



Reconciling Love

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Re-opening of St. Savior’s Church in Akko:
February 21
- Clergy Retreat:
February 20-24
- Archbishop Fred Hiltz and Canadian Companions visit:
April 17-23
- Provincial Synod in Jordan:
May 15-17
- Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby visits:
May 2-9

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Welcome from the Archbishop

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The continued challenge for the church in this land - how can we be a reconciling presence? The church is called to reflect the reconciling love of Christ where ever it is present, through word and action. In this land we do much of this through the invaluable work of our institutions, serving the very poor and most marginalized. In standing with these people at the margins, we are able to be prophetic. The Church’s prophetic voice is not only found in our institutions, it is also - and this is central to our identity - found in our parishes. Äpoulos watered but God gave the growth, so neither the one who plants and the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives gives the growth (1 Corinthians 3.6-8).



When the congregation of St. Savior’s fled in 1948 because they were concerned for their security - some fled to Beirut, others to nearby churches - the prospect of a sustained future ministry seemed impossible. Yet as I write we plan to re-open and re-dedicate this church next week. While a lot of work has gone into the renovation of this project, for which I give thanks for. I too must recall those who founded this church many years ago. They planted a seed, that we watered but it is God who gives the growth. The new Rector, Revd Emad Diabes has a wonderful and daunting task before him. I am confident that through the power of the Holy Spirit Revd Emad will be able to bring the good news of the Gospel through word and action to the people of Akko.

Akko, and the north, are places where people endeavor to live in harmony. It is a place which can model a community where reconciliation is possible, where differences are put aside. A church closed 68 years ago and then re-opened signifies and testifies to the reconciling power of love. And above all it shows



that whatever we encounter we must never give up, but have confidence in our Lord, as it is God who gives growth.

I thank you for your kindness and support for this Diocese, and I ask too that this month you pray for Rev Emad, the people of Akko, and the ministry of St. Savior's.

Grace and Peace,

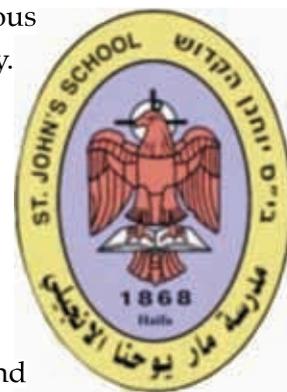
+ Suheil Dawani

The Most Revd Suheil S. Dawani, Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem

MINISTRY PROFILE: HAIFA

Anglican schools and churches shine as luminaries in mixed city

The Anglican Church has been a prominent force in Haifa's cultural and religious mosaic most notably with establishing the first school and hospital in the city. St. John's Episcopal School was founded in 1868 followed by the establishment of St. Luke's Hospital in 1910. Originally, St. Luke's Church was built by the Church Mission Society to serve the English speaking community while St. John's served the indigenous Arabic speaking community. Membership in both parishes flourished up until the outbreak of war in 1948. During the war, most of the members of both church congregations fled; now only a few of the original members remain.



Since then, St. John's School has become one of Haifa's best and most in-demand schools. The school regularly uses the church space for services, concerts, and holiday events, while Sunday worship services are held at St. Luke's Church nearby. Although the hospital was closed many years ago, it was generously redeveloped into classrooms for the school. Currently, Revd Canon Hatem Shehadeh is the Priest of St. Luke's and Revd Emad Diabes is the Assistant Priest and Chaplain of the School. To everyone's excitement, later this month, Fr. Emad will be assuming his new role as priest of the newly re-opened St. Savior's Church in Acre, Israel, which has been closed since 1948.

"It is an advantage to serve in a mixed city. All of us here meet more than twice a year on different occasions. My role, and our role as Christians in this city, is to build bridges, to work for co-existence by sharing a message of peace, love, and harmony."

~The Revd Canon Hatem Shehadeh

Haifa is a unique, mixed city where Jews and Arabs live together in harmony. It has often been described as a model for coexistence within the region with Christians, Muslims, Jews, Druze, Baha'i, and other religious groups living together side by side. Canon Hatem describes serving here as "It is an advantage to serve in a mixed city. All of us here meet more than twice a year on different occasions. My role, and our role as Christians in this city, is to build bridges, to work for co-existence by sharing a message of peace, love, and harmony." During the December fires that raged through Haifa, indiscriminately threatening Arabs and Jews alike, St. Luke's and St. John's opened their doors to support those affected and helped spread word and updates in the community.



Catching up with the Headmaster of St. John’s School



Recently, we had the opportunity to speak with the Headmaster of St. John’s School, Aziz Daem, and ask him some questions about his longstanding work and leadership at the school:

1). How long have you been Headmaster at the school?

