

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

AMERICAN FRIENDS  
OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM





*Juniors at The Saviour's School, Zarqa, Jordan*

## OVERVIEW

In a year marked by relentless conflict, economic strain, and profound humanitarian need, the institutions of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem stood firm in their mission to serve the most vulnerable—providing healing, education, and hope to communities across the Holy Land. This resilience was made possible through the steadfast support of donors like you working alongside American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ).

Your generosity helped AFEDJ fulfill its role as the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem's primary fundraising and grantmaking partner. Together, we delivered urgent healthcare to those facing crisis, expanded access to essential therapy and rehabilitation for children, and kept classrooms open to students of all abilities across Gaza, East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Jordan.

In 2024 your support was indispensable, part of a layered and collaborative model grounded in trust and partnership that ensured care never stopped, even in the darkest hours. As you read on, this report will highlight the tangible ways your generosity made a difference throughout the year, sustaining vital services and transforming lives across the region.



# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friend,

This past year has challenged all of us in ways we could never have imagined. Across the Holy Land, daily life was marred by conflict, displacement, and an unshakable sense of instability. And yet, because of you, healing and hope endured. Together, we raised more than \$4 million in direct support for the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem in 2024, a collective effort that allowed diocesan hospitals, schools, and rehabilitation centers to continue their vital work, even in the face of crisis.

It's hard to capture the kind of courage this year demanded. From Gaza to the West Bank to Amman, staff across the Diocese continued delivering medical care, therapy, education, and daily essentials without interruption—all thanks to donors like you. When bombs fell and institutions were pushed to the brink, you showed up with compassion and resolve. Your support helped keep hospital doors open, therapy centers staffed, and classrooms full of children eager to learn. Whether in operating theaters at Al Ahli Arab Hospital or at the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre's inclusive school and beyond, your generosity was present in real and tangible ways, reaching every corner of the Diocese's humanitarian mission.

As we reflect on 2024, I want you to know how deeply grateful we are for your partnership. Every gift to AFEDJ was part of a powerful collective effort to bring care and dignity to people facing profound hardship across the Holy Land. Your support has carried people through moments we could never have predicted, showing families who might otherwise have felt left behind as the world turned away that they are not forgotten.

Thank you for continuing to walk alongside AFEDJ in our mission. The report ahead is a testament to what we can do together, even in the hardest times. I hope you'll take a few moments to read on to see the difference you've made and the lives you've touched.

*Eileen Spencer*

**EILEEN SPENCER**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



“  
Pray for the peace  
of Jerusalem...  
not only Christians,  
but also Jews and Muslims.  
Otherwise, the word 'peace'  
doesn't mean peace.

**ARCHBISHOP HOSAM NAOUM**

Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

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## WHO WE ARE

Thirty-six years ago, Episcopal leaders saw the need for a safe, secure channel to offer support to the humanitarian institutions owned and operated by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ) was born.

Today, AFEDJ, a nonpolitical, nonsectarian, 501(c)(3) organization, is the leading fundraising organization for the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. Our sole focus is to mobilize financial resources for the Diocese and its humanitarian institutions—its schools, hospitals, and centers for children with disabilities in Palestine, Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon.

## OUR VISION

A Holy Land where people of all faiths have opportunities to live full, flourishing lives that express the worth and dignity inherent in every human being.

