academic standards are rigorous. The school seeks to prepare young men and women for higher education and, ultimately, to assume leadership roles in Palestinian society. Many of its graduates already occupy such positions.

In early 2020, as St. George’s transitioned to distance learning due to the pandemic, the 120 year-old school needed to upgrade its technology infrastructure.

The generosity of American Friends provided the \$39,000 necessary to install high speed wireless connectivity through the school and provide interactive whiteboard and other equipment necessary for teachers to instruct, assess, and support their students.





"I greatly appreciate your unwavering support of our ministries here in the midst of this crisis. We put your gifts to immediate use both for our hospitals' work in stemming the pandemic and in our relief work among those whose lives have been thrown into economic disarray."

— Archbishop Suheil S. Dawani



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CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE MILES

In late 2020, members of the Global Mission Committee at St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C. learned from Dua'a Bisharat, the principal of Saviour's Episcopal School in Zarqa, Jordan, the dire news that many families had lost all income due to business shutdowns.

They knew that in addition to the congregation's regular support they needed to make an end of the year appeal.

Lisa Sams, a member of the St. Alban's committee and an AFEDJ trustee, said, "We believe the students of Saviour's need the safe haven of their school community and the stability of a caring teaching staff more than ever. People across Jordan have no government safety net to fall back on. Dua'a and her team have prayed for help to continue to serve the students in their care. We at St. Alban's have the ability to answer their prayers."

The year-end appeal led members of St. Alban's to dug deep and contribute \$9,300 in addition to their \$19,000 donation earlier in 2020.

Dua'a Bisharat has it right when she tells her teachers, "Take an umbrella. God will provide the rain."

"It is our belief the inability of any member of our community to afford healthcare should not and will not be an obstacle to receiving high quality care. We need the tools to do our job. For many patients, St. Luke's is their last, if not only, hope."

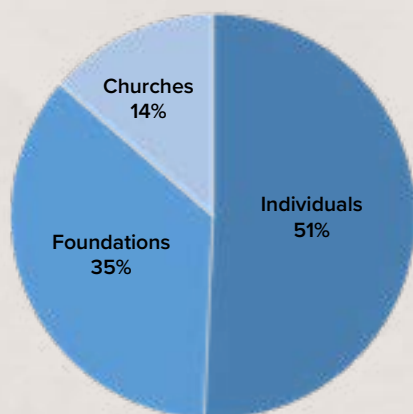
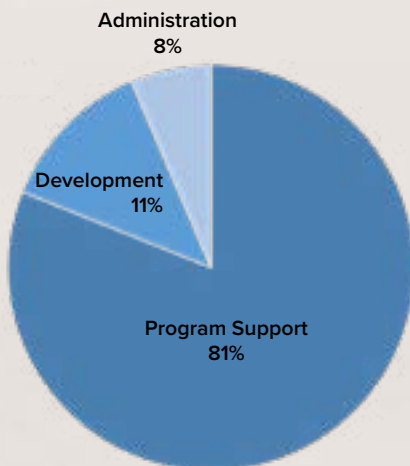
— Dr. Walid Kerry, Executive Director of St. Luke's Hospital, Nablus, West Bank



FINANCIALS

2020 USE OF FUNDS

- Program Support
\$1,796,641
- Administration
\$186,364
- Development
\$253,259



2020 SOURCE OF FUNDS

- Individuals
\$1,130,901
- Churches
\$302,590
- Foundations
\$802,773

A NEW ULTRASOUND MACHINE WILL SAVE LIVES IN NABLUS

Last fall, when the clergy and concerned members of St. John's Norwood Church in Chevy Chase, Maryland, learned that their friends at St. Luke's Hospital in the northern West Bank city of Nablus needed to raise more than \$114,000 to fully fund a critically needed 4D ultrasound machine, they got right to work.

St. Luke's 20-year-old ultrasound machine was obsolete and replacement parts were no longer available. Patients in need of urgent care were being referred to other institutions. For those who were uninsured and dependent on St. Luke's for free services, their care was compromised.

In December St. John's rector, the Rev. Sari Ateek, in partnership with AFEDJ, approached people in his congregation, neighboring Episcopal congregations, and other churches in the greater Washington, D.C. region to raise more than \$100,000 for a new ultrasound machine. By Christmas Eve, with the help of more than 70 individuals and churches, they exceeded their goal, and were able to send additional funds to purchase a portable ultrasound machine as well.

Upon learning the news during a Zoom call, Dr. Walid Kerry, director of St. Luke's said, "We humbly thank God for sending you to us, and as much as we are humbled by your example, we are equally honored to carry the responsibility of putting your good works into action on the ground."

Donors make a difference by providing support for

- educational scholarships
- renovation projects
- program support
- equipment purchases
- professional development
- meeting emergency needs

AFEDJ offers one of the only secure and direct channels to support the humanitarian institutions of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem.

We value financial accountability and transparency.

Please find our audited financials and most recent IRS 990 at
www.afedj.org/about/financials.



“We believe that it is the calling of the Gospel to care for others just as you would care for your own family.

That’s why we’re intentional in caring for these children as a family. We are called to serve.”

— The Rev. Wadie Far, Chaplain and Boarding Program Director at Holy Land Institute for the Deaf

Click on the photo for our interview with Fr. Far

