



Phil and Sylvie Good

Link Letter no. 18 | September 2022

Contact details:

philipgood@email.com
sylv@goodheaven.co.uk



Location: Lebanon



What we do: Supporting multiple organisations discipling new believers across the MENA region and fundraising to bring the good news across borders

Dear friends,

We arrived in Lebanon just as it was getting warm, and to help us settle in we had a very dramatic and unseasonable thunderstorm, during which I was running a race in the mountains and all the runners got soaked to the skin. In the summer it does get uncomfortably warm and a lot of activities slow down, many friends move out for the summer. Quite a few people we know have finished their time here and we have said final goodbyes to some good friends. It is one of the things about mission that there is a constant turnover of people so no doubt this autumn we will discover new friends.

Our visit back to the UK for the month of May was amazing – we welcomed the arrival of our first grandchild, Harry, to Beth and Chris, we celebrated the wedding of Alex and Nina, there was also a funeral of an aged aunt and of course the Queen's jubilee celebrations. All in all, a very English time was enjoyed. I also spent some time meeting and working with the SAT-7 team at their offices in Chippenham and visited their London studio.

Life has settled into a routine: I have set up an office in the apartment and find that the internet is quite good enough to work with. Sometimes it becomes flaky but I have both a wired connection and a 4G connection, so we have backup. As is normal here, you always have to have more than one supplier. It is the same with the electric and the water – they periodically fail, but there is a backup, as long as you can afford it.

We have also become involved in the work of A Rocha, the environmental Christian NGO, who have a project here. We are making plans for a botanic garden experience reconnecting people with the created habitats of Lebanon.

We have reconnected with our refugee families and while I am writing away in my office Sylvie is usually out visiting. Sylvie says...

Well, we are, surprisingly, back in Beirut! This seems to be where God wants us to be, though we thought he had other ideas. Following God is not always (in fact, hardly ever) straightforward. Sometimes he seems more interested in developing us rather than having us do stuff. After all, isn't that what the ministry of Jesus was all about? He didn't teach carpentry classes, he taught us how to live, how to relate to God, how to live with each other, how to be holy and abundantly happy. So, am I happy? Yes, always with Jesus, but



Our new home is the first floor flat on the left.

Support Phil and Sylvie:
churchmissionsociety.org/good

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



I still miss home, our family and friends and sometimes the culture here is a strain. But then, maybe Jesus could have said the same!

I am finding myself beginning to teach various refugees English. I did do the TEFL course during lockdown so I now have some understanding of grammar and teaching methods, but it is very much an adventure as we all learn together. So far it has been fun, especially as we seem to do it en famille – the kids come too! Some of them learn English at school so they are better than the parents.

It has been a joy to take up our existing relationships again, and as before we find ourselves in the supporting role. This time some of our friends are beginning to branch out and start home groups of their own among other Muslims who are cautious about coming to church. They want to hear about Jesus, but until they are ready to follow him they don't want to be associated with any church, so coming to a friend's house is easier than darkening the doors of a church. Last week we had the privilege of leading one dear lady in the prayer of commitment to Jesus. All the work of teaching her about Jesus had been done by our Arab friend but she wanted us to lead her in the prayer, and very glad we were to do it!

As Sylvie says it is exciting to see our friends reaching out to others and there are several other seekers who are coming to know Jesus; their lives are being transformed from the inside out. A lot of life here is lived from the outside in, and appearances are very important – we notice this in the showy clothes and cars and the bling.

Of course, the refugees struggle to maintain the public face, but those who have found Jesus are changed from the inside and this is incredibly attractive. When your security and identity is no longer based on how well you keep your external face, but instead on a loving Lord Jesus, a relationship that can make you smile even when there is no food because his love is so amazing, then other people notice and they want this relationship too. Increasingly the Lebanese are also looking for some reality in their faith and the churches are reporting increasing attendances and growth in the youth work. We don't see this directly as we are with the refugees here, but behind the dreadful headlines about economic collapse and desperate food and drug shortages there is a work of God going on.

As ever we don't understand a lot of what we see as the language required is too complicated for us, but our presence and our prayers do make a difference. I do wish we could understand more but we see that it is about people being set free and finding a new life in Jesus. Please do continue to pray for the seekers we encounter, that their faith like a mustard seed would grow from the inside out.

Love,

Phil and Sylvie



Photos from top to bottom: View from our window: there is no shortage of wires but little electricity; Refugee baby has no stuff, no toys, no crib, but lots of love; Fumigating the streets for cockroaches; Wild flowers in the mountains.



Going further with Church Mission Society

Prayer is the engine room of mission: Here at CMS, we know that the history of mission is the history of answered prayer. We would love you to join us as a praying community around the world at churchmissionsociety.org/prayer

Please note that opinions expressed in link letters are those of mission partners, not necessarily of Church Mission Society.

If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this link letter on a regular basis, please email supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org or call 01865 787400. Church Mission Society is a mission community acknowledged by the Church of England. Registered Company No. 6985330 and Registered Charity No. 1131655 (England and Wales) and SC047163 (Scotland).