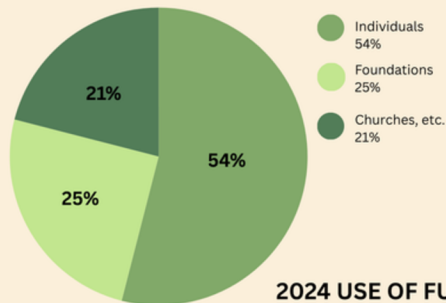
## OUR MISSION

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

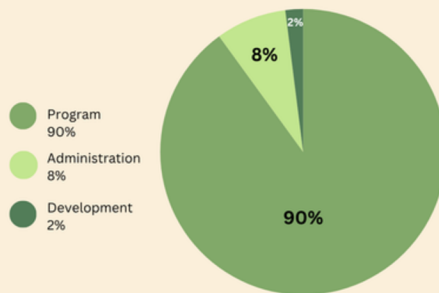
We believe peace and prosperity can be achieved when people have access to comprehensive healthcare and children have access to quality education irrespective of their religion, ethnicity, or ability to pay. 100% of funds designated to specific institutions go directly to those institutions. Funds raised for “where most needed” enable AFEDJ to direct resources to critical areas. This approach ensures that AFEDJ can swiftly address urgent needs and emerging opportunities, while empowering us to adapt to evolving circumstances, deepen our impact, and foster resilience within the communities we serve. By supporting the Diocese in its holistic mission to provide essential services and promote peace and reconciliation, we exemplify our mission, laying the foundation for lasting change and sustainable development in the Holy Land.



### 2024 SOURCE OF FUNDS (Based on \$4.2M)



### 2024 USE OF FUNDS



### \$4.2 Million

In 2024, AFEDJ raised over \$4 million in direct support for the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and its humanitarian institutions. This total includes funding for board-approved grants designated for urgent needs and emerging opportunities identified by the Archbishop and donor designated funding for diocesan institutions.

### 90%

of all funds raised directly supported institutions and programs across five countries within the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. When a donor designates a gift for a specific institution, AFEDJ directs 100% of it to the Diocese, to support the intended institution.

### 4 Stars

AFEDJ received the highest rating for financial accountability and transparency from Charity Navigator.

## FINANCIALS

Donors rely on AFEDJ as a trusted, secure way to directly support the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and its humanitarian work. Financial accountability and transparency are a top priority for us. We invite you to review our most recent audited financial statements: [2024 Audited Financials](#) and [2024 IRS 990](#).

AFEDJ's work is sustained through a diverse range of funding sources, each playing a vital role in advancing our mission:

- Individual donors, whose generosity fuels both flexible emergency response and targeted support where it's needed most
- Institutional partners, who support strategic initiatives
- Churches and Dioceses, who engage in mission-based giving

This diversified support allows AFEDJ to respond quickly in times of crisis, sustain core operations at diocesan institutions, and ensure that funds are used where they are needed most. Regardless of size or source, every gift to AFEDJ is stewarded with care, accountability, and a deep commitment to transformative impact.



# FLEXIBLE GIVING: HOW AFEDJ MAXIMIZES IMPACT

As the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem's primary grantmaking partner, AFEDJ plays a foundational role in sustaining and uplifting its humanitarian institutions through donor support.

Twice a year, AFEDJ awards board-approved grants to the Diocese, funded by gifts to AFEDJ directed to "where the need is greatest." These funds give diocesan leadership much-needed flexibility to direct support where it is most required—whether that means covering staff salaries during wartime, addressing infrastructure damage, or sustaining operations in under-resourced schools and hospitals. This kind of adaptable funding is especially important during times of crisis and economic instability, when needs shift quickly and unpredictably.

This flexible support also reduces the administrative burden on the Diocese, allowing leadership to focus on responding to emergencies, managing unforeseen expenses, and directing energy to their essential mission rather than on fundraising. This means your gift goes farther and reaches people faster, delivering help exactly where and when it's needed most.

When donors designate a gift for a specific institution, AFEDJ ensures that 100% of the funds go directly to the Diocese, which in turn directs the full amount to the specified institution, guaranteeing that every dollar fulfills its intended purpose.

*Students at The Arab Episcopal School in Irbid, Jordan*





*A nurse offering neonatal care at St. Luke's Hospital, Nablus*

# PARTNERING FOR GREATER IMPACT: THE ROLE OF GRANT FUNDING

Generous grant funding from institutional partners has played a pivotal role in advancing AFEDJ's mission. In 2024, support from organizations like Islamic Relief USA (IRUSA), along with private and family foundations, as well as churches and dioceses across the US, enabled the Diocese of Jerusalem's humanitarian institutions to sustain services, meet urgent needs and emerging opportunities, and reach the most vulnerable across the region.

By partnering with AFEDJ, our grant funders delivered essential care and services directly to communities under immense strain. This kind of partnership, grounded in shared values and a deep commitment to long-term impact, is what makes AFEDJ's work resilient and effective.

