



awareness
FOUNDATION

Harvest

Christmas 2022

Awareness Foundation: building peace through education

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The Awareness Foundation is a registered charity in England & Wales (No 1099873)

Christmas & New Year Message

The Revd Dr Nadim Nassar

The Executive Director



At the first Christmas, despite being in the hometown of Joseph, the pregnant young Mary and Joseph didn't find a place in the human society for her to deliver her baby. The situation gets worse if we consider the importance of hospitality for the Syrian families in the whole of greater Syria including Palestine.

When God decided to make this extraordinary journey to be with us, he found himself born in a dirty place designed for animals, sleeping in a little wooden structure set apart to hold the animals' food outside any human welcome or care. However, the baby grows up and God continues his journey of love in the person of that grown up man Jesus Christ. Jesus experienced all human conditions including being part of our joys, sorrow, being hungry, thirsty, being betrayed and even facing the final human frontier, death. Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, God with us, faced our evil and was sentenced to death and was nailed on another wooden structure, but this time designed for punishing criminals. He was crucified outside any human community. Again, God found himself rejected and pushed to the margins of the human society. We praise God that the two wooden structures, the manger and the cross, led to the glorious resurrection of the Lord.

The sad situation today is that in this busy season of Christmas many people push God outside their lives and try to fill their vacuum with gifts, parties, food and shopping. God remains always faithful and standing at the doors of our hearts, knocking and waiting for us to open and invite him in. Only when he is in, can he transform our hearts and lives and we became more and more like him and experience the depth and the wonder of his love.

Little Heroes

Christmas 2022



Winter is always hard on poor families especially in countries that suffer from violence and military conflicts. As an educational charity, we, at the Awareness Foundation, try to reach out and help children in Syria every winter to face the cold weather through a gift which would lift some pressure of poor families with children. This year we decided to give a thousand children a gift of a pair of gloves, two pairs of socks, and some stationery including notebooks, pens, pencils, sharpeners and erasers. The children that received our gifts were carefully chosen from poor and devastated areas in Damascus, Aleppo, Homs and Latakia.

We are in credibly grateful for our wonderful volunteers who also happened to be Ambassadors for Peace, who helped our hardworking Coordinator for the Middle East to send the gifts and making sure that the children received them in time. We couldn't have done that without the amazing support of so many fantastic individuals and churches that believe in the ministry and the passion of the Awareness Foundation.



Christmas Drinks

11 December 2022

On December 12th, The Awareness Foundation organised its annual Christmas Drink for the friends and the supporters of its ministry. We shared with our friends our activities during the year 2022 as well as the strategy of the Foundation for the near future.

During the evening, we showed our friends and supporters a video which was made specially to celebrate our 20th anniversary, and the video production was given to us as a gift from Paul Brown - Baked Bean Media.



The team and the Vice Chairman the Rev Alan Scotland gave certificates of appreciation to some of the volunteers who worked hard to support the team and the work of the Foundation in so many ways for several years and raised a lot of money by doing different activities like cycling and walking.



Ann Moukayed



Gus Ghorayeb



John Ager



Alex & Ray Cox

During the evening there was a raffle draw, and the team distributed some Christmas gifts that were donated by several businesses which have supported our work for years.

The Christmas gifts were a thank you gesture from Awareness Foundation team to the friends and donors for their support, commitment and the love and care for Awareness Foundation mission.



Christmas Tree Festival

St Mary Magdalene Church



Christmas Tree Festival is an initiative of St Mary Magdalene Wandsworth Common, London.

Every three years, the Church of St Mary Magdalene adopts a charity, and the church has adopted the Awareness Foundation last year, so this is the second year of this wonderful festival.

Among the annual Christmas Trees Festival this year, there was a tree dedicated to the Awareness Foundation. The foundation's staff decorated it with the foundation's logo and the pictures of its events.



The Awareness Team decorated the Christmas tree so that people would know more about us and donate to support the Foundation and its work and programmes. But this year was even more special than before, because there was a second tree that was sponsored for the Little Heroes Programme from one of our long-standing supporters.

The proceeds from the entire Tree Festival in the church will go to the Foundation's programmes in the Middle East.



