

Relief Work Newsletter - December, 2016

Dear Friends and Partners,

As the Season of Advent begins it is time to wait for the great Light to shine! May the coming Lord who has come and will always be coming bring you light and hope.

I greet you personally and on behalf of NESSL Family.

We thank God for you being with us in this journey of serving God through responding to the needs of many suffering Syrians. We kindly urge you to continue praying with us so that God will bring this human tragedy to a soon end.

As many of you know that I have been away for over two months visiting with Churches in the USA. I praise God for all our Church friends and partners.

Thus I would like to express deep gratitude to the PCUSA, through its PDA, S/L Partnership Network, Presbyterian groups, on the Capital (Washington DC), and in the UN in NYC, all of whom worked faithfully organizing a whole month of speaking engagements for me, speaking to decision-making committees and groups, so that the voice of the Church in Lebanon and Syria be heard. The Church Urges all who can make a difference to move and do everything possible to help bring about peace, and listen to the cries of the people in Syria, and to help work for peace and reconciliation among the Syrians. To help an end to this ugly war.

I also would like to express gratitude to the M.E. Task Force in Chicago who for years have been advocating for peace and partnering with our Church. Same gratitude to the First PC in Dallas, to the Grace Presbytery, and to all who are with us in our ministries.

I am ever grateful for the Eastminster Presbytery in Ohio - with all its churches that were open hearts and ears to listen to the struggle of our church, and who also is part of our ministries.

Many thanks to the Providence Presbytery in South Carolina, an old and great partner with us for many years.

Gratitude also to the Westminster PC in Wilmington, Delaware, providing an opportunity for many to learn about our church, and who is greatly concerned to find more ways to strengthen their partnership with us.

I deeply am grateful for all those who hosted me in their homes, who met me in Airports, those who drove me around and accompanied me day by day. To mention names frightens me lest I forget a name.

The high point for me was that wherever I was, I was surprised by the presence of old and dear friends. Some, like Bob and Judy Studdert, the Rev. Joseph and Mrs. Hourani who took two trains to come and be with me, seeing them moved me deeply. Regretfully soon after coming back home, I learned of the passing away of Ramez, the eldest brother. To all the Hourani family I say, my prayers with you and I share in your loss.

Praise be to God for all the friends and churches that are concerned about the ministry of NESSL among the suffering Syrians.

As I promised all the friends that as soon as I am back, I will report about our ministries, and how we are trying to respond to the needs of the suffering, and how our ministry with the children from the camps is progressing.

1 Schools:

a. **Rayak- Bekaa Valley.**

In this we have two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Number of children in both is: 110.

Number of staff is: 7.

classes in each session: 3.



b. **Kib Elias- Bekaa Valley.**

Number of children. 66.

Number of staff: 7.

Classes: 4.



c. Tye school- South of Lebanon.

Number of children: 56.

Number of staff: 6.

Classes: 3.



d. Miniara school- North of Lebanon.

Number of children: 56.

Number of staff: 8.

Classes: 3.



e. Tripoly School. North of Lebanon.

Number of children: 54.

Number of staff:7.

Classes: 4.



In all the schools the subjects taught are from the Syrian Curriculum. Hoping that peace will soon come back and those children can get involved in Syrian schools.

All children are collected from the camps in the morning, and taken back, except for the school in Tripoli, where children are brought by their parents. All are provided with school equipment, one meal, medicine when needed, clothes and shoes as needed.

In fact we have just got one child a pair of glasses as the Doctor prescribed. We also held a special training for teachers to know how to help children with specific problems.

Specific challenges:

1. In one of the schools we began with 75 children for the first session. The Number dropped down now. the reason is that some special person in charge in one camp demanded that we pay him an amount of money, similar to other organizations, so he allows children from the camp to ride on the buss. Surely we refused as we think this is mere bribery.
2. In another school few children dropped out so that they go to places where they can learn the quran.

We appeal for special prayers that many children can be rescued from getting lost and receive education.

Surely we continue to provide help for the student inside Syria who have requested help to buy school equipment. We have committed to help up to 2000 students with (\$25) per year per student. Up till now the number already received their share is: 1227.

The Relief Project with internally displaced:

- The going on relief program inside Syria continues to be a pressing responsibility on the shoulder of NESSL.
- With the continuation of violence and the spreading of loss on every level, the number of those crying for help is increasing.
- Families who are getting help to buy Fuel is, 992 for first payment and 992 for the second payment.
- Those getting help for rent are 100 families.
- Individuals who are considered in dire needs are being responded to as they come.

Dear Friends, very special thank you to all the partners who are concerned and work hard so that the ministry of healing can continue.

Partners in the USA, Sweden, France, Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, and everywhere, may you all be richly blessed by the one who is the reason for the Season of Advent and Christmas, the King of Peace, and the source of hope, Jesus the Christ.

Happy Advent!

Sincerely,



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