



Jennifer and Kevin Cable

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Location: Israel/Palestine



What we do: Working to re-open the historic Anglican church in Jaffa and strengthen the presence of Christ in the Middle East.

Dear Friends,

As we approach Christmas, we send our love and prayers from the Holy Land.

The Archbishop of Jerusalem visited our service to preach and preside on 11 September and advised us that hopefully work would start within two to four weeks on the repair of the tower at St Peter's. The permits are applied for by the Diocese of Jerusalem, and we are still waiting to hear when these will be granted. We know you share our frustration and are keen for the work to start – there is little we can do other than support the diocese and check regularly on progress. We are grateful for your prayers and support and ask that you will continue to pray with us as we trust in the Lord's perfect timing for this to commence.

As we continue to minister to the people locally, and increase the awareness of the Christian community in Jaffa without our own building, we are reminded of the early disciples who gathered in small groups, homes and used other people's buildings or community spaces for their worship and activities. During this waiting period, we have built many relationships with the municipality, police, diplomats, representatives of the local community and residents, which, looking back, has helped us each step of the way as we navigate the legal system here and prepare for building work. As we celebrated harvest, we were reminded of the need to prepare the soil in order to sow the seed, and the Lord has given us this year to do so.

We have seen some new members join our regular congregation. We have welcomed expats from the USA, Finland and Australia, who are in Israel for anything between six months and three years. They have all become fully involved with the life of our church and we are thankful to the Lord for increasing our numbers, which in turn encourages visitors, pilgrims and local people who come to see what our service is like. We are very excited that one member is preparing for baptism.

In October we had our first annual church meeting, as it had been a year since we started our services. We called it "Looking back, Looking forward" and it was a great opportunity to give thanks to the Lord for all that he has done and pray for the year ahead as we seek his will. We held it after our Harvest Festival, so we were particularly thankful for his provision in so many ways. Members of the church family are now taking turns in reading the Scripture in church, praying at Bible study and baking for our meetings. It is a joy to see people becoming more involved. Our Bible study now has between eight and ten people each week. We are currently studying the Letter of James, and we are all challenged and encouraged by its practical wisdom on how to live out our faith.



*Archbishop Hosam
leading the service.*

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



As part of our commitment to the community, we are working with Aviv Ministries (also supported by CMS), who offer support to people on the edge of community life through their soup kitchen. They minister to the homeless, people with addictions and those caught up in prostitution. Several of our members have visited to offer help in the soup kitchen, and to talk with those people using the services. We were able to donate all our harvest contributions from the congregation this year and a financial gift raised from our weekly collections to support the ministry, and we hope to work closely with them in the coming year.

We finally finished clearing Bat Yam Cemetery with the dedicated help of our congregation. We employed some workers to remove some large bushes and stones and treat the ground, and now we can maintain it ourselves. It has brought much joy to relatives of those buried there, and has given us many opportunities to talk with them and the community who have watched the progress being made over time.

We are delighted that we have been able to continue to worship in the Lutheran Church while we wait for work to be done on St Peter's, and we continue to welcome Little Lambs each week for our toddler group. We have a regular group of mums or nannies, plus extras who come when they come. Although the children are all about sixteen months of age, we are starting to introduce simple crafts that they can enjoy. Finger painting and stickers are very popular! They also love to "play" the piano and sing along. We look forward to lots of glue and glitter around Hanukkah as we make some crafts together.

We look back with thanks to God for his continued faithfulness as he has guided and provided for us to work with him in this place. We have seen him walk with us as we have experienced many joys as well as faced different challenges, but he has remained the same in an ever-changing world. As we continue our ministry here, being a very visible presence in the community, we will continue praying for you all, and wish you a blessed Christmas and New Year!

Please join us in prayer:

- ▶ Giving thanks for four new members who have settled into our congregation and are now taking turns at reading Scripture in our services, coming to Bible study and one who is preparing for baptism.
- ▶ Giving thanks that Little Lambs has new members and friendships are growing.
- ▶ Praying for permits to be granted to allow repair of the tower at St Peter's and for patience as we wait.
- ▶ Giving thanks that Bat Yam Cemetery has been cleared of overgrowth and rubbish, and praying for wisdom as we discern how to maintain it with our limited resources.
- ▶ Giving thanks for a good relationship with Aviv Ministries in central Tel Aviv as we support them in their work.

With every blessing,

Jen and Kevin



Photos from top to bottom: The archbishop enjoying coffee with some members of the congregation; Bat Yam Cemetery, before and after; Jen helps a "Little Lamb" with some craft work



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