



AFEDJ

American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

Bearing Witness

A Journey with Holy Land Christians

GETTING TO KNOW THE HOLY LAND

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

“We are entrusted with this mission in the Holy Land – to be a beacon of hope, love, and peace in this world. We do this ministry not only for ourselves, but we do this on behalf of every single Christian. I trust that the Lord is with us and I take comfort that we have wonderful friends surrounding the diocese with so much love, affection, and support. How do you expect me not to be hopeful?”

–The Most Reverend Hosam E. Naoum, Anglican Archbishop of Jerusalem

A diocese of the worldwide Anglican Communion, The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is engaged in a ministry of hospitality and welcome in an interfaith region, spreading a message of mutual respect and cooperation through its many humanitarian institutions, and working to bring peace and reconciliation to this conflict-torn region, as it seeks to maintain its faithful witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem Parishes:

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem supports 27 parishes with 30 priests and 7,000 Anglicans. The indigenous families who make up most of these parishes are the descendants of the Arab Christians first baptized in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:11).

Jerusalem	2 congregations	Jordan	9 congregations
Israel	9 congregations	Lebanon	1 congregation
West Bank	5 congregations	Syria	1 congregation



Beirut

Lebanon

Damascus

Syria

Golan Heights

Haifa

Nazareth

Irbid

Nablus

West Bank

Ramallah

Salt

Zarqa

Amman

Tel Aviv

Jerusalem

Gaza

Dead Sea

Israel

Jordan

Aqaba



Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem Ministries

- The diocese owns and operates 25 humanitarian institutions—schools, hospitals, vocational training centers, clinics, centers for children with disabilities, and retirement homes for the elderly.
- Employs 1,800 people working in five countries, all operating in a region of constant turmoil and conflict; sustaining them comes at great cost and sacrifice for the Diocese.
- Across the Holy Land, Christians represent under 2% of the population and yet they provide 30% of the available education and medical services.

Geography

- The Levant is a term in geography that refers to an area in the Middle East that includes the areas of Lebanon, Jordan, Occupied Territories of Palestine, Israel, and Syria.
- It is an arid region consisting mostly of desert and dry steppe, with a thin strip of wetter, temperate climate along the Mediterranean coast.
- Geographically it is dominated by the Jordan Valley, a section of the Great Rift Valley bisecting the region from north to south, and containing the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River, and the Dead Sea – the lowest point on the earth's land surface.

Population distribution

Israel:	9.2 million (74.2% Jews; 20.9% Arabs; 4.8% Others)
Occupied Territories of Palestine:	4.8 million
Jordan:	11 million
Lebanon:	6.8 million
Syria:	17.5 million

Religions

Israel:

74.2%	Judaism
17.8%	Muslim
2.0%	Christianity
1.6%	Druze
4.4%	others

Palestine:

98%	Sunni Muslim
2%	Christianity

Jordan:

95%	Muslim
4%	Christianity
1%	Druze and Baha'i

Lebanon:

61%	Muslim (evenly split between Sunni and Shi'a)
34%	Christian

Syria:

75%	Sunni Muslim
13%	Shi'a Muslim
10%	Christianity
3%	Druze

Christians in the Holy Land

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem faces all the challenges that many churches face in the United States – falling attendance and income, aging congregations. It also faces the existential issue of young Christians leaving their homeland for opportunity in other countries. No matter where they live in the Holy Land, many Christians are discriminated against or live under occupation. Christians today are a tiny minority in the Holy Land who face persecution and the Christian community is fast disappearing from the land of its birth.

Christians in the Holy Land tend to be better educated than other groups, which also contributes to the exodus of youth. Christian young people – whether they attend university in the region or abroad – have more opportunities and they leave their families in the Holy Land at much higher rates than other demographic groups. Still, the Diocese of Jerusalem finds ways to sustain its parishes and humanitarian ministries. The leaders of these ministries know that support from their American friends sustains them and keeps their doors open.

History

- The Anglican Church in the Holy Land (Jerusalem) was established in 1833 by the Church Missionary Society in England.
- Became an independent Anglican diocese in 1887 incorporating several Anglican communities in the Middle East.
- Following the 1948 War, the diocese had the tremendous task of ministering to the Palestinian refugees.
- In 1976, the Right Rev. Faeq Haddad was consecrated as the first Palestinian Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem.
- Today the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem is Hosam Naoum, installed on May 13, 2021.

Meet Archbishop Hosam Elias Naoum

The Most Reverend Hosam Elias Naoum was born in Haifa in 1974 and grew up in Shefa'amr in Galilee. With his wife Rafa, they have a son and two daughters. As Diocesan Bishop, Archbishop Hosam is the Chief Pastor of the 27 parishes spread through the five political regions of Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. As Bishop, he is also Chairman of the Board of each of the more than 25 institutions of education and healthcare in the five countries of the diocese.

Archbishop Naoum is a strong advocate for peace and reconciliation in a multicultural, multi-faith, multi-ethnic region. A significant member of many ecumenical and interfaith organizations, he works with the Archbishop of Canterbury on Anglican and interfaith issues. One of the 13 recognized Heads of Churches in Israel, Archbishop Naoum faithfully encourages leaders of the Churches to make every effort to strengthen the Christian presence as a moderate and mediating body in a region torn by anxiety and unrest.



"It's because of the prayers and support we get from our friends like you that we keep going," Archbishop Naoum said. "It's not something I say for the sake of compliment. I really want you to know that you make a huge difference in our lives when you realize and we realize that we are partners and participants in God's mission for the world, especially in Jerusalem."

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