



# Fiona and Joel Kelling

Link Letter no. 26 | April 2025

**Contact details:**

fionakelling@gmail.com  
joelkelling@gmail.com



**Location:** Jordan



**What we do:** Working alongside local churches to care for vulnerable groups to strengthen the mission of the Church in the Middle East



**Equipping and encouraging** where followers of Jesus are in a minority

Dear friends,

Apologies for the slightly longer gap between letters than usual. In many ways things have become a little more quotidian, with the rhythms and repetitions that have developed between college, school and church as our life here has become more established.

But rhythms and repetitions are good and necessary things, particularly for the children as they have settled into primary school, friendships and regularly seeing extended family. In fact, the only real disruption to this now is the school holidays, which are a new six-weekly phenomenon we didn't have to manage in Jordan! But these are also progressively becoming part of the pattern and we are finding a balance between visiting friends in the first half and being more sedentary back in Cuddesdon in the second. In the October half term, Oma (Fiona's mum) came to stay, planting bulbs with Nora which have just poked up from the ground. More recently, in the February half term we visited friends and family in Sheffield, including a family we knew from Jordan who returned to the UK before Nora was even born! It was lovely to make a dedicated and unhurried visit, rather than just stopping off on our way to or from Scotland.

Christmas was also a special time, particularly as we were able to host Joel's family on Boxing Day, and because we were able to have a "real" Christmas tree for the first time (rather than only the artificial ones available in Jordan). We also spent time up in Scotland with Fiona's family, which included both of the kids participating in the Scottish tradition of a New Year's Day "dook" in the North Sea!

Outside of school, the activities of the children shape our comings and goings, with archery for Aidan (inspired by the Olympics and his burgeoning love of history, both ancient and early modern) and gymnastics for Nora, RCC Kids (the children's group at Ripon College) and Aidan singing in the choir in his grandma's parish.

Amid all this sits times of lectures, study and writing, prayer and worship for Joel. He is very much enjoying his course and finds the classes stimulating, while much of the formation comes from participating in and preparing to lead worship, as well as time spent in conversation and debate with fellow students. Joel's placement church provides a great context to develop a deeper understanding of liturgy and worship. He's preached on two occasions already, is leading intercessions and has begun volunteering with the recently-launched youth ministry.



*Joel captured in the winter light on his daily morning walk*

**Support Fiona and Joel Kelling:**  
[churchmissionsociety.org/kelling](https://churchmissionsociety.org/kelling)

**With Jesus  
With each other  
To the edges**



These activities are balanced with (what should be) one day a week of ongoing work with the Anglican Alliance. This is primarily focused on the Diocese of Jerusalem's project to support Anglican institutions across Palestine. The project now includes eight donating partners and is in the third phase of emergency support. The project is funding medical and educational facilities – notably Al Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City and St Luke's Hospital in Nablus. Joel's work mostly consists of arranging and facilitating update meetings and working alongside the programmes development officer in the diocese to ensure reporting meets the requirements of those providing funding while still being realistically

collectable data. By coordinating a bigger group, we can reduce the amount of work that the diocese has to do (one report rather than eight) as well as bring partners together to listen, share and pray as a community across the world. Please continue to pray for the very fragile ceasefire that we have so longed to see happen, that the second phase of the ceasefire can come into effect, for aid to be allowed into Gaza. Pray that a viable reconstruction plan can be pursued that allows all those displaced to return to their land, not forgetting those in the West Bank, particularly in the northern cities where the IDF has razed refugee camps, displacing over 50,000 people. We pray for peace with justice for all.

In addition to this project, Joel is co-leading the Alliance's work on migration, which involves helping to facilitate the Anglican Communion migration working group. The past two meetings have focused on Latin America and the response by the Church in America to the US administration's rhetoric, policy and funding cuts. He is contributing to the development of a resource for the Anglican Church that can be used locally to help parishes support people on the move arriving in their communities, both practically and theologically.

Fiona has come to the end of a period of heavily involved work providing support to the Palestine Shelter Cluster while also developing training materials on housing, land and property rights in humanitarian response. Since we last wrote, it has been Fiona rather than Joel who has been able to travel, going to Cairo for the World Urban Forum in November and taking the opportunity to meet with friends of ours from Jordan who moved to Egypt, as well as travelling to Oslo in December to spend time with her Palestinian colleague Amal, who fled Gaza in early 2024. This was a significant opportunity to grieve and lament together in friendship. Fiona hopes to be able to visit again while we remain so (relatively) close.

Fiona is now in a phase of working out what's next with work and life, and is taking some time to do that intentionally. In the meantime, she is beginning some voluntary work with a local charity that provides support to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, and is also exploring community land trusts. Do pray that Fiona has a chance to rest and rejuvenate as she discerns what she is to do next.

We've already been able to catch up with a number of you since our return and would be very happy to come and visit when possible and appropriate. We'd love to see you!

Thank you so much for your continuing love, prayers and support,

Grace and peace,

Fiona and Joel



**Photos from top to bottom:** Adventures at Bolsover Castle during February half term; Aidan and Nora braving the North Sea on the Fife coast with their cousins; kids enjoying the snow in the college grounds; Fiona attending the World Urban Forum held in Egypt



## Equipping where followers of Jesus are in a minority

**We've been encouraged** to hear from others who are part of our wider area of work. Recently in Lebanon, three Muslim women have turned to Jesus and discovered their own mission calling, and in Nepal a young man called Amit has chosen Jesus over fame and fortune. Read more at [churchmissionsociety.org/equip](https://churchmissionsociety.org/equip)