

PRAYER & PRAISE

Quarterly news from Middle East Media

ISSUE 93 JULY 2016

SERVING REFUGEES

Using media for healing in refugee camps

FUTURE LEADERS

Meet the next generation of the Middle Eastern church

SPONSORED WALK

Will you walk with us for refugees?

middle east
media

Dear friends,

Thank you so much for praying for us as we attended Spring Harvest back in April.

If you're receiving your copy of *Prayer & Praise* for the first time after signing up at Spring Harvest - welcome! Chris and I were greatly encouraged by the event and really enjoyed chatting to people face to face about the amazing work of our Middle Eastern colleagues.

It was wonderful to see people getting excited about what God is doing in the Middle East. We found that what impressed people most was that all our work is by the people of the Middle East, for the people of the Middle East - something which is quite unusual in the charity world. We already have lots of ideas for attending more events like this in the future - watch this space!

In this edition of *Prayer & Praise*, you'll read about our new project, **Serving Refugees**. MEM has a vast wealth of resources which we hope to use among Middle Eastern refugees, such as children's animations, media therapy courses and an educational curriculum to train the trainers of those currently working in the area of human trafficking and violence against women, especially in refugee camps, where it is rife. This project is in its infancy, so we would really value your prayers as it gets underway.

To support Serving Refugees, we'll soon be dusting off our walking boots ready for the **MEM Sponsored Walk on August 13th** - there's still time to sign up, but if you can't make it, why not sponsor one of our walkers? Read on for more information!



Above: Emily and Chris at Spring Harvest, in our new favourite t-shirts!

You'll also find real testimonials from some of the participants of our **Future Leaders training** - an innovative course which trains young Christian leaders in spiritual leadership, discipleship and filmmaking and media skills, to enable the persecuted Middle Eastern church to flourish in times of adversity. This course has been a great success and has now been requested all over the region, from Morocco to Sudan. We are so excited to see how this project progresses and would really value your prayers for our past and future participants as they put their new skills into practice.

As always, thank you so much for your faithful prayers and support of our work.



Emily Shurmer
Communications Manager
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Setting captives free

Speaking out against human trafficking in North Africa

Human trafficking is prevalent in the Middle East and North Africa, but remains a taboo subject. Even if a girl manages to escape, she will often be rejected or punished by her family for the perceived shame she has brought on them.

Through Project Rescue, we have been raising awareness of human trafficking and early forced marriage, and have partnered with other charitable organisations who provide compassionate support to girls and their families. Our aim is to shift people's mindsets, particularly in rural communities - to teach them not to treat trafficked women and girls as outcasts, but as victims in need of restoration and love.

Please **pray for the team** as the project gains momentum - due to massive demand on the ground, we are now being requested to expand this project to assist even more women and girls in need across the region. **Please pray too for the women and girls we work with**, that God would bring them healing from their pain and hope for the future.

Thank you so much to those of you who signed up to sponsor a woman through our Blossoms training!

Individual sponsorship of women is already making a real difference to our work. The facilitators of our anti-trafficking curriculum have been able to identify women who are particularly affected by the topics raised, and have recommended them for the Blossoms course to make sure they receive the further emotional support they need and deal with the root of their pain.

If you're still considering signing up to sponsor a woman through Blossoms, please get in touch or visit www.mem.org/blossoms.



Photo credit: Orlok

Serving refugees

For the hundreds of thousands of men, women and children fleeing as refugees from the Middle East, the journey is far from over. Many are now living in refugee camps in Europe and across the Arab world and are vulnerable, traumatized and in need of healing, love and support.

At MEM, we have a wealth of creative media resources and training programmes which we've already used to make a difference to marginalised and hurting people - like the victims of human trafficking, women who have been oppressed and abused, and children who have no idea of their worth. Now we want to adapt these resources to serve refugees. There are countless organisations offering aid to address refugees' physical needs, but we want to go deeper and address the very real emotional and spiritual distress that comes with being forced to flee and live in uncertainty.

Here are just some of the ways our resources can be used to serve refugees:

- Children's educational and inspirational TV shows, for those who receive little or no education in the refugee camps
- Gender-based violence and human trafficking curricula. This is extremely important as female refugees are particularly vulnerable to forced marriage, violence and abduction
- Media therapy, to give people tools to express themselves and find peace after the intense trauma they have been through
- Filmmaking training for young people and children, to give them a creative outlet for their pain, and employable skills for the future.

Pray for Serving Refugees

Renee, our North Africa Director, tells us how we can pray for this project:

"Serving Refugees is a new area that we are stepping into and we are walking totally by faith. We need guidance and discernment to know where to start!"

"The *Serving Refugees* project will put all our existing programmes and training courses at the service of refugees. We also need God's guidance in knowing who to partner with, so that we can use our media resources together with people who are already working in the area to bring hope and deliverance to suffering people. It's very important that we connect with people on the ground to make the project sustainable.

"Our new animated series for children, *Life in the Desert*, is an integral part of this project. We need the resources to be able to continue production, and we want to look into how best to use Bible stories to bring hope, joy and peace to vulnerable children who are going through pain. We need to pray for anointing for the writers and animators, that the finished episodes will bring life and joy to the viewers.

