



AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM

BUILDING PRESENCE, BUILDING PEACE



25 Old King's Hwy North, Suite 13, Darien, CT 06820 • 203-655-3575 • aklynn@afedj.org

Summer 2010

GAZA CRIES FOR HELP!

The Rev. Canon Robert Edmunds traveled to Gaza a few weeks ago to visit Ahli Hospital, see current conditions, talk with Director of the Hospital Suhaila Terazi, and officiate at a service in the small but lovely chapel. The chapel was recently repaired after damages sustained from military action. It was Bob's first visit, part of Bishop Dawani's effort to bring clergy to the hospital once a month for worship and pastoral care. "They do so much with so little," he said. "The staff does triage in very cramped quarters and an x-ray machine functions with the help of a pile of books. The hospital was originally built in 1898. Yet this facility treats thousands each year with professionalism and dignity. Patients receive excellent care provided to all, with respect and love."

We haven't heard much about Gaza for the last few months, but the overwhelming need has remained – all this time. In her recent letter to President Barack Obama, The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori pointed out that, "Today, seventy percent of Gazans live on less than \$1 per day. Forty percent of workers are unemployed, and more than ten percent of children are malnourished." While the flow of equipment and supplies into Gaza has been severely restricted, hope is recently growing that there may be the opportunity to resupply, repair, re-equip, renew. Ahli Hospital, a pillar of stability in the area, serves the region with full service in-patient facilities, a pharmacy, outpatient clinic, and sorely needed psycho-social support. Ahli's doctors, nurses and other staff want to continue doing God's work.

The number suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders, depression, and other psychological stresses continues to grow. The hospital developed a unique, culturally sensitive program to train local women to identify symptoms and utilize stress reduction techniques in their families and neighborhoods. A recent gift to the hospital from an AFEDJ donor will allow the program to expand at a critical time. Thanks to donors like this, the hospital can respond to evolving patients' needs and conditions.

From detergent to wash hospital sheets or glass to replace broken windows to toilet paper or a new ambulance, the need for basics is enormous. Bandages and some medications are available. But the important business of bringing needed equipment and updated systems is just beginning. Ahli needs your help to serve a people who have struggled for a very long time. Please help us help them. The need is great and the time is clearly now.



"They do so much with so little."



The Rt. Rev. Subeil Dawani, Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, celebrates the Eucharist with the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, Archbishop of Canada in St. Philip's Chapel inside Ahli Hospital in Gaza.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EXPANDS AND NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

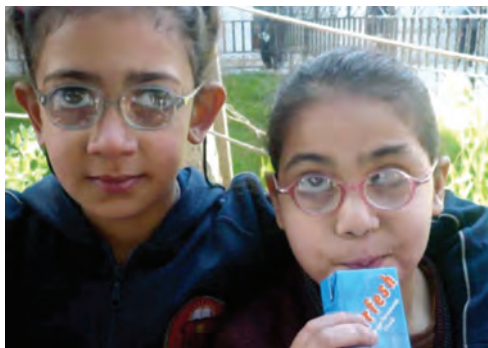
Christ School in Nazareth had an urgent need for help in building new classrooms last fall. Those classrooms are now filled with students eager to learn and grow thanks to your help. There is still a serious financial gap to finish that project and your help would be gratefully received.



Students at Christ Church School in Nazareth sometimes have classes outside in the beautiful weather.

Now more schools are adding capacity to begin to address the overwhelming need for Christian education in the region. Parents trust the Diocese of Jerusalem to instill values and faith in addition to strong academics. They know that a well-educated community will make better choices and improve the chances for peace.

Arab Episcopal School in Irbid, Jordan has been praised for its work with blind and low vision students in addition to those with normal sight. Mainstreaming disabled students is a concept that is receiving slow acceptance in this region, and our school is leading the way in Jordan. The school has educated students in K-6, but those with disabilities who complete 6th grade have limited options to continue their studies. AES recently purchased an adjoining property and plans to build space for both 7th and 8th grade, plus a nursery school. They hope to eventually expand through 10th grade and include vocational training for the blind. They need your help with construction costs plus teacher salaries, books and equipment. They need \$15,000 to cover construction – a modest investment for a significant and long-lasting resource.



Arab Episcopal School students

St. Paul Shefa'Amr in Israel also acquired an adjacent property which they're developing into a school for the disabled. Even more remarkable, the work is being done with labor, professional expertise and materials sourced locally through in-kind donations and community support. The pride and sense of accomplishment is enormous. We sometimes think that the region is permanently mired in conflict and despair. The St. Paul's family is shining example of hope and growth.



