



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,

In many ways it is hard to believe we have been in Israel now for two years. We are constantly thankful to the Lord for his provision and grace in equipping us to work with him and, as you know, we have seen his hand at work in many ways. We give thanks for the relationships he has given us here in Jaffa, for our growing congregation, for our Little Lambs and for many opportunities to share our faith with people. We praise him for answered prayers over visas and the many bureaucratic issues we have faced, for health, and for the provision of the Beit Immanuel space and community, and the Lutheran church. We also give thanks for the support you have given us, and for journeying with us into what was unknown territory. Thank you for your prayers, emails and messages of encouragement.

You will know that we have faced many challenges over the church building since we arrived. We have managed to clear the ground of the jungle, maintain the area, plus clear it of hazardous building materials. We have also done the same at one of the Anglican cemeteries, which was a real witness to the local community who have been deeply unhappy about its condition for many years. Along with the diocese, engineers have been consulted about repairing the tower, and many necessary structural reports and surveys have been completed.


Meanwhile, we have continued working in the community and serving our neighbours, building important contacts and relations with the mayor's office, the municipality of Tel Aviv-Yafo and of course our Christian neighbours from the other denominations in Jaffa, with whom we enjoy a fruitful and strong relationship. All this has taken place alongside extensive Modern Hebrew study, which, although hard work, has meant we have reached the point where we can comfortably communicate fully in Hebrew.

However, we have been unable to move forward with the building restoration due to the ongoing legal issues surrounding the project. Thank you to those who reached out and shared your concerns and frustrations at the lack of progress in this area, and have supported us in prayer in what has been an extremely challenging time. In December 2022, because of the continued delays, we met with our CMS regional manager to discuss the way forward. The amount of time spent on the situation with the church building, cemeteries and other related issues was reaching a point that it was significantly impacting the time we had to continue our important work of strengthening the Anglican presence and working with our Christian neighbours to serve our local community. As a result of this meeting, we were asked to prayerfully consider how we might move forward and if the Lord was signaling a change in direction. At the same time, CMS had a series of meetings with the Diocese of Jerusalem to clarify what was happening to the proposed restoration, and how we move forward with the mission and ministry here in the longer term.

Having now met with the diocese about these issues, we are sad to report that at this date, with legal issues still ongoing, there is no likelihood of the church building renovations beginning in the immediate future.

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



Although the diocese are committed to renovating the building, at this stage this is not likely to be any time soon and all parties concerned, including ourselves, felt that given the amount of time being consumed by the building, with no likelihood of it opening soon, a new approach was required.

Ultimately, our time here is to build up the Body of Christ, the Church, to engage with those around us, to help build reconciliation between peoples, and to proclaim in words and action the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. So, where do we go from here? From the beginning of our time, we have been supported here locally by the good people of Beit Immanuel in Jaffa, part of the Israel Trust for the Anglican Church (ITAC), who also administer the Anglican Church of Christchurch in the Old City of Jerusalem, as well as other locations and projects in the Holy Land. Christchurch was the first protestant Church to be founded in the Holy Land, and although working autonomously in Israel, is fully part of the Diocese of Jerusalem. Given their resources for mission in building community and making Christ known – and their long history of working with all peoples in this land – we, the diocese and CMS felt after much prayer that partnering with them would be a good fit, and allow us to continue our work in Jaffa, as well as assist them in their ongoing projects across Israel.

So, what does this mean in practice? Actually, on a day-to-day basis not much will really change, although a huge amount of time will be freed up from the building concerns. We will also be able to more fully utilise the Beit Immanuel building in Jaffa, and work more closely with the staff and volunteers there. Our work in the community will continue as before, and we will continue our support of Aviv Ministries in their important ministry to the homeless and destitute in Tel Aviv. In terms of our growing congregation, there will be one significant change and that is our name. Although we remain part of the Diocese of Jerusalem, the diocese felt that as our congregation now legally becomes a daughter church of Christchurch in Jerusalem, that we should rename the congregation to something that more readily identifies us with both Christchurch and our local community. Clergy from there will now be more actively involved in supporting the work here in Jaffa, and in turn we will now also support the ministry there. As we write, our congregation are in the process of choosing this new name and so please pray for us as this takes place, and that we chose a name that captures who we are and our ministry in Jaffa.

I am sure you will appreciate that although this way forward will bring many benefits to our own congregation, the local community and us personally, we are deeply saddened that the church building of St Peter will, for now, remain closed for the foreseeable future. Many hours have been spent in there, and in the grounds, doing what we could to maintain the existing structure and keep the grounds looking pleasant and presentable. A lot of “blood, sweat and tears” have been invested into the place and project, and both our congregation and we ourselves feel a deep emotional connection to it. Of course in the future, whenever that may be, our congregation will be welcome to use the building at a point when it does re-open, but we rejoice that even in the midst of these changes, the Lord continues to grow our small community here and bring people along.

We appreciate that you may have further questions that we haven’t answered here. Please do get in touch if you want to know more and we’ll do our best to fill you in as we go through this time of transition. Churches can contact Julie in the CMS church team on churchrelations@churchmissionsociety.org, and individuals can contact us directly – we’ll get back to you as soon as we can.

Finally, please pray for us and for our congregation in Jaffa during this time of change. Pray we may have the wisdom to make good use of additional resources, new connections and that ultimately the Holy Spirit continues to lead us forward in our ministry here in Christ’s service.

Kevin and Jen



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