



## FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND

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### “FRIENDS – HELPING CHRISTIANS IN THE HOLY LAND”

#### March 2015 update from the FHL

- **Thank you**

Peter Rand, FHL Vice-Chairman, writes, “Once again I find myself thanking all of you who have been so proactive in the last 4 weeks. It has been another very encouraging month for donations as we have passed the £1/2 million for this financial year with 4 weeks to go! Lent is a period for us to focus on prayer, fasting and almsgiving as we prepare for the joy of the Easter season. As we do so, let us remember the plight of all those who suffer around the world and especially our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land and in all other areas of conflict and tension, at this time.

- **How your support is helping**

Thanks to a surge of donations in the last few months, March will be a record month for distributions of grants to families in the West Bank and Gaza. Around £150,000 will be going to families for a wide range of projects covering each of our core areas of support; health, housing, employment and education. More details will be included in the April Update, by which time the distribution will be complete for this financial year. Never in the last five years, thanks to the generosity of so many ‘Friends’ have FHL been able to make such a difference to the lives of so many.

- **Sponsorship**

Sponsorship of individual families receiving FHL Family Support at £90 per month or school fees at an average of £300 per year is increasing. Is this something to consider?

- **Holy Land Committee**

We are especially grateful to our team in the Holy Land, who are under a lot of pressure to verify cases and ensure that your donations are directed to the most needy in the community. They meet in person every 3 weeks or so to consider new cases. Our small office in Bethlehem is run by Nancy and Reem. The Committee comprise of Fr. Jamal (Chairman) who is Rector of the Latin Seminary in Beit Jala, Revd Hosam, Dean of St. George’s Cathedral in Jerusalem, Laila, Executive Director of Laila Tours, Husam, lecturer at Bethlehem University and a Public Certified Accountant and George, Headmaster of the Greek Orthodox School in Beit Sahour. They each have many other roles in the community! For those of you who have seen the new FHL film, all the Committee members make an appearance!!

**Friends of the Holy Land**  
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Registered Charity 1130054



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- **Trustees and Management Committee**

The Trustees always meet in February and September and occasionally at other times. The February meeting focuses on signing off the budget for the next 12 months. This year it continues to set a target moving towards the goal of a £2 million turnover by 2019 at the end of the current Five Year Strategic Plan. Vicki, FHL's recently appointed Director of Development, joined the meeting to meet with the trustees. The trustees are Jim Quinn, Peter Rand and Tony Stokes, Founder Trustee, Patrick Horsfield, Dr. David Ryall, Secretary of the Department for International Affairs at the Catholic Bishops Conference of England & Wales, Dr. Charles Reed, Foreign Policy Advisor at the Church of England, Norah Whelan and Jim Kelly. We thank all of them for the generous time and invaluable experience that they give to FHL on a voluntary basis.

The seven members of the Management Committee with the invaluable assistance of our Minute Secretary, June Palmer, meet formally every 2 months and more frequently with each other to move the Charity forward and support the day to day running by Vicki, Karen and the team of volunteers in the office. Thank you to one and all.

- **FHL Easter cards**

Easter cards designed and printed in Bethlehem are available. Details attached.

- **Letter to all Bishops**

Thank you to FHL Patrons, Archbishop Emeritus Patrick Kelly and Bishop Christopher Chessun for sending a letter of support to every Church of England and Catholic Bishop in England & Wales following their visit to the Holy Land in January with the 'Coordination.'

- **National Gathering**

Following National Gatherings in the Midlands in the last few years, two regional gatherings are to be arranged in the autumn, probably around London and in the North of England. Watch out for an announcement of dates and locations.

- **End of financial year**

Please forward all available funds to the Kenilworth office by 17 March, so that we have everything in place for the end of our financial year on 31 March.

Please remember that for those of you who gift-aid your donations, it is an opportune time to inform us of any change to your home address, any change to your personal tax circumstances or if you wish to cancel your Gift Aid or change your standing order.

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