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM

# SAVING LIVES IN GAZA: AL AHLI ARAB HOSPITAL

In 2024, donor generosity enabled AFEDJ to provide critical support to Al Ahli Arab Hospital, one of the only operational medical centers serving Northern Gaza during a time of relentless violence and humanitarian collapse.

Despite repeated airstrikes and extreme resource shortages, a small, courageous team of doctors continued to perform complex surgeries, treat severe burns, provide trauma care, and offer psychosocial support to children and families. Their care has shaped life beyond the hospital walls, offering comfort and hope to thousands of families navigating unimaginable loss.

Personal gifts from donors like you, together with support from IRUSA and other institutional partners, played a critical role in ensuring that much-needed medical services remained accessible to Gaza's most vulnerable. In a year when nothing was certain, your partnership with AFEDJ meant that Ahli's doors remained open and its mission endured.

## AFEDJ donors supported:



Life-saving orthopedic and reconstructive surgeries, treating war-related injuries



Essential medical supplies, including antibiotics, anesthesia, and surgical tools



Critical trauma and burn care, serving thousands of patients in need



Salaries for staff, including regular and emergency hires



Psychosocial support for families, easing the toll of prolonged conflict



Meals and food vouchers, offering sustenance during times of extreme scarcity



Reliable fuel supply, keeping generators running and equipment operational through power outages



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# FROM GAZA CITY TO RAFAH: AHLI HOSPITAL EXTENDS CARE

In April 2024, as airstrikes and military operations intensified in Gaza City, several displaced staff members of Al Ahli Arab Hospital responded with remarkable courage. Forced to flee their hospital, these medical professionals established a desperately needed outreach clinic in Rafah, a city that had rapidly become home to over 1.4 million displaced Gazans.

Despite the collapse of basic infrastructure, severely limited clean water, inadequate sanitation, and minimal access to health care, Ahli team members created a safe space where civilians could receive emergency medical services, OB-GYN services, and essential medication. Their rapid deployment filled a critical void in a region overwhelmed by humanitarian need.

As more families were evacuated to Rafah, the clinic served an ever-growing number of patients. Staff from Ahli, operating under extreme pressure and personal risk, worked tirelessly to care for the injured and the sick. Their outreach efforts exemplified the hospital's mission: to bring hope and healing to all, even in the most difficult circumstances.

This extraordinary initiative would not have been possible without the support of AFEDJ donors, whose generosity has sustained Ahli's operations during one of the most devastating chapters in Gaza's history.



*Dr. Maher Ayyad, Medical Director at Ahli Hospital, helps a young patient*

“  
If it wasn't for you,  
our American Friends,  
Ahli would not be able to  
continue saving lives in  
Gaza today.

**SUHAILA TARAZI**  
Director, Al Ahli Arab Hospital

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# OPENING DOORS TO HEALING: JERUSALEM PRINCESS BASMA CENTRE

Thanks to the collective gifts of AFEDJ's donor community, children with disabilities across East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza received the care they needed from the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre (JPBC).

Donor support made it possible for JPBC to expand its programs across the region, even in the face of tremendous hardship. Located on the Mount of Olives, JPBC's K-12 inclusive school enrolled more than 460 students, one-third of whom live with physical, sensory, or developmental disabilities. Through its integrated model, students with and without disabilities learned side by side, supported by a curriculum grounded in dignity, inclusion, and opportunity.

With your help and the steadfast partnership of IRUSA, JPBC also opened a satellite unit at Al Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City. There, Gaza-based staff provided urgent care to displaced and injured children while remaining in close coordination with JPBC clinicians in Jerusalem.

**Together, your compassion and our institutional partners' commitment provided essential support to hundreds of children with special needs, ensuring access to:**



**Integrated classroom therapy,** providing speech, physical, and occupational services during the school day



**Caregiver training and housing,** equipping mothers with support and training to continue care at home



**Inclusive education,** where children with and without disabilities learn together in a supportive environment



**Family counseling,** resulting in reduced stress and improved well-being for hundreds of families



**Specialized autism services,** launching new support centers for families



**Clinical staff development,** enhancing capacity with training across six partner clinics

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# RESTORING HOPE THROUGH HEALING: AL-ZAHRAA'S COMMITMENT TO GAZA

In the midst of Gaza's ongoing conflict, Al-Zahraa, an occupational therapist affiliated with the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre (JPBC), became a beacon of hope for displaced families. Stationed at a shelter in Rafah, where approximately 600 families sought refuge under dire conditions, Al-Zahraa provided essential therapeutic support to children with disabilities and those injured by the war.