I have been a headmaster at the St. John's School for 16 years since September, 2001.

2). What are your favorite and least favorite parts of the job?

I believe that the School Principal serves as the educational leader of the institution, and I feel that I can develop and lead processes that ensure our students' excellence and uniqueness. Throughout my work, we have had many great achievements that were affected by our hard work. I mostly like the meetings and the dialogues held with the students where they can express themselves freely, deal with various topics and share different points of view. In addition, I also like training the teachers and the educational staff and developing projects that can contribute to maintaining the educational-learning atmosphere of the school. I try to focus on the school’s priorities. One hard part of my job is the decreased amount of funding available. This is a critical issue. While funding is decreasing, schools need to be innovative and do more with less.

3) Can you tell us a little about the Peace Education program there? How receptive are the students to the program?

Our aim is to lead our students to peacefulness and excellence through exposing them to the six dimensions of peace education. All aspects of life are connected to these six dimensions, which include citizenship and democracy, human rights, conflict resolution, health and safety, environmental education and serving leadership. Exposing our students to the aspects of peace education is done through lectures, different activities, visits to different institutions,



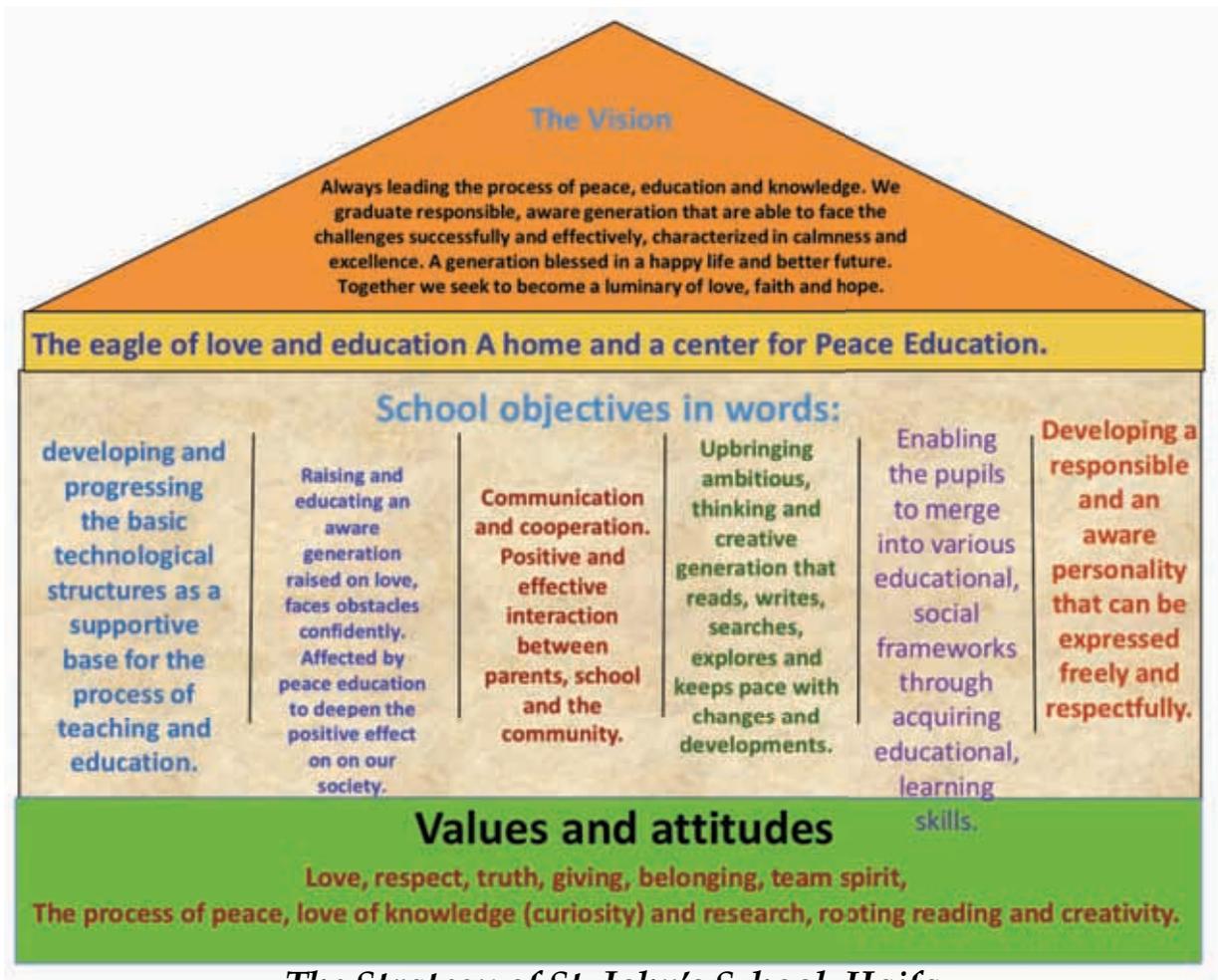
and meeting people from different backgrounds. This, we believe, can lead our students to achieve excellence and peacefulness in all that they do.

