



PRAYER DIARY

FEBRUARY 2024 - JULY 2024

The past year has been a difficult time for our sisters and brothers in the Middle East, but their faith has kept them steadfast in the face of war, natural disaster and economic uncertainty.

As Embrace celebrates 170 years of working in partnership with Middle East Christians to serve local communities, we and our partners are deeply thankful for your prayerful support. Your faithful commitment gives our partners the hope and strength to continue their vital work.

For the latest news about the current situation, please visit **www.embraceme.org**. This diary gives some background information about a different Embrace partner for each week of the coming six months, but we encourage you to look at our online updates and use these to inform your prayers.

Thank you for praying with us – our Christian partners live out their faith in a complex and often dangerous environment, and this year they need your support more than ever.



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FEBRUARY 2024

4 February

A year has gone by since the earthquake that shook Turkey and northern Syria, destroying thousands of buildings and leaving families bereaved and homeless. Please pray for Embrace's partners in Syria as they continue to support people who remain in desperate need.

11 February

The social, economic and political barriers facing the Arab minority in Israel have provided fertile ground for a marked increase in violent crime in recent years. The Arab Youth Association, Baladna, has launched a pilot project pairing at-risk young people with trained mentors, helping them to find hope and make positive decisions.

18 February

This week we mark the UN World Day of Social Justice (20 February) by praying for peace and justice across the Middle East. We pray that our partners' compassion and commitment will serve as a source of inspiration and hope, and that those of all faiths and backgrounds will recognise the equal humanity of their neighbours.



Despite everything, we thank God, especially as we are still able to help people in need around us. One of my favourite verses says: 'God loves a cheerful giver'. There is truly joy in giving, in helping.

Nour, local church volunteer in Syria



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25 February

Al-Kafaàt's Notre Dame School in Beirut is a rare example of a fully inclusive school in Lebanon. It gives students with disabilities the opportunity to thrive in a mainstream environment, often after other schools have rejected them. The nurturing approach and strong focus on individual learning plans ensures that every young person can flourish.

MARCH 2024

3 March

This week we celebrate International Women's Day (8 March) by praying for all of our partners who work to improve women's educational opportunities and participation in society. In Egypt, Think and Do runs a scheme called Life School, which teaches literacy and numeracy skills, fostering self-worth and enabling women to assert their rights.

10 March

Our partners in northern Iraq, CAPNI, live by the motto 'to keep hope alive.' Please pray for them as they seek to help disadvantaged Christian communities rebuild the homes and businesses that they lost after the devastation and displacement caused by ISIS from 2014-2017.

17 March

This week we pray with gratitude for all those who give their time, energy and skills in support of Embrace. Our volunteer church speakers spread the word about our partners' work, while others organise events or take part in sponsored challenges. We and all our partners in the Middle East are thankful for their dedicated compassion.



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MARCH 2024

24 March

Even before the devastating violence that began in October 2023, healthcare in the Gaza Strip was under extreme pressure, and for many years there have been gaps in the quality of pre-conception, antenatal and newborn care. Our partner, the Near East Council of Churches, offers primary healthcare services to support these vulnerable babies and their mothers.

31 March

Christ is risen! On Easter Sunday, we rejoice in the message of the Resurrection and give thanks for those continuing Jesus' ministry in the Middle East today. We ask for Christ's blessings on every member of our partners' staff, and trust that He will renew their hope and resilience as they meet the challenges ahead.

APRIL 2024

7 April

World Autism Awareness Day took place on 2 April, and this week we pray for the young people living with autism at the Zvartnotz Centre in Beirut. The centre offers education and vocational training so that its students can live with independence and dignity as adults.

14 April

Our Middle Eastern Christian partners take great strength from the support of Christians in the UK and beyond. We give thanks for everyone who supports Embrace through their generosity and prayers, and we ask God to bless those who are facing challenges in their own lives at the present time.



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APRIL 2024

21 April

Tahaddi is an organisation addressing extreme poverty in Hay el Gharbeh in southern Beirut. As well as providing health, education and social services, they offer the 'Best Step' class, supporting children with additional needs, who have never been to school. The project works closely with parents to ensure that the whole family is involved with their child's progress.

28 April

We pray for all children in the Middle East to experience a loving and safe home where they can thrive. The Rock project we support in Egypt works with marginalised families in Cairo communities where garbage collecting is the main source of employment. Staff provide parenting courses and one-to-one support, to avoid family separation and ensure children grow up in a secure, nurturing environment.

**Bear one another's burdens, and so
fulfill the law of Christ**

Galatians 6:2

MAY 2024

5 May

Soteria – meaning sanctuary – is the name of a women's empowerment project at the Anafora Institute in Egypt. Soteria offers a healing space for women who have experienced physical or psychological abuse. Through counselling and vocational training, the women build their independence and discover their potential to lead positive changes in their communities.



SARA'S STORY

Five-year-old Sara from Cairo lives in a marginalised community where garbage collecting is the main source of employment.

