



AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM

BUILDING PRESENCE, BUILDING PEACE



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Spring 2011

ST. JOHN'S HAIFA PUSHES AGAINST THE TIDE

Haifa is a city in transition. There are over 600,000 in the metropolitan area of this ancient northern Israel port, the third largest city in Israel. A high proportion of its Arab population is Christian, educated and gainfully employed. Yet significant challenges face St. John's School, the award-winning K-8 school owned and operated by the Diocese of Jerusalem in the heart of the old part of the city. Built in 1868, it was the first school in the city.

As with all Diocesan schools, St. John's educates students without regard to religious or ethnic background. But this school goes even further: it has been honored by the school district for its emphasis on values education. The concepts of teamwork, leadership, peace education, human rights, citizenship and democracy are integrated into every class, every grade.

A happy throng of 350 students attend grades 1-8, with another 45 pre-schoolers in the kindergarten. The school was so crowded that they undertook a capital campaign to refurbish a nearby dormitory to be used as a new lower school. That work is underway, but stalled because funds ran out.

For many families, this school is the anchor that keeps them in the community. Tuition is substantial because while Jewish schools in the district receive 100% reimbursement, Arab schools receive only 55%. That leaves 45% to be covered by parents who often have more than one child to educate. Tuition is \$1250 per year per child, beyond the means of some. Scholarship help is always needed.

Classes are incredibly crowded, but the quality of education is extremely high. Almost all eventually go on to university. The staff is dedicated, energetic and has received recognition from the school district and the Diocese for teamwork and creativity. Headmaster Aziz D'eem is a visionary who has developed relationships with parishes in the US to fund a science lab and computer lab. But the sheer number of children creates challenges. The new building will take some of the pressure off when it can be completed.

But the larger issue is Christian presence in this historic place. How do we help insure that today's Christians can stay here and provide a safe place for all to be educated? How do we support this community which offers a buffer in a changing region? While the neediest are in our hearts, these educators are holding the line to maintain a Christian presence in the Holy Land, against all odds. Some have predicted that within one generation, there will be no indigenous Christians left. St. John's is taking a stand against that. But to continue to grow and prosper, it needs help to complete its building and move children into an environment that's appropriate. Each gift will help them get to that goal.

WE WANT YOU AS AN AFEDJ MISSIONER

AFEDJ extends its reach across the U.S. with the help of our on the ground volunteer eyes and ears. They are called "Missioners" and they work hard to help us tell the story of the Diocese of Jerusalem.

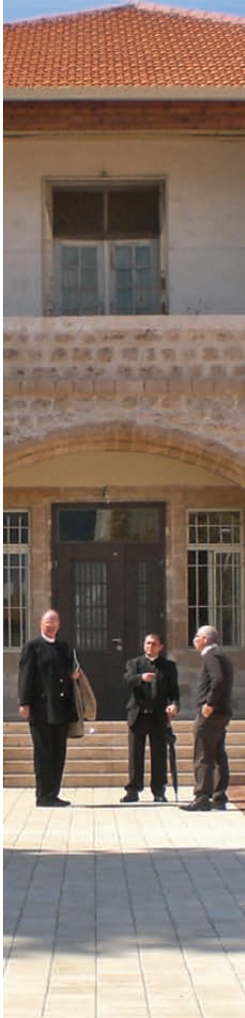
Why do people become Missioners? The ones I've talked with have this in common: We've each had personal experiences which left us with a deep desire to support the people and ministries of the Diocese of Jerusalem.

Mine took place on a pilgrimage one year ago. On that pilgrimage, I took a financial gift from The Church of the Holy Comforter in Vienna, VA to The Episcopal Technological & Vocational Training Center in Ramallah, West Bank (www.etvtc.org).

I spent a day in Ramallah with Giovanni Anbar, Director of the ETVTC. I saw firsthand some of the challenges the school faces. Even though Ramallah is doing better economically than many cities in the West Bank, many parents are not able to find jobs. So without scholarships, students are not able to attend ETVTC. But they need to attend in order to be prepared to find jobs when they graduate. What a blessing to be able to learn about the school from Giovanni, see his remarkable skill and dedication, meet the teachers and students, and deliver a gift which will pay tuition and, in turn, teachers' salaries.