"We are fairly new to the area of dealing directly with traumatized people, and we recognise that it is only the Spirit of God who can really set captives free. This needs enormous prayer support."

Renee
MEM North Africa Director



Photo credit: Andrew Child

Sponsored Walk 2016 WALK WITH US FOR REFUGEES

Will you help us serve refugees by joining us on our Sponsored Walk, or by donating to the campaign?

On August 13th, we'll be walking 15 miles along the picturesque Dorset coastline, from Worth Matravers to Studland. The walk will be a unique opportunity to meet staff, trustees and other supporters, as well as raising vital funds for the *Serving Refugees* project.

If you would like to join us for all or part of the walk, please get in touch using the contact details on the back.

If you are unable to join us for the walk, **will you donate to the campaign?** We are trying to raise £10,000 to support this project, but we can't do it without your help. You can give online at campaign.justgiving.com/charity/middle-eastmedia/sponsoredwalk or by using the enclosed response form. Thank you!

Future Leaders

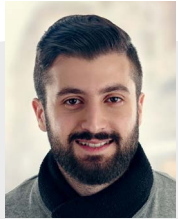
MEET THE NEXT GENERATION OF THE MIDDLE EASTERN CHURCH

Our *Future Leaders* training course has been designed to equip young Middle Eastern Christians with the skills and confidence to impart the Good News among their churches and communities in creative ways.

The course combines spiritual leadership and discipleship training with hands-on filmmaking workshops, to empower young Christian leaders to use media to reach out to their communities and to enable the church to meet virtually in times of persecution. By the end of the training, participants are able to create short films on biblical themes and use social media to get their messages across.

Churches throughout the Middle East and North Africa are in desperate need of this training. Following the success of our first courses, *Future Leaders* is now being requested in Iraq, Morocco, Sudan, Lebanon and Egypt. Please pray that we would be resourced to meet the need!

Here, some of the participants describe how the course has impacted their lives, and how they are going to use their newfound media skills for God.



*Maher**

AGE 28
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

My vision in life is to communicate the message of Christ to all people in any format I can. I know God had granted me so many talents and I want to use them for His kingdom. I received Christ through a theatre play at a Christian festival, and over the years I've discovered a talent for acting and directing. I prayed for years that God would show me the way to use those talents for Him.

Two months ago, God gave me a vision of gathering high school students and teaching them Biblical principles through short YouTube videos, so I was searching for a way to do that. **The *Future Leaders* project matched my dream exactly!**

**To protect the identity of our participants, real names and photos have not been used.*



Maria

AGE 24
SCHOOL TEACHER

God has given me the ability to lead groups of people, along with being able to teach. I currently lead a discipleship group with about ten of the youth from the church. I also greatly enjoy discussing theological ideas with non-believers and answering their questions in logical, easy-to-understand ways. Using media in order to do this is greatly beneficial in that it reaches a plethora of people, more than most other avenues of communication.

The Great Commission clearly states that we are to go to all people to make them disciples and teach them what Jesus has taught us. *Future Leaders* provides us with the teachings that we need as disciples, so that through using media, we can go to all people to make them disciples and teach them what we ourselves are being taught. I believe media is a great tool that can be used in doing God's work in this world, and through it we can lead people to understand what it truly means to live for God.

Through *Future Leaders*, I have been disciplined in biblical truths, and have learnt how to put these biblical truths into a short film. I've learnt to film, edit and produce.

Please pray for the *Future Leaders* course, that God has his way and that we come out doing what is on God's heart.



Abram

AGE 22
STUDENT & COMEDIAN

I'm a born-again believer from a Christian family. I love people and believe that God granted me the gift of humour and easily communicating with people from all different backgrounds.

I recently won first prize in a stand-up comedy competition out of all the universities in my city. I want to use my comedy in media, and have filmed a few humorous videos about the necessity for Christians to move beyond their church borders and blend into the community to reach others with the message of the Bible. **These films really impacted the Christian students at my university, which made me believe in the power of short films.** After the *Future Leaders* training, I want to write, film and edit in a more professional way.

How to pray for *Future Leaders*:

- **Thank God** for the passion, talent and potential of the many young Christians who have already undergone the training.
- Pray that the short films our participants have made, and continue to make, will **have real impact** in their communities and churches.
- **Ask God** to provide the resources our team needs to be able to run all the requested courses across the region.

Prayer requests from the Gulf team...

- Please pray for us as we **plan for the next 12 months**. Pray that we would be able to follow God's leadership, and not take on too many side projects which can be a distraction!

- We thank God that one of our **Arabian Dawn** testimonies has now had over 2 million views, after the person who gave his testimony bravely shared the video on his personal Facebook page. Please pray for his safety.

- Thank God for **the impact our work is having in people's lives**. In one of our recent workshops, the participants were working on their final film projects and were talking about role models. Our Christian trainer said that her role model was her mother, because she taught her the meaning of prayer. The Muslim participants were intrigued and asked her how she prayed, and as the trainer explained that she talked to God in times of trouble, fear or doubt, the participants were silent – it was clear that God was working in their hearts, as they hadn't ever been exposed to the idea of having a personal relationship with God before. Conversations like these are one of the reasons for our work – so Muslim young people can encounter Christians and hear about a different way of living.



Photo credit: Liboriant

Justice, compassion & hope through media

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