Although Sara isn't an orphan, she was sent to live in an orphanage.

Her mother (a single parent) was unable to provide financially for both Sara and her 1-year-old sister. The economic crisis in Egypt has plunged many vulnerable families, like this one, deeper into poverty and forced parents to make impossible choices.

This is where The Rock project, supported by Embrace, stepped in. The project seeks to avoid family separation and works with families to create a safe, nurturing home environment where everyone's needs are met.

Staff at The Rock saw the love and attachment that existed between Sara and her mother, and the pain that came with being separated from each other. They mobilised to help the family reintegrate Sara back into the home.

They provided the family with financial support for basic needs like food and enrolled Sara into their community nursery, which allowed her mother to work and earn money. More recently, they supported her mother with a school application for Sara and are covering the fees for her.

As a result of this care and support, Sara is now happy and well-adjusted, with a bright future ahead.





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MAY 2024

12 May

The desperate humanitarian situation in Gaza has pushed medical services to their limits, but chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease have not gone away and people are suffering from lack of medication. Caritas Jerusalem sends mobile medical clinics to areas without primary care services, ensuring people can access the treatment they need in a very challenging situation.

19 May

Traditionally, people in Lebanon who are deaf or hard of hearing have been marginalised and underestimated. Please pray for the Learning Centre for the Deaf in Baabda, which strives to advocate for social inclusion, providing health and educational opportunities for children from the earliest intervention to university education and beyond.

26 May

The post-pandemic economic downturn has made it even more difficult for Egypt's young people to find work. The Arkan Cultural Centre in Alexandria empowers youth by training them in technical skills – particularly digital media and communication – to improve their employability. Christian and Muslim young people learn together, which promotes understanding between their communities.

JUNE 2024

2 June

Please pray for the protection of children's mental health in Palestine. This is a priority for the East Jerusalem YMCA, which provides group counselling and activities for those who have been caught up in political violence. One area it supports is South Nablus, where the Palestinian community is frequently targeted by Israeli settler attacks that leave children traumatised.



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JUNE 2024

9 June

The Karagheusian Medical Centre is a lifeline for the refugee communities and the Lebanese population of Bourj Hammoud, Beirut. With Embrace support, the centre helps patients manage chronic diseases, providing necessary medications and referrals for those who cannot afford to pay for treatment and who have difficulty accessing government health services.

16 June

The 20 June marks the UN World Refugee Day, which honours refugees and displaced people across the world. In Cairo, refugees from sub-Saharan Africa and Middle Eastern countries can turn to Refuge Egypt for help, receiving emergency assistance and ongoing advice about housing, healthcare and employment.

23 June

People living with disabilities in Palestine face negative stereotypes and inaccessible services, which limits their participation in society. Please pray for the Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation, which provides medical services, campaigns for disability rights, and delivers training for community organisations that work with people with disabilities in the West Bank.

30 June

Residents of the garbage-collecting community in Ezbet el Nahkl, Cairo, experience unhealthy living conditions and limited healthcare provision. The Salaam Centre aims to build a healthier, safer society by offering medical clinics, education on nutrition, psychological support for those experiencing addiction or abuse, and employment skills training.

**“Fear not, for I am with you; be not
dismayed, for I am your God.”**

Isaiah 41:10



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7 July

The Swedish International Relief Association (SIRA) runs schools in Bethlehem and Jericho for children with learning difficulties such as dyslexia. In mainstream education, large classes and lack of resources mean children with additional needs risk falling behind and dropping out. The SIRA schools give each child the individual support that helps them thrive.

14 July

Getting the correct legal advice is important for Palestinians experiencing restrictions to their freedom of movement in the West Bank. Our partner, the Society of St Yves, advocates for people's right to travel safely to reach workplaces, access vital healthcare and live their lives with dignity. Please pray for the Society and people it serves as it challenges travel bans imposed by the Israeli administration.

21 July

Young people with learning difficulties often miss out on opportunities for higher education due to a lack of support for their individual needs. The SKILD centre in Mansourieh, Lebanon, provides specialised support to children, caregivers and teachers, enabling many of these young people to continue their studies beyond school and have fulfilling careers.

28 July

Health services for disabled children in the West Bank are limited, especially for those from disadvantaged families and rural areas. We pray for The Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre, which works with Community Based Rehabilitation Centres to build capacity and expertise, so that children from across the West Bank have access to timely and appropriate care.



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Go deeper with **Embrace...**

You can find more information about each prayer prompt by reading the weekly devotions we add to the prayer section of our website. The devotions give more details about our partners and projects, as well as a relevant Bible passage and spiritual thought:

www.embraceme.org/devotions.

You are welcome to reproduce the text of this diary in your church newsletter. If you would like to receive extra printed copies, contact us at **info@embraceme.org** or call **01494 897950** to request them.

Thank you for praying alongside us and showing solidarity with our partners in their transformational work.

Embrace the Middle East

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