Traveling back to St. George's College in East Jerusalem, I needed to walk through the Kalandia checkpoint. One bus dropped me off on the Ramallah

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EVANGELICAL HOME, THE EARLY YEARS *By Patricia Rantisi*

As a young teenager, I was known as the quiet, shy Vicar's daughter. Yet beneath that façade I was a rebel and an adventure seeking individual! During my second year of Nurses Training, I committed my heart to Christ and my life to Mission. Little did I know then what challenges would confront me.

Following graduation in nursing and midwifery, I entered Bible College in Swansea, S.Wales, where I first met Audeh Rantisi, for Missionary training. We were just friends, each going in opposite directions; I to the Peruvian jungle where my ministry for almost six years, entailed medical and evangelistic work and travelling by horseback or mule. Audeh, on the other hand, went to the Sudan, teaching in a dangerous and volatile political environment.

Our next meeting was in Ramallah, while on vacation and visiting Mary-Jeanne Grupp. We married just over a year later in my father's church in the UK. Within three months we were back in Ramallah, having spent all our wedding gifts on buying essential furniture to start a Boys Home in co-operation with the Evangelical Home for Girls, founded by Mary-Jeanne and Kit Morgan. I always joke with people saying that we were only married three months when we had twelve children! Twelve little boys, either orphans or from poor or difficult home backgrounds came to share our 3-bedroomed marital home. That was in 1965 when Ramallah was under the Jordanian Government.

Two years later, following the war of 1967 we found ourselves under Israeli occupation with increasing restrictions and frustrating fearful influences. Nevertheless, even without any stable income and purely maintaining a life of faith for all our needs, we were able to expand and move to bigger premises caring for more children. After twenty years in rented premises, we saw the foundations being laid for our purpose built Boys Home, which eventually housed up to forty boys. Education for Palestinians is like a precious jewel. It is something to be treasured because it means a future and a hope. This is especially true for Palestinian Christians who have to pay fees for Private Christian schools. We saw 215 boys go through our home, all educated at the Evangelical School. Some of them were only with us a few years, other boys stayed from Kindergarten through to High School. It thrills me to see the former Boys Home building now being used as a Vocational School.

We finally retired in 1995, thirty years after the Home opened, during which time we had three daughters and saw many of our

'sons' grow up and start families of their own. The years in the Boys Home were full of joy but sometimes difficult with the inevitable problems of boys and staff. They were also times of danger, boys being arrested just for being in the back yard during curfew, gunfire in the streets, endless days of curfew, settlers kidnapping one boy, my car incinerated on purpose and death threats on my husband. But you could say that life was never dull!

My beloved Audeh died in October 2001, after which life became even more difficult. The Israeli army re-invaded Ramallah in the Spring of 2002 and I was taken hostage at gunpoint, with my neighbours for three days, while the soldiers used the building for sniping from. Although I tried to work as a volunteer at the Sabeel Office in Jerusalem, I was often not allowed to pass the checkpoints. So, I felt it was time to return to England.

I am now settled in a small apartment in the beautiful town of Shrewsbury (Birthplace of Charles Darwin!). I am very involved in our local Anglican Church and also with Friends of Sabeel, campaigning for Peace and Justice in Palestine. But I now have a new 'career' writing novels! My first novel 'Miriam's Legacy' was published in 2007. It is a story of four generations of Palestinian refugees, beginning in the Shatila Camp in Lebanon, which I visited when doing my research. The main character is Miriam's great-grandson, Farres, who grows up in this refugee camp but dreams of becoming a doctor and one day visiting the land of Palestine from where Miriam was exiled. (ISBN 978-1-4343-04124 obtainable from AuthorHouse.com or Amazon.) My next novel, 'My name is Musa,' is about an abandoned Palestinian baby. Hopefully it will be published this year. I also updated Audeh's biography, 'Blessed are the Peacemakers' in 2003.

My eldest daughter Susan is married to Rev. Samuel Barhoum whose ministry is in the Episcopal Church, Raineh, near Nazareth. Hilary is married to Paul Beran and both work at Harvard University in Boston. My youngest, Rosemary, is severely handicapped and is in care in the UK.

Throughout my life, in spite of times of regret and mistakes, I give glory to God for overwhelming blessings and great thankfulness.



28 members of St. Luke's Parish, Darien Connecticut experienced the transformational wonder of the Holy Land during Lent. They were warmly welcomed by Fr. Fuad Dagher and members of the St. Paul's Parish family for worship, fellowship and a tour of the new Community Center. It's being built with support from the entire community of Shefa Amr, near Nazareth. They'd be grateful for your support.