A new school rises at St. Paul Shefa'Amr

St. Philip's in Nablus has run a daycare facility for many years with a substantial wait-list. In an overcrowded city with high unemployment and a large refugee camp, Nablus presents a real opportunity for the church to minister in meaningful ways. St. Philip's recently announced plans to begin adding an elementary school, one grade at a time. Children will be able to grow in faith, absorbing lessons of tolerance along with their academic studies. They'd be grateful for your help with scholarships and teacher salaries.

Your gifts will have a direct impact on these children's lives. Bishop Suheil believes that education is the cornerstone to peace in the region, and AFEDJ chose it as our priority for funding for the next two years. With your help, each of these schools can develop future leadership, stabilize communities and prepare for a sustainable future. Please support this work now.



St. Philip's Nablus Nursery School

PRINCESS BASMA SCHOOL GRADUATES ITS FIRST CLASS

It's a great joy to share with each of you how proud we are of the graduating seniors at the Princess Basma School. On Sunday, May 30 at 5 p.m. in East Jerusalem they became the first class to complete 12 grades in this school which mainstreams disabled and able bodied children. Several will go on to university and all will bring the skills and courage they acquired in this remarkable place.



they built confidence and hope. Mohamad plans to study physiotherapy so he can help others gain the same advantage. "Princess Basma School has helped a lot of people," he says. "The teachers care about us."

Ibaa has been at Princess Basma since she was in nursery school. She literally grew with the school: she remembers when it only went to sixth grade. "I worried what would happen to me when

The School, a part of the Princess Basma Centre, is a pioneer in inclusive education and was established in 1987. It started with 17 students and now has over 750 in grades K-12. This includes 33 physically disabled, 74 hearing impaired and 6 blind children. The success at Princess Basma School has prompted other Palestinian schools to mainstream their special needs children, giving them a chance to become self-supporting contributors to their communities.

20% of the staff at the Centre is disabled as well. Special needs educators are given employment priority here, allowing them to become role models for students.

Ahmed, one of the graduates, is hearing impaired. His two brothers are studying medicine and Ahmed would like to follow them to university. He knows it'll be hard, but he's eager to try. His classmate Mohamad, also 18 and also from Jerusalem, is physically disabled. They've studied together at Princess Basma School where

I reached seventh grade! I did not want to leave the school, but a class was added each year." She particularly loves extra-curricular activities, trips and summer camp. What she will remember most is the good relationships she has with her teachers. "Teachers are my friends," she said.

Ibaa plans to go to university to study business and economics. She's deeply impressed by Princess Basma's success in integrating disabled and able-bodied students. She feels it helps each one prove themselves in ways they never imagined.

We salute these students and hope you'll support the summer camp and scholarship programs so more can benefit from this unique environment. Your recent gifts which provided a van, summer camp and desperately needed scholarships have made this possible. Please continue to provide for their futures. Offer your congratulations to these graduates at info@basma-centre.org and offer your prayers for their continued success.

Virginia Theological Seminary, February 2010

The Rt. Rev. Suheil Dawani, Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, spoke to over 140 at a luncheon at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria. He spoke of the small and shrinking Christian population in his Diocese of 5 countries. They act as a buffer in a volatile region. He spoke of the difficult choices that families must make every day. "You can't make peace with hungry people," he said. He also noted that, based on his February visit to Gaza with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the children in Gaza do not smile. We must do everything in our power to change that.



Bishop Suheil and John Peterson

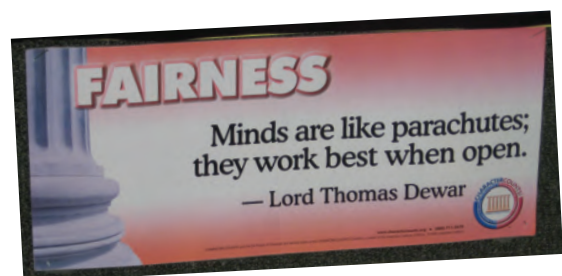


ASK FOR THE AFEDJ

- 2009 Annual Report
- Planned Giving brochure
- General information brochure
- Diocese of Jerusalem institutions brochure

from aklynn@afedj.org

Visit our website at www.afedj.org to donate online, for Reflections, news and an archive of AFEDJ newsletters.