Guided remotely by JPBC's Medical Director in Jerusalem, Dr. Waddah, Al-Zahraa utilized specialized screening tools to assess and address the needs of the children in her care. Her work included conducting face-to-face interviews and offering ongoing emergency support and guidance for assessment and treatment.

The impact of her dedication was profoundly felt by the families she served. One grandmother, whose granddaughter Rahaf received treatment in Gaza, expressed her gratitude: "This support brings us relief. We are grateful and thankful for this institution and its specialists." Despite the challenging circumstances, Al-Zahraa continues her mission, embodying JPBC's steadfast dedication to serve children and families in need.

*Al-Zahraa screening a displaced child in Rafah*





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# CREATING EQUITABLE CLASSROOMS: ARAB EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

The Arab Episcopal School (AES) in Irbid, Jordan upheld its commitment to an inclusive educational environment where blind and sighted students are welcome, supported by a curriculum and culture designed to promote equity, dignity, and academic success.

AES's dedication to inclusion was evident in every classroom. From the use of adaptive technology to individualized support systems, the school equipped students with the tools they needed to succeed academically and socially. Despite ongoing regional instability and limited access to specialized resources, AES remained a lifeline for families in need across northern Jordan.

In May, AFEDJ staff visited the school and witnessed firsthand the power of its integrated approach. With dedicated teachers, a strong support system, and a mission grounded in equity, AES continues to showcase how education can break barriers and open doors.

**Because of your support to AFEDJ, AES delivered:**



**Inclusive learning environments** for both blind and sighted students, fostering a culture of empathy, shared learning, and mutual respect



**Individualized academic support** to ensure students progressed at their own pace, enabling meaningful participation and personal success



**Assistive tools and adaptive materials** to help students with visual impairments fully engage in the learning process



**Accessible tuition model** allowed blind and visually impaired students to pay just one-sixteenth of the regular tuition, removing financial barriers for families with limited means

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# REDEFINING EXCELLENCE: YAQEEEN'S JOURNEY

In 2024, Yaqeen, a blind student and lifelong learner at the Arab Episcopal School (AES), achieved an extraordinary milestone: scoring an impressive 99% average in her twelfth-grade national exams and ranking among the top students in the city. Her success is a powerful testament to her own perseverance and to the inclusive, empowering environment AES has cultivated for students of all abilities.

Yaqeen began her educational journey at AES at just three years old. Born into a blind family of four, she found in AES a place of belonging—a school where blindness is never a barrier to achievement. With access to integrated classrooms, adaptive learning materials, and personalized academic support, Yaqeen thrived academically and socially. The talented faculty at AES worked closely with her throughout her schooling, ensuring she had the tools, resources, and encouragement to reach her fullest potential.

Her remarkable accomplishment did more than place her among Irbid's highest achievers. It broke down deeply ingrained societal misconceptions about the limitations placed on children with disabilities.

With support from AFEDJ and our donors, AES continues to lead the way in educational equity, ensuring that students like Yaqeen are given the tools they need to excel. Her story is a shining testament to what is possible when compassion, determination, and opportunity come together.



*Yaqeen, at her graduation ceremony*



*A child at the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre*

## TOGETHER IN HOPE

The impact of this past year shows what is possible when a community comes together with a shared purpose. Whether through individual donations, institutional grants, or church support, every single act of generosity brought hope during some of the most challenging circumstances the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem has ever faced.

In 2024, we helped hospital doors stay open, brought care to children, and provided essential support for families across the Holy Land. On behalf of AFEDJ and the institutions we serve, thank you. We are deeply grateful for your partnership and look forward to continuing this mission of healing and hope, together.

“Your donation is an investment in the holistic well-being of the children and families we serve, allowing us to adapt, innovate, and persevere in the face of uncertainty.

**VIOLETTE MUBARAK**

Director, Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre

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# AFEDJ

American Friends of the  
Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

**Building Hope in the Holy Land**



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