WE WANT YOU – *continued from front page*

side. About an hour and a half later, after waiting in long lines in barred, prison-like corridors and responding to unseen people interrogating me through one-way glass, I stepped onto a bus on the other side.

The bus was packed, standing room only. A young Palestinian woman, head covered, saw me. She jumped out of her seat and insisted I sit down. I sat, thanked her and asked where she was going. In fluent English she said she was returning to her parent's home in East Jerusalem after attending classes at Birzeit University in the West Bank. I asked her how many days a week she needed to pass through the Kalandia checkpoint. She responded, "Five days, twice a day." I asked what that was like for her. She broke into tears and turned away.

We're all invested in bringing about a time of peace and justice in Israel/Palestine. But students need education today. And Missioners are committed to sharing the information which will help donors meet the daily needs of the people and ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. Missioners, for example, are passionate about making it possible for the children in Ramallah to be able to be in school *today* and for their dedicated, amazing teachers to be paid *today*.

Do you share that passion?

Currently, there are 190 AFEDJ Missioners. Because of the very real daily needs in the Diocese of Jerusalem, we need many, many more. Will you join us?

What specifically do Missioners do?

1. In their parishes, deaneries, diocese and local communities, Missioners build awareness about the people and institutions of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem.
2. Missioners work to build financial support for the AFEDJ and contribute to the AFEDJ themselves on a yearly basis.
3. As they meet others who share concern for the people and institutions of the EDJ, Missioners enlarge the circle of support for the EDJ. They invite these interested persons to join our mission by becoming part of the AFEDJ mailing list and/or by becoming Missioners.
4. Missioners, as they are able, build networks with other Missioners. They work together strategically to build greater support for the EDJ. They seek local opportunities to present speakers, cultivation events, encourage support for St. Nicholas Day or other AFEDJ programs and they share great ideas from their local communities. AFEDJ can then publish and share these ideas with others so we can learn from each other.

Contact me at davidsmith927@gmail.com. I'm happy to answer your questions, share my experiences and can send you an enrollment form. Or you can find the information on our website www.afedj.org in the Missioners section. Send the form back to me and AFEDJ will send you a Missioner Toolkit of useful resources. I will in touch with you and all our Missioners on a monthly basis to support you in your vitally important, life-giving calling.

The Rev. Dr. David Smith
Chair, Missioner Task Force
AFEDJ Board of Trustees



*Giovanni Anbar
and David Smith
The Episcopal Technological
& Vocational Training
Center in Ramallah*

KIDS4PEACE: INTERFAITH EDUCATION CREATES WORLD-CHANGING FRIENDSHIPS



"We have big dreams, but small opportunities," one twelve year-old Muslim boy said, at the end of a two-week Kids4Peace camp. Haitham had travelled with other Jewish, Christian and Muslim children from Jerusalem to the United States, to see what peaceful coexistence might look like. He worked hard to make friends with Israeli kids, he shared the pain of not being able to visit his grandmother in Ramallah, and he hoped that someday life in Jerusalem would be different. But he didn't know what he could do that would matter.

This summer, Kids4Peace launches its first ever Leadership Camp, hosted by The Rev. Nicholas Porter at his family's farm in Vermont. Porter and his wife Dorothy have long dreamed of helping to make Middle East peace a reality. Their dream and Haitham's dream will come together in a two-week program to empower 15-16 year-old youth with the skills to make real change in their communities. "Young people are realizing they can be responsible for their own environment," Porter says. "We don't want to reestablish the status quo. We want something better and we think the young people want that, too."

Kids4Peace was born amid the violence in Jerusalem in 2001-2002, when children were caught in the crossfire of fighting. A brave group of educators and parents from Jerusalem's three faiths dreamed of a safe place, where children could meet each other face to face, learn about each other's lives, and just maybe become friends. With its home in the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, Kids4Peace has grown into a powerful movement of interfaith learning and cooperation, operated as a global partnership between interfaith staff in Jerusalem and local host chapters in Atlanta, North Carolina, Vermont and Boston. Over 450 children have participated in Kids4Peace programs so far.

This summer, 48 more Jewish, Christian & Muslim children from Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Bethlehem, age 11-12, will come to camps in the USA, for two weeks of fun and learning. Along with soccer and swimming, the

ST. ANDREW'S CLINIC IN RAMALLAH READY TO OPEN, WITH YOUR HELP

children observe each other's practices of prayer, visit each other's sacred places, and engage in dialogue about conflict and peace. American children join them as "peace pals," to expand their global understanding. Adult staff from each faith travel with the children from Jerusalem and join their American counterparts to plan and lead the programs.