4). What is it like operating and maintaining a Christian School in the State of Israel?

St. John's School of Haifa teaches according to the Israeli educational curriculum though our vision, attitudes and spiritual approach are inspired by the Holy Bible. Each day, our pupils enter the school church for prayer, where we have religion and hymn lessons in addition to peace education lessons that are all based on teaching core Christian values. Our school serves the entirety of our dear community. It sows and grows the love of God and the loving of others as oneself. The school aspires to be an educational and learning luminary. As Christ has said: "We are the light of the world let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5.16)



In St. John's Church for Christmas celebrations



The Strategy of St. John's School, Haifa





Food Market and Creativity stations to support charitable organizations and students in need



Students prepare a healthy meal in the yard of St. Lucas

5). How is the Church perceived by parents and students? In what ways are Christian values included and promoted in the school’s education system?

Our school works in partnership with families, institutions, and the local community to serve and lead Christian education in the City of Haifa. As a Christian organization, the teachings of Jesus Christ, as presented in the Gospels and proclaimed by the Church, are central to our vision and values. We foster in our pupils the values of love, respect and brotherhood. Parents are very cooperative and participate in all our celebrations. Each event or celebration like Christmas or graduation begins with a prayer with all the parents involved. Christian values are also taught through the school’s many various projects.

6). What kinds of projects is the school currently involved in or planning for the future?

Our school is involved with many learning and educational projects that can promote and develop the pupils' personalities. We encourage in our students the values of charity and service by helping families in need and visitations with sick children or children with special needs. Furthermore, through our peace education program we have produced different diaries (the Seeds of Reading, the Thanking Diary, VIP passport, and the Health Diary) that strengthen students’ written and oral proficiencies. These diaries support our focus on excellence and peacefulness and leads to a more self-confident and developed personality among each student.



A healthy food chain shaped by

“We encourage in our students the values of charity and service by helping families in need and visitations with sick children or children with special needs... our focus on excellence and peacefulness leads to a more self-confident and developed personality among each student.”

~Aziz Daeem, Headmaster of St. John’s School

I would like to close by saying thank you for giving us the opportunity to present our program and we hope that our school would be a luminary to shine, guide and graduate unique students in the City of Haifa.



HOLY LAND COORDINATION OF 2017 VISITS JERUSALEM

International group of bishops prays for the healing of ecumenical relationships

Annually, a group of Roman Catholic bishops from around the world participate in a Vatican-mandated Holy Land Co-ordination trip to Israel and Palestine. The Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of Southwark, the Rt. Revd Christopher Chessun, joined this year's group on its journey across the region. During their trip, the group visited the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and met with Archbishop Suheil Dawani and his staff to hear a presentation on the work and life of the diocese and its institutions in the midst of tremendous challenges faced by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The presentation was followed by a very special Evensong service held in St. George's Cathedral.

At the end of this year's Co-ordination, the group released a final communique calling for prayer, awareness and action over the continued absence of peace. (Read the communique here: www.catholicnews.org.uk/Home/News/HLC-Final-Communique)



Archbishop Dawani with visiting bishops after the Evensong service



Bishop Christopher Chessun addresses Archbishop Dawani and Diocesan clergy and staff

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY FOCUSES ON RECONCILIATION

Jerusalem churches join together in prayer and fellowship for strengthening of ecumenical relations

Each year since 1908, Christians of the Eastern, the Orthodox, the Protestant, and the Catholic churches come together in Jerusalem and around the world for a week of ecumenical worship to pray for unity and healing within God's Church. With this year's theme titled *Reconciliation - The Love of Christ Compels Us (2 Corinthians 5.14-20)*, the week in Jerusalem was held between 21 - 29 January. Each evening featured a special worship service held at a different church around the city, including: The Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Greek Orthodox Office), St. George's Anglican Cathedral, Armenian Cathedral of St. James, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, St. Savior's Latin Parish Church, St. Anthony's Church (Coptic Orthodox), Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and the Greek Catholic Church of the Annunciation. During his sermon, the Most Revd Suheil Dawani encouraged worshippers and faith leaders to take the initiative, saying "Not only are we to have





Faith leaders gather at St. George's Anglican Cathedral to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

good ecumenical relationships; but we strive to have excellent companionship and fellowship with other Christian denominations. We look for opportunities for collaborative ministries. In this land, our existence as Christians depends on these relationships. These are relationships that spiritually nourish us. I am told by pilgrims who pass through here that when they meet a Christian in the Holy Land and ask their denomination, the first response is 'I am a Christian.' Our denomination is of secondary value: our primary identity is in Christ. And it is this identity that enables us to reconcile with one another, even with those who we perceive to be different from us."

