Arab Baptist Theological Seminary
كليّة اللاهوت المعمدانية العربية

February 2017

Our Lebanese Students: Ministry, Journey and Prayer Requests

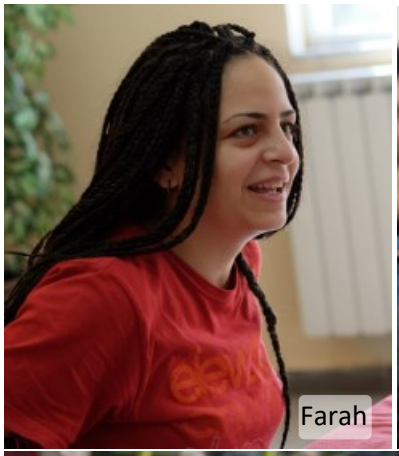
Since 1960, ABTS has equipped hundreds of Arab Church leaders from various nationalities. A minority of these students are Lebanese. Faced with many challenges, including ministering to the Syrian refugees and building bridges that overcome the historic wounds felt by Lebanese communities, the Lebanese Protestant Church is in great need of leaders who can faithfully shepherd and equip the believers to witness about Jesus Christ to their fellow Lebanese. In this month's newsletter, some of our Lebanese students share with us information about their background, ministry and prayer requests.

Farah is a first-year Lebanese female Bachelor of Theology student.

"I led a life that is filled with hurt and broken relationships, leading me to renounce God. Following that, I started seeking Him after I had challenged my uncle that either I turn him into an atheist or he turns me into a Christian. The result of that was that I fully surrendered my life to Christ.

"I now serve among female minors in a one-on-one ministry. These teenage girls struggle with issues such as sexual abuse and suicidal thoughts. I walk closely alongside them and help them to find healing in Christ and to lead them in His way. I do this because I have been in their shoes, and I don't want them to go through the things I did."

Prayer request: "Pray that God may fix divine appointments with the women whom I can serve. May He provide me with the means of transportation to facilitate my meetings with these girls. Also, pray for one of these girls who is going through severe depression and is struggling with suicidal thoughts because of traumatic experiences and past abuse."


Farah

Dany

Gehad

Dany is a Lebanese male Post Graduate Certificate in Theology part-time student.

"I am the assistant pastor of the Free Evangelical Church in Mathaf. I am also the Missions and Operation coordinator and the leader of the Syrian refugee ministry. We have several church plants in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Sudan, Jordan and Iraqi Kurdistan, and we are seeking to plant additional churches through our national workers. We also minister to 90 refugee families that we follow up and visit. The ministries we have with them include a kids program, a literacy program for women, a knitting class to help them make a living and a Bible study. Finally, we have set up a Kurdish church in Burj Hammoud, Beirut."

"I first began studying theology after my church had encouraged me to do so. And so, I began to take one course per semester. I found myself putting to practice all what I am studying, answering ministry and community needs. For instance, the Church and Society module has helped me to be more attentive to the needs of the Syrian refugees.

Prayer request: "Please pray that the Lord will provide more

servants for the Missions and Operations at our church so we can further plant churches in the five countries I had mentioned earlier."

Gehad is a Lebanese male Bachelor of Theology part-time student.

"I was born in Lebanon in 1982 and grew up in a Christian family. In 1983, under war circumstances, we left our village to live close to the capital, Beirut. My mother started taking me to Sunday school, and on May 21, 1992, being ten-years-old, I was born again through accepting Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord.

"My Vision is committed to: 'Empowering for a Blameless and Pure Generation' (Philippians 2:15). This is through empowering new children ministries and Sunday schools, and encouraging the Bible teachers to get children teaching biblical training. I also work on equipping teachers with basic skills and effective methods to share the gospel with children and immediately begin a neighborhood or public outreach ministry. With an ambition to become a professional and certified Children and Youth worker, I am focusing on excelling in the field of Children and Youth ministry."

Prayer request: "While looking forward to my life with my fiancée, to live together under one roof and start serving the Lord together, please pray that we may furnish our house soon and decide on a date for our wedding."

Elie is a Lebanese male Bachelor of Theology part-time student.

"Although I grew up in a traditional Christian family, I did not really have an idea about Jesus. I lived my Christianity through embracing the doctrines and traditions of my family. When I was 20, I visited a bible-believing church for the first time. I then realized that I am a sinner and need someone to pay my debts, but He who believes in Him has eternal life. I, therefore, received Jesus and I began my relationship with Him since that day.

"I pastor the Nation's Desire church, Horch Tabet. The ministry is growing in our church, and I feel the need to dedicate more time for this purpose. Whenever I visit someone, I am always left with the desire to sit with these people more often so I can provide encouragement and answer questions."

Prayer request: "Pray that I would be in full-time ministry in the near future. For now, my job as a hairdresser helps me to support the church's ministry and my family. I know the Lord is in control, and I believe in His timing. I am now 42. I have lived and travelled. I got married to my wonderful wife, and we have wonderful children. This is what gladdens me most of all: to invest every moment of my life for His Kingdom, to do His will."

Chaden is a Lebanese female Bachelor of Theology student. She has finished all her courses at the beginning of the year and will graduate this June.

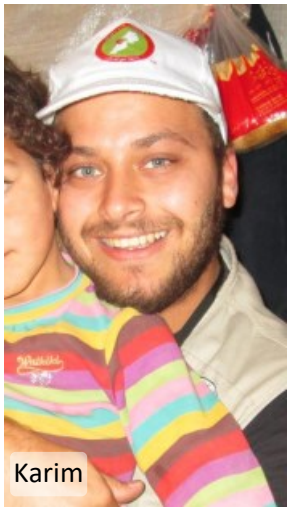
"After getting married, my husband and I moved to Romania for ten years. We got introduced to Christ through one of the Lebanese expats in Romania. After that, I witnessed the faithfulness of the God of the Bible after He answered my prayer and delivered me from all my troubles. That's when I surrendered myself to Christ.