"It opened a wall in my heart," one girl said of her time at a Kids4Peace camp. But the children return to a city still full of walls, suspicion and fear. Through the Continuation Program, 50 camp alums are meeting monthly for two more years of dialogue, fun activities, weekend trips



and community service. They visit each other's homes and neighborhoods, organize activities for children at St. Vincent dePaul orphanage, and slowly form lasting friendships across the lines of conflict.

Kids4Peace is another program birthed in the Diocese of Jerusalem which hopes to build peace from the ground up. They'd be grateful for your support. Gifts may be sent through AFEDJ, designated for Kids4Peace.



Rev. Nicholas Porter (left)
and Rev. Joshua Thomas



2011 Course Schedule
for St. George's College
is now available at
www.sgcjerusalem.org

Om David is a cheerful woman who lives alone in Ramallah. She's almost completely incapacitated. Her husband died several years ago, her two children emigrated to South America a decade ago, and she's bed-ridden with circulatory problems resulting from diabetes. It's hard to know what keeps her smiling, with a kind word for everyone and joy in her heart.

Om David was independent until her physical condition deteriorated when Ramallah was almost completely surrounded by checkpoints. It became impossible for her to travel to a hospital. The disease quickly and permanently damaged her legs and feet.



Father Hanna Daleh

Fr. Hanna Daleh is the parish priest at St. Andrew's in Ramallah. He visits her and brings her supplies from a food bank for the needy, a program he started last year. But Fr. Hanna and the Rt. Rev. Suheil Dawani understood that food alone would not sustain elderly, chronically ill residents like Om David. Bishop Dawani determined to help her and others like her who couldn't access the care they need in the current travel-restricted environment. The Diocese chose to do something about it. Check out the video which includes Om David and information about the clinic from Dr. Hisham Nassar, Consultant to the Diocese for Healthcare, at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjKWusirNfl>.

St. Andrew's Clinic was built as a two storey addition on top of the parish hall. One floor was reserved for the clinic, and the other is rented out to generate income. But after construction, funds ran out and the clinic awaits the purchase and installation of specialized equipment for diagnosing, assessing and maintaining diabetes. Because of genetic factors, Palestinians have between 4 and 5 times the rate of this debilitating condition as those in the US. Without adequate treatment, this disease takes vital, productive heads of households and turns them into unemployed dependents.

Om David eagerly awaits the opening of the St. Andrew's Clinic at the church. The clinic will provide area families with a unique combination of primary care and high quality advanced care for diabetics. So she will receive good care locally, something that is currently impossible. The clinic will provide services on a sliding scale to insure that everyone has access. But the waiting room stands empty now, waiting for the children and older people who will benefit from care that will keep them healthy. They're waiting for your gift to make it happen...



Have you considered a bequest to AFEDJ in your estate planning? Your gift will live on...

To donate go to:
www.afedj.org

For more information contact Anne Lynn:
aklynn@afedj.org

Congratulations to Phoebe Griswold, President of the Board of the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem! She was the recipient of the Deans' Cross for Servant Leadership given by Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, VA at their Service of Lessons and Carols on Dec. 5.





What IS progress in the Middle East?

Last fall when I was writing the President's message (September 26, 2010), the world was waiting to see if the Israeli government was going to continue the moratorium on Settlement expansion in hopes that the peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine would continue. That did not happen. And the peace process has not been restarted.

Now (May 2011), the world is anticipating a UN General Assembly meeting in September that could recognize Palestine as a state. September is also the month that the Palestinian Authority has set for the completion of its state-building program. Again, we wait for visible progress in the establishment of Palestine statehood and the opening of peace negotiations.

What IS progress in the Middle East?

Progress in the Middle East for the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is the building of a strong board committed to fund raising to support the mission of the Bishop of Jerusalem, the Rt. Rev. Suheil Dawani. Progress is raising the funds so that a much-needed Diabetes Clinic can be completed and opened in Ramallah. Progress is to be a catalyst to more and more pilgrimages in order to be with our Christian family there as well as visiting the deeply moving holy sites of that sacred region.