Ambassadors for Peace 2022

Aleppo-Syria

“Trust and overcoming!”

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33



For the first time, Awareness Foundation ran the Ambassadors for peace programme in Aleppo, Syria. The programme was hosted by the Revd Dr Haroutune Selimian at the Armenian Presbyterian Church, Bethel. The Ambassadors for Peace programme is an ecumenical programme, and the young participants came from seven different Christian denominations. Those young Ambassadors joined the programme to be ambassadors for peace in their own broken and devastated city in order to make a difference.

The programme started on October 27th to October 29th.

Revd Dr Haroutune gave the opening message supporting the young people, and encouraging them to be equipped to take the responsibility to be a force for good in the middle of the difficult and critical time that their communities are going through.





Huda Nassar, Director for the Middle East

The Director for the Middle East gave the first session on the role of the Ambassadors for Peace in the society and she focused on three points:

- The concept of citizenship, including the duties and the rights of citizens.
- Our role as ambassadors for Christ in this world.
- When we are ambassadors for Christ, we are ambassadors of His peace.



The Revd Dr Nadim Nassar, Executive Director

Fr. Nadim, our Executive Director, led a Bible study and unpacked the parable of the Good Samaritan from a Syrian perspective.

The young Ambassadors were so engaged and challenged especially when linking the parable with their own situation and suffering through their first-hand experience.

The second session was also led by Fr. Nadim, as he reflected on the distress in the world and he looked at:

- God's intervention.
- Our reaction to distress.
- The role of the church and the individual.



The third session was led by Dr Kheirallah Atallah, assistant pastor of The Presbyterian Church in Latakia, Syria. He gave the Ambassadors an exciting presentation about how to overcome distress in the world (John 16:33). He reflected on the prevailing of Christ and focused on two points:

- How Christ conquered the world.
- How we can be like Christ and overcome distress through Him.

Workshops:

We ran three workshops:

The first workshop was about each Ambassador creating a motto reflecting on a concept of peace and presenting it in the most exciting way they could. Then we exhibited the mottos in the creative ways they designed, and each one explained and presented their motto in their own the rest of the group.



The second workshop was about spreading peace through activities.



The participants planned and prepared different activities which could be implemented in their churches and communities in near future. The group was divided into five small groups, and each group worked hard to create and display their activity and then presented it to the rest of the groups.

All the activities were ecumenical and targeted different groups of the society. They were so realistic, easy to implement and extremely helpful for everyone. They also created tentative budgets for their activities in order to plan for fundraising.



The third workshop in Aleppo for the new Ambassadors for Peace was about how to spread peace through social media.



The small groups designed different posters and produced short videos sending Peace messages locally, nationally, and internationally. These posters and videos could be posted on different social media apps. After they finished, they presented their work and discussed it with each other.

The closing of the Ambassadors for Peace Programme in Aleppo



We all gathered at, our host, Bethel, the Armenian Protestant Church, and had a moving closing prayers and ceremony. Huda Nassar, The Director for The Middle East, read the Bible which followed by an emotional meditation by the pastor of the church the Revd Dr Haroutune Selimian.

During the closing ceremony Dr Selimian presented an art piece to Nadim as a Symbol of friendship, cooperation and appreciation. Sumaya Hallak, the international Syrian opera singer, the friend of the Foundation and Bethel joined the closing ceremony and shared a wonderful song which put us all in a wonderful spiritual atmosphere.

At the end of Ambassadors for Peace Programme, we had, with the young Ambassadors, the first celebration in the Middle East of our 20th anniversary, and we cut a special cake that was decorated with the Arabic logo of the Foundation.

Many thanks to all who worked very hard to make this programme such a wonderful success. We would like to thank wholeheartedly our Coordinator for The Middle East Elza Nasra for her incredibly hard work in organising the programme in Aleppo in a very difficult and complicated situation there. We are also specially very grateful to The Revd Dr Haroutune Selimian, the Head of the Armenian Protestant Denomination in Syria, and his amazing team for hosting us in his church in Aleppo, and providing all the logistics which allowed the programme to run very smoothly.

We are also extremely grateful for all the Bishops in Aleppo who encouraged their young people to take part in this gathering.

