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Reverend Will Pearson-Gee  
St Peter and St Paul Buckingham  
The Rectory  
8 Aris Way  
Buckingham  
MK18 1FX

30 January 2024

Dear Reverend Pearson-Gee,

### Your Support has made a Difference in 2023

As Mosaic's programmes of projects for 2024 gets underway, the need for hope, help, and healing in the Middle East is both urgent and far-reaching. Your support is enabling us to continue and extend our work so that we can increase our impact in the months ahead and we look forward to sharing with you the stories of lives which have been changed.

However, first I'd like to highlight some of the fantastic work achieved last year thanks to your support. From ensuring displaced Yazidi youth receive the education they deserve, to promoting peace and reconciliation through the arts, we're so grateful to have you by our side.

### Highlights from 2023

**Two new Olive Tree Centres.** Since 2014, Mosaic has worked with church partners in Jordan to bring hope, help, and healing to tens of thousands of primarily Iraqi refugees who fled there following the rise of Daesh (ISIS). The protracted nature of the refugee crisis in Jordan has seen the needs of the refugees evolve from the initial provision of emergency relief to now including assistance with education, trauma therapy, and vocational training. Our four Olive Tree centres welcome hundreds of refugees every week, including new arrivals from Ukraine, Egypt, and Palestine to name a few. Everyone in need receives the support of this ever-growing community, which contributes to the process of healing and reconciliation.

As we watch the images which have dominated the news channels since last October, it is not difficult to see how extensive the trauma is for those fleeing conflict. Such psychological scars do not heal quickly. Mosaic's Olive Tree Programme places trauma healing as a central strand in its approach, something which has been extended during 2023.







Sisters Leka and Ashwak, fled conflict in the Christian town of Qaraqosh in northern Iraq nine years ago and have been refugees in Jordan ever since. The intervening years have not eradicated the pain and suffering they endured during that terrifying exodus. Last Autumn, the sisters attended trauma healing sessions at the Olive Tree Centre which helped equip them with tools to deal with the psychological impact of their experiences as well as providing a safe space to support each other in the healing process.

Your generous support of our Christmas Appeal means that we are now looking to create a fifth Olive Tree Centre during the coming year. This means that even more refugees will receive vital relief and the support of a community rather than being marginalised and isolated.



**Accelerated education for Yazidi youth.** Education is a vital means of offering a stable and safe environment for displaced children, helping people to rebuild their communities and pursue productive, meaningful lives. The Yazidis for whom Sheikhan Camp (one of many such camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Iraq) has been home for more than eight years, suffered unimaginable persecution at the hands of ISIS. The subsequent trauma - both individual and generational - will be long-felt. Having been able to attend school at the camp during their primary years, these students face multiple barriers when it comes to progressing to secondary education. Last year, Mosaic's accelerated education project enabled 50 young people to receive targeted tuition in order to pass their end of year exams.

Plans are currently underway to secure the funding needed to run this project again this year in order to support the next cohort of students access the education they deserve. At Mosaic we know education is a crucial access tool for those who are marginalised and persecuted. Education brings empowerment, dignity, and hope. Your support means we can continue to support education projects both in our Olive Tree Centres and in fragile contexts such as IDP camps.

**Family relief programme extended at St George's, Baghdad.** Christians and those from other minority faiths are persistently marginalised in Iraq. Excluded as a result of their religion, they are unable to find reliable sources of income needed to support their families. The added impact of the global cost of living crisis has worsened the situation, and the Rev. Canon Faiz Jirjeez, MBE, rector of St George's, has seen an increase in the number of families who cannot afford to eat or pay for medical treatment.







Families like Jnan's: *"The church has helped my disabled son and paid for schooling and transport. Rev'd Faiz's wife, Nawal, has brought women together spiritually".*

Mosaic has worked with St George's to extend its provision of food parcels and free medical care to the most vulnerable in the city. It also offers outreach to the women and children through church groups and activities. Of course, we also continue to fund the Medical and Dental Clinic at St George's, which provides free healthcare to approximately 2,000 people of all faiths each month.

**40 participants in the *Bruised Reed* project trained in the use of arts-based trauma therapy.**

Run through Mosaic's Duqshashe Café – a Nineveh SEED project in northern Iraq - the classes gave disempowered young people an outlet for processing some of the trauma they have experienced, as well as the opportunity to celebrate and take pride in expressing their culture.

Part of the project was to provide the participants with the knowledge and skills to then go on and practice arts-based trauma therapy, and therefore empower them to help others affected by conflict.

Taxi driver, Ali, had constructed an Oud (a traditional Iraqi instrument) from wood and screws, his only way to access music after it was prohibited by ISIS. As part of the project, he was able to learn the violin, a transformative experience for the young Iraqi who had been denied the means of expressing himself through music during the war. Ali reflects, *"This project provided golden opportunities for young people in Nineveh...music is the only spiritual and psychological remedy for those who have been harmed by the scourge of war. After I learn well, I will contribute to giving music lessons for free, because I feel for people who want to learn and do not have the money".*



As we look ahead to 2024, we have exciting developments planned for our existing projects and programmes, such as football coaching at Harsham Camp and women's empowerment, as well as new projects such as emergency relief for Palestinian Christians in Gaza. We look forward to sharing the details of these plans over the coming weeks, but in the meantime want to thank you for your continued support. If you would like to receive resources to enable your congregation to understand and pray for our work further, please do email us:

[office@mosaicmiddleeast.org](mailto:office@mosaicmiddleeast.org). We are also very happy to arrange for one of our team to attend a church service, small group, or event in order to talk about the impact of our projects and programmes. Your prayers and donations truly make a difference in the lives of vulnerable minorities effected by conflict in the Middle East – thank you.

Wishing you every blessing for 2024,

Helen Jackson  
Executive Director, Mosaic Middle East