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~The Most Revd Suheil Dawani



FORMER DEAN OF ST. GEORGE'S COLLEGE PUBLISHES NEW BOOK ON THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

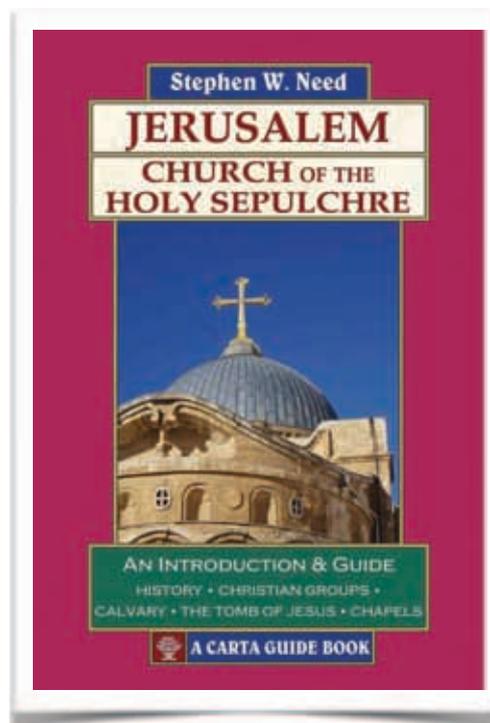
New introductory book useful for first-time pilgrims and scholars alike

A project several years in the making, the former dean of St. George's College, Jerusalem (2005-2011), The Revd Dr. Stephen W. Need recently published a short book titled, *Jerusalem: Church of the Holy Sepulchre*. The book is designed to enable visitors and pilgrims to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem to understand and appreciate what they are seeing. Many people arrive at the church without any understanding of the history of the site. Hopefully this book will throw some light upon it.

The first part of the book introduces you to background questions about the gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion and burial, and to the development of the various churches that have stood on the site. It also introduces you to the various Christian groups that worship in the building today.

The second part of the book will be useful as one walks around the building itself looking at the main points of interest such as Calvary, the tomb of Jesus, various chapels and other features a person might miss without a guide. The Bibliography and Further Reading will enable the reader to take their study and understanding of this fascinating building further.

At the book launch and signing event last December in Jerusalem, Revd Stephen and his wife Jill were warmly welcomed by Archbishop Suheil, Dean Hosam, and over 70+ members of the community who came out to hear about this exciting and useful new text. Planning a trip to Jerusalem soon? This book is an invaluable guide to understanding and exploring the Holy Sepulchre Church and is available for purchase on amazon.com.



Revd Need addresses book launch guests



Revd Need with Archbishop Dawani and Dean Naoum



PRAYERS

St. John's and St. Luke's Churches and St. John's School in Haifa

Collect for St. John's Church:

Masterful Lord let your glory shine upon your church, that enlightened by the teaching of your blessed apostle and evangelist Saint John, we may walk in the light of your truth and come at last to the splendor of an eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect for St. Luke's Church:

Father you chose Luke the evangelist to reveal by preaching and writing the mystery of your love for the poor. Unite in one heart and spirit all who glory in your name and let all nations come to seek your salvation, grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer for St. John's School:

Loving God, who leads your people into ways of reconciliation and peace. Guide this school, its students, its staff, and all who support it so that it may be a place of love, respect, truth, giving and belonging. Bind us all together in truth to reflect your love for all. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, which is part of the Anglican Communion, in the province of Jerusalem and the Middle East covers five countries - Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel. The Diocese consists of 27 parishes and over 30 institutions, with its Cathedral, St. George the Martyr, situated in Jerusalem. The Diocesan institutions include hospitals, clinics, schools, and vocational training programs. The Diocese through its institutions and parishes serve the community by caring not just for the able-bodied, but also for those with special needs, including the deaf, the disabled, and the elderly. It is through serving the poorest and most marginalized in the community that the Diocese seeks to convey Christ's message of love, peace, and justice for all regardless of their identity. The Diocese greatly appreciates your support and prayers. If you would like to support the work of the Diocese, please contact us at info@j-diocese.org.

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