WHY SHOULD YOU SUPPORT TODAY'S CHRISTIANS IN THE HOLY LAND?

Message from the Executive Director:

Why should we care about a bit of history, half way around the world? In a time of earthquakes, AIDS epidemics and human tragedy, with so many demands on our compassion and resources, why should we invest in the future of the Holy Land? Isn't it really a museum in the middle of a war zone?

Our collective call to this work in this place is different from any contemporary need. This land and these people are our shared history, our only physical connection to Christ. The Holy Land is central to our faith and to our relation to other faiths. By helping to sustain the Christian presence, we build our own faith – we are Christ's hand in the world. We become one with our brothers and sisters, one in the body of Christ.

We believe that each of us has a responsibility to those living in a sometimes hopeless place, who are stewards of our shared Holy Land. They struggle there so we can visit, worship, be inspired, be transformed. The Rev. Peter Walsh, Rector of St. Mark's in New Canaan, Connecticut visited Jerusalem and the Galilee last month. He described it as VUCA: volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. A land with more sacred sites and more machine guns, more missiles for devotion and missiles for destruction that he had ever seen. This is a challenge for us and for all Christians.

Please join us in helping to sustain a small and shrinking community of faith which buffers larger forces through Christ-like example. They need your support and they deserve our prayers. They look to us for hope and help. Please be generous.

- Anne K. Lynn



WE MADE OUR FAITH STATEMENT LIVE AND SERVE FOREVER!!!

My wife and I have recently written new wills. It was an easy decision to make a substantial gift to the American Friends from the proceeds of our life insurance policy. These funds will be directed towards education and health care.

We believe that it is every Christian's responsibility to support the work of our church in the Holy Land, which I have visited 12 times, beginning in 1985. My trips all over this 80 miles of real estate have taken me to the hurting towns and villages of the West Bank and Gaza. These are some of the places which Jesus visited, preached and healed.

For us Christians this small spot of real estate is where our faith originates and vibrantly lives today through the efforts of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. We believe that the 20 years we have served the Diocese is the best living investment of our time and treasure to bring the peace of Christ to a land of conflict that radically impacts total peace on earth.

Upon our deaths, our gift will be a living statement that we believe Christ is the only answer for the world today. We are investing in that hope for the world, beginning in Jerusalem. We encourage each of you to make a similar gift from insurance or other assets. Anne Lynn in our home office has resources to guide you in this process.

- Ann and Laird Mortimer

THE FRUITS OF FRIENDSHIP

I do not call you servants any longer...but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father...And I appointed you to bear fruit, fruit that will last...

(John 15:15-16)

This article begins a series that looks at the work of individual institutions of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, institutions whose impact on the people and societies they serve indeed constitute "fruit that will last." These Diocesan institutions, in Jordan, the West Bank, Israel, Syria, and Lebanon, provide essential resources for all in their communities.

We start with Christ Church School in Nazareth, Israel. Founded in 1851 by Anglican missionaries, the school today serves some 1700 students in grades K-12, many of them Muslim. With an emphasis on computer science, the school regularly graduates students competitive enough to enter the Technion, Israel's MIT. Christ Church was judged some years ago to be the best school in Israel, not the best Arab school, but the best overall. This is a remarkable achievement for a church funded private school in a country in which Arab and Jewish children are for the most part educated in separate and inherently unequal public school systems.

In addition to its superior academic standards, the students are grounded in the social and ethical values that flow from the best of Christian and Anglican tradition. That means mutual respect and understanding for people of different religious traditions and cultures as well as an appreciation of the shared heritage of Jews, Christians and Muslims. As future citizens of Israel, these students are being given the skills to compete and flourish in Israel's increasingly high-tech economy while retaining their own cultural, religious and linguistic heritage. In a part of the world where people are too often judged – and pigeonholed – on the basis of religion or ethnicity, Christ Church graduates bring a different perspective to the table. Their computer savvy and fluency in Hebrew also belie the expectation that Arab Israelis are not capable of participating in or contributing to the country in which they hold citizenship.

With Israel's Arab minority now 20% of its population and growing, the students are ideally positioned to break through existing barriers and to serve as bridges to Israel's Arab neighbors. That is part of the reason the Diocese of Jerusalem made a major investment this year in expanding and modernizing the school's facilities.