From October 17-30 I will be leading a group of Episcopalians in the Holy Land as we visit the holy sites and also the remarkable health care and educational institutions of the Diocese. There is room for additional pilgrims and I hope that you might want to join us for what should be an amazing educational opportunity for our minds and a time of nurture and inspiration for our spirits. If you are interested, please contact Ann Korky akkorky@gmail.com co-leader of the pilgrimage for details.

As the United Nations praises Palestinians' progress toward statehood through establishing functioning institutions, know that you, with AFEDJ, have a part in that work. Through the Diocesan hospitals and schools in Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, healthy, educated citizens are being prepared to lead the new state for which we all wait in hope.

Phoebe Griswold
President, Board of Directors

THE FRUITS OF FRIENDSHIP ST. SAVIOUR'S SCHOOL ZARKA, JORDAN

If you visit Jordan, you are unlikely to find your way to Zarka, a gritty industrial suburb of the capital, Amman, that is home to a large population of refugees from the West Bank city of Nablus. But if you do go to Zarka, you will be rewarded by the chance to visit St. Saviour's School, a K-12 educational institution of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem.

In a crowded building on an impossibly small compound that also houses the parish church, St. Saviour's offers a challenging, academically rigorous education to some 350 students. Coeducational at every grade level, St. Saviour's welcomes Muslim as well as Christian children and mainstreams in regular classes both visually impaired students and those with other disabilities.

I had the chance to visit the school in 2009 together with a fellow parishioner from St. Paul's K St. in Washington, DC who happens to be professional educator in Montgomery Co, MD, a jurisdiction with one of the finest public education systems in the US. My friend's verdict was simple—what St. Saviour's is doing for its students with disabilities rivals what the best of US schools is able to offer.

The school's headmistress told us that some 25-30% of the students receive some form of financial assistance, often to avoid families having to choose which of their children they can afford to send to St. Saviour's. She also noted that some families are reluctant to have their daughters remain in a co-ed school after the 6th grade. Her policy is clear—if a family wants its sons to attend, their sisters must be enrolled as well.

Funds are desperately needed to provide scholarship support and to make essential physical improvements. We at St. Paul's recently funded the replacement of the floor in the kindergarten classroom. The school dreams of building a third floor on top of the existing building to provide additional classroom space and expanding the size of its compound.

Diocesan schools like St. Saviour's impact more than the individual students they serve, as important as that is. By the fact of their inclusiveness,



they demonstrate both to the students themselves and the larger community that all of us—Muslim and Christian, able bodied and physically or intellectually challenged—are made in God's likeness and deserve respect, understanding and opportunity. The institutions of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem don't just preach that message, they live it, and in so doing counterbalance other voices in their societies that advocate exclusion and extremism. They deserve our active support, both for the sake of the people they serve and for the example they set.

Ann Korky
AFEDJ Board of Trustees



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25 Old King's Hwy North, Suite 13, Darien, CT 06820

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Did you know...

that the Diocese of Jerusalem covers 5 countries and provides pastoral care and humanitarian aid through:

- 23 parishes
- 14 schools
- 2 full service hospitals
- 4 outpatient clinics
- 4 guesthouses
- 4 institutes for the disabled
- 2 homes for the elderly



Support this important work today.



20 AFEDJ Missioners from the Diocese of Los Angeles gathered at the Cathedral of St. Paul for a workshop with Anne Lynn, Executive Director of AFEDJ. Missioners got updates on the work of the Diocese of Jerusalem and received packages of information and resources to help work with parishes and interested individuals. The LA group “bought” an AFEDJ display to keep and share so they’d have it available for conventions, adult education presentations and conferences as needed. Please contact David Smith at davidsmith927@gmail.com, Chair of Missioners, if you’d like to host a workshop or learn about becoming a Missioner.

Have you considered a recurring gift? Would \$10 or \$25 a month be right for you? Please go to our website at www.afedj.org and click the Donate Now button. Would you like to remember a loved one or a recent occasion with a gift in memory of or in honor of a friend or family member? Your gift will mean so much to a child or family struggling in the Holy Land.

Missioner Patricia Jensen represented AFEDJ at the San Diego Diocesan Convention in February. The Rt. Rev. James Mathes drew the winning entry for our raffle. If you’d like to volunteer to man a booth at your Diocesan Convention, AFEDJ will gladly supply everything but the tablecloth. Just contact Anne Lynn at aklynn@afedj.org.



Save a Tree. Sign up for the AFEDJ e-newsletter and Give securely online at www.afedj.org