"Today, my husband and I co-pastor a church in our home village for disciples of Jesus that emerge from among my people . We, as a church, offer support to one another and, in a way, we live together. My husband and I follow up with people and do home visits. We have around a hundred members excluding those who attend irregularly.

"I am also the Executive Director of the Lahza magazine, which is published by Dar Manhal Al Hayat, a Christian publishing house, a sister organization of ABTS. The purpose of the magazine is to reflect on contemporary issues and to serve the Arab community by highlighting

Elie

Chaden


Karim

Would you consider supporting the equipping of future leaders for the Arab Church?
We invite you to partner with us in fulfilling our mission of serving the Church in the Arab world.
Contact Development and Partner Relations Manager Wissam al-Saliby to learn more.

to the readers biblical virtues and ethics."

Prayer request: "I pray for more and more people to accept Christ in my community, especially the young men and women who are searching for existential answers today more than ever. Also, pray for my educational journey in the Master of Religion in Middle Eastern and North African Studies at ABTS, in which I will be enrolling later this year. "

Karim is a Lebanese male Online student pursuing the Certificate in Ministry. He is expected to be among the first cohort of Online degree graduates in June 2017.

"I grew up in an Armenian Orthodox family. Later on in life, I began attending home groups in Adonis, Lebanon. I later accepted Christ as Lord over my life, and now I have become full-time in ministry.

George

"I serve in Zahle through sharing the gospel with unreached groups. This is through Jesus Prince of Peace church. I mainly serve in the camps offering discipleship and Bible studies. I also offer food supplies for 65 families.

"I also serve with another ministry at a school teaching about a thousand students in the Bekaa valley. We support this school and teach the Bible there."

Prayer request: "Pray with me that the ministry would grow in the Bekaa valley and that the Lord would provide more servants. Also pray that we might be able to meet the material needs of the people, but above all, that their souls to be saved from eternal death."

George is a Palestinian refugee, born in Lebanon and lived all his life in Lebanon. He is enrolled in the Certificate in Ministry Online program.

"I was born in a Christian legalist atmosphere, which caused me to reject the Christian faith. Later, I got stuck in the web of Satanism until I repented in my late teens and turned to Christ with the help of my current church, the Nazarene church in Ashrafieh.

"I serve with the New Heights ministry, and we prepare curriculums for Sunday school and youth meetings. I also serve as an assistant pastor and a youth pastor at my church. Finally, I cohost a show with Lebanese Christian worship singer, Shams Saad, on the Christian TV channel Tele Lumiere. The show is called *17 Stories with Shams & George*, and it targets kids whose ages range from five to 14."

Prayer request: "Pray that the Lord would continue to strengthen the youth ministry in my church. Many youths go to youth-related nonprofit organizations more than they go to their own churches, but this is certainly not the case in our church. In the past four to five months, 30 new young men and women have begun attending our church."

Rabih is a Lebanese male MRel (Master of Religion in MENA studies) student.

Rabih

"I am the manager of the Academy of Languages and Practical Skills (ALPS), which is a comprehensive Arabic Language learning program of the Institute of Middle East Studies (IMES) that also offers translation services.

"My first module, MENA Cultures, helped me to change my approach in the ministry and my attitude towards those with whom I deal. This has especially helped me to better deal with the ABTS residential students who come from different cultures. I teach them Arabic language and, therefore, take part in the formation of future Arab leaders. I also serve at Faith Baptist Church, Mansourieh, in the Sunday school ministry and occasionally, I preach on Sundays. Our church includes people from Syria and Iraq and is therefore diverse. This is another area in which the module has helped me to be even more effective.

"The second module, MENA Islam, has taught me more about the coexistence of Christians and Muslims the importance of sharing our faith with one another instead of evading the topic. For instance, during the MRel residency, on January 13, we attended a mosque in Saida on a Friday. There we formed groups, made up of both Christians and Muslims, and got to share facts about our faith with one another."

Prayer request: "Please pray for the ability to divide my time wisely among work, ministry and study and to know my priorities. Also, pray that I may be able to implement what I am learning in a way that aligns with God's will for my life."

MIDDLE EAST CONSULTATION 2017

19 - 23 | June 2017 | Beirut - Lebanon

THE CHURCH IN DISORIENTING TIMES:

Leading Prophetically Through Adversity

We live in disorienting times. This is a reality for the church in many parts of the world today, not least the church of the Middle East. Many factors, historical and social, have reduced the church to the status of minority, in which persecution and hopelessness have become a reality for many. How must our theology inform our response?

During Middle East Consultation 2017 (MEC 2017), participants will seek to discern a biblical framework that avoids both self-victimization and triumphalism and encourages the church to prophetically embrace adversity in these disorienting times in a way that activates growth and development rather than discouragement and stagnation.

MEC 2017 provides a unique context for the MENA and global church to address a range of critical issues, such as persecution, minoritization, despair and emigration. Together we will explore how the Body of Christ can best respond to some of these challenges, exploring Biblical and theological responses when confronted with adversity.

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in collaboration with the European Baptist Federation Commissions: Theology & Education and Freedom & Justice.

To find out more and to submit an online application please visit:
www.ABTSLebanon.org/mec2017
You can also email us directly at: **MEC@ABTSLebanon.org**
Regular updates will be available on the IMES Blog: IMES.blog

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