With great courage, the Rt. Rev. Suheil Dawani expanded the school last year so more children had access to high quality education at Christ School. That decision resulted in substantial construction debt. Please help support this beacon of hope with your prayers and donations.

- Ann Korkey





photo by Kara Flannery

EAST JERUSALEM IS A CRUCIBLE

Message from the President

The urgent news from East Jerusalem about land ownership and buildings brings into clear focus the role of the Episcopal Church in the Middle East. Major institutions of the church are in East Jerusalem.

The Cathedral, Diocesan offices, its guest house, St George's College, St. George's K-12 school for boys (girls newly admitted in kindergarten and first grade) and The Princess Basma Center for Disabled Children all have long and respected histories in East Jerusalem. This is an Anglican/Christian presence that we must support.

At St. George's School, 800 Muslim and Christian boys are being educated in a rigorous curriculum so they can graduate and lead productive lives. Just around the corner, other boys are throwing rocks and getting arrested.

Education offers an alternative to this frustration. Diocesan schools include respect for differences and tolerance as an integral part of the curriculum – so critical in this environment. I've seen the older boys at St. George's during recess where the playground is the size of a postage stamp. They need playgrounds to work off their energy and practice team sports. They don't have that opportunity, yet the waiting list remains long because families understand the importance of the academics and the values taught here.

Nearby the Princess Basma Center for Disabled Children treats children of all faiths who have been damaged by birth or war. The Center works with the whole family sending a child home with parents who can care for their special physical or mental needs. Some children even come from Gaza, when then can get out. It's a regional referral center and a critical asset to every disabled child in the Diocese.

With all eyes in the world on East Jerusalem, even though we are far from this Holy City, we can support the Christian presence and the work of the Episcopal Diocese through the AFEDJ. We are already there healing, teaching and praying. By strengthening the institutions which teach and heal, we strengthen families and communities. We provide hope at a time when there may be a chance.

What is your part? It is to support this work by sending a donation now and encouraging your congregation to do the same. Let's not see the Christian population fall below the present 1.5% because we did not recognize our responsibility to our very own Christian family.

With love and hope,
Phoebe W. Griswold
President of the Board of Trustees



Read the inspiring
Reflections from visitors
to the Holy Land
at www.afedj.org



AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM



NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Dallas, May 2010. The AFEDJ Board of Trustees held its Annual Meeting in Dallas in May at St. Michael and All Angels. The Rev. Robert Dannals, Rector of SMAA, guided a group of 41 parishioners through the Holy Land, and that group warmly welcomed the AFEDJ Board. New members of the Board of Trustees are welcomed here by President Phoebe Griswold.

Pictured left to right are Jack Roll, Lorraine Reeder, Phoebe Griswold, Ann Korky and The Rev. David Smith. Officers for the 2010-2011 year are Phoebe Griswold, President; Michael Clark and Sue Smock, Vice Presidents; John Sakhleh, Treasurer; and Deborah Dresser, Secretary. Elected onto the AFEDJ Advisory Council were Dianne Moss, The Rev. Nicholas Porter, Dennis Hensley, The Rev. Canon John Peterson and Maureen Shea.



SAVE A TREE

Sign up for the AFEDJ
online e-newsletter
aklynn@afedj.org



AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

*St. Nicholas Day, Dec. 5
Fun with a Purpose!*

CELEBRATE THE SECOND ANNUAL
ST. NICHOLAS DAY, DEC. 5
(OR WHENEVER THE SPIRIT MOVES YOU!)

Join the fun! Celebrate St. Nicholas Day and connect with the spirit of the real St. Nicholas, Bishop in Turkey in the fourth century. He's the patron saint of needy children in the Middle East and inspires us to help needy children today. Organize your Youth Group, Outreach Committee, Church School or your family to celebrate the Holiday season in less commercialized, intergenerational and more giving spirit. Perform the Advent pageant, sing the hymns, pray and have fun with the tools we've provided at www.afedj.org. Most are free and we've connected with the St. Nicholas Center to add prayer cards, cookie cutters, costume patterns, recipes and much more. Special St. Nick mite boxes and a giving calendar are also available.

Refocus your Christmas spirit and include an ingathering or personal gift to help a child in the Holy Land. These children will get more than a shiny toy – they'll receive an education, healthcare, therapy, a chance at a new life. Help us help them. Make a gift or organize a celebration in your congregation, your family, your club, your town. Kids are hoping...

See all the free or low cost St. Nicholas Day activities and materials at www.afedj.org