This programme would have not been possible without the commitment and hard work of a small group of Ambassadors for Peace who went through the whole programme before in Lattakia, and came all the way to Aleppo to assist us in this first training that took place in that suffering city. They shared with the new group their own experience with the programme, and how that experience transformed their lives.



Highlighting a key point concerning Ambassadors for Peace programme in Aleppo, The Revd Dr Haroutune Selimian, the head of the Armenian Protestant Denomination in Syria, called all the Arminian pastors in Aleppo to meet with The Revd Dr Nadim Nassar, the Executive Director of the Awareness Foundation at his office. The meeting was very friendly and the discussion was about the cooperation between the pastors and the Foundation in the future.



We are extremely grateful for all the support that the pastors showed for the ministry of the Foundation.

Christmas workshop for the leaders of Little Heroes

In cooperation with the Greek Catholic Diocese in Latakia, Syria, the Awareness Foundation organised a workshop called "Christmas Crafts".

The workshop trained the leaders of Little Heroes Programme and other youth leaders to learn the skills of making Christmas crafts, and to be able to teach them to the children and young people.



Our deep gratitude to our dear friend Archimandrite Michael Kandalaft for hosting us, and for our creative designer Ramia Ibrahim for being their main trainer. Thanks for her tireless effort to support the activities of Little Heroes. Our wonderful trainer Ramia Ibrahim interacted with the group and taught them a lot of different Christmas handcraft techniques specialised for children. The results were creative, beautiful, and cost-effective handcrafts especially in this difficult time.



The participants expressed their appreciation of what they have learned in order for them to be able to teach that to the Little Heroes.

Ambassadors for Peace Walk

15 October 2022



This year as we celebrate our 20th Anniversary, after the success of the Ambassadors for Peace Walk last year, we decided this year to organise the walk in our beloved city of London on Saturday 15 October 2022. The walk started at Westminster Abbey, and we ended the walk at St. Paul's Cathedral.

We were very warmly welcomed by Canon Tricia Hillas and Bishop Anthony Ball who have been dear friends for the Foundation for many years.



Before we left the Abbey to start our walk, Bishop Anthony took us to visit the famous and very special Jerusalem Chamber and offered prayers there for the group and the Foundation.

We attended a eucharist service at the chapel of St Edward the Confessor at the Abbey celebrating with them their National Pilgrimage Day, which is an annual celebration.

During the walk, we visited five other churches to celebrate the ministry of peace that the Awareness Foundation embraces East and West. The entire walk was around 10 miles plus our stops in those different churches.



St Mary Lebow Church, City of London



Holy Trinity Church Sloane Square



St Bride Church, City of London

Revd Dr Stephen Avens welcomed us at his church his church St Marylebone and opened us Jerusalem Chapel to visit also.



St Marylebone Church, Baker Street



Orthodox church of St Nicholas Church, City of London



Jerusalem Chapel at St Marylebone Church



St Paul Cathedral

Why we need your support:

After more than a decade of conflict, war and the pandemic, children and young adults in Syria continue to suffer from traumas and mental and emotional damage. Help them save their future and donate to help them heal and become more resilient.

Please play your part in supporting our young **Ambassadors for Peace** in Syria & Iraq to enable them to develop their own creative peace-building activities and initiatives so that they promote peace and reconciliation in their diverse and wounded communities.



You can also support our ground-breaking children's programme, **Little Heroes**, in Syria which builds the children's sense of well-being, self-esteem, resilience, and emotional health.



Please consider to support our brand new programme **Pioneers**. The programme aims to care for teenagers to take them on a journey through building up their mental and physical wellbeing, self-confidence, resilience, competence, identity and human relationships.



How to donate:

You can donate through our website: <https://www.awareness-foundation.com/donate>

Or send cheques, made payable to:

In UK: Awareness Foundation, 134C London Road, SM6 7HF.

In US: TFCC America, Steve Taber, Secretary
1170 Green Street, SAN FRANCISCO CA 94109-2013

We are a registered charity in the UK, (No: 1099873), we have the 501(c3) status in the US, and we are partners with CAF Canada so we can give donors tax receipts in all those countries if they choose to have them.





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[Www.awareness-foundation.com](http://www.awareness-foundation.com)