

Friends of the Lazarus Home for Girls

Christmas Newsletter 2007

CHAIRS LETTER

'Unless the Lord builds a house, those who labour build in vain'

This year has been a remarkable and exciting year for the charity. After many delays and frustrations regarding the sale of land, I am delighted to report that work on the building has begun! Praise the Lord!

The words above, from Psalm 127, have been with me over recent months – a reminder to us all that, when we initially responded to God's call to help the Lazarus Home for Girls, it was important to hold the plans and the work in prayer and to seek God's way forward in all we do. I feel that we have done this and that the Lord has honoured our work to date.

Alan Anderson, one of our trustees, will report on the building work. I hope that you will share with me the excitement and the urgency to complete the structural work and begin the fitting out work as soon as possible. In addition, as you will hear from our treasurer, we have also been sending regular payments to the Home to meet day-to-day expenses and salaries. The sponsorship scheme is also being reworked.

I take this opportunity to thank all who support us – by your prayers; by your interest and by your giving. The generosity of so many has been amazing! I would also like to record my thanks to McCabe Educational Trust, who through their charitable giving, also generously support the work of the Home (alongside other projects, including the Jeel Al Amal Home for Boys which IS also close to our hearts). The Trust have expressed great interest in the new building and have indicated that in principle they will come alongside us once the building framework is completed. Thank you too to the staff at McCabe Travel who encourages pilgrim groups to visit the Home and routinely include a visit to the Home in their pilgrimage itinerary.

The new building is at last in sight and will, I am sure, be completed without too much delay. We now pray that the remaining funds will be released soon.

I would like to end with an invitation to join me in November next year on a Pilgrimage to The Holy Land and see first hand all that is happening at The Lazarus Home for Girls. It will be a moving visit I promise you!

God Bless you all.
– Revd Kevin Dunne

VICE CHAIR AND BUILDING COORDINATOR

Following my latest visit to the home in October 2007, great progress has been achieved on the construction of the new Lazarus Home for Girls, which is situated approx 200metres from the existing rented accommodation. The charity through the building fundraising has been in the position to forward out to the appointed architect Ibrahim Younan International payments to cover the construction costs to date.

The construction of the basement slab and walls has now been completed.

Work is about to commence on the construction of the ground floor and first floor, which is estimated, to be completed early 2008. We are now in the process of raising funds for the construction of the second and third floor, which will depend of funds being raised or donations received. God willing this should come to fruition during 2008. This will then complete the construction of the five floors and stone cladding to the exterior of the new home.

During the construction of the basement wooden crosses made of Olive Wood and blessed in the Holy Sepulchre have been placed within the basement walls and upper structure of the new home. As a reminder, this home will accommodate 50+ girls, housemothers and staff. The ground floor will accommodate an area for workshops and the provision for medical facilities not only for the home use, but also for the local community. At present no medical facilities exist in Bethany village. Access to local hospitals is extremely difficult, as there is only one ambulance to accommodate up to 36,000 residents. It is hoped that professional medical volunteers would staff the clinic.

The final phase of the home is the most expensive, as this involves the construction of all internal finishes, the charity will be looking for assistance with grants, but this is proving difficult due to the political climate that exists at present.

Once again may I thank each and every one of you for your prayers and support in this work in which we all serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.
– Alan Anderson

TREASURER'S REPORT

As I reflect over this year I would like to call to mind some of the most amazing achievements that has allowed the charity to progress with both the building work and the up keep of the children.

- Meet & Greet with film star Dave Prowse (Darth Vader in Star Wars)
- An evening Sir Geoff Hurst and Martin Peters
- Abseil from Malmasion Hotel
- Gala Dinner Dance with special guests Abba Express

as well as including coffee mornings, bring and buy sales and funds raised by local schools and scouts. A special thank you goes to all those who have given their time and expertise in assisting the charity to achieve its aims. We have been blessed with the support of churches throughout the country and individual giving. The charity was fortunate to be named as Soroptimist International of Newcastle Upon Tyne chosen charity for this year and we give thanks for their friendship and charitable giving.

Our sponsorship giving has slightly increased and I ask all of you who are taxpayers who are considering donating to gift aid. The gift aid scheme is such a bonus to charities. If you need more information, please contact me 0191 2376798 and I will forward out to you our "Gift Aided Giving Notes".

Finally I must draw to everyone attention "funds given to a registered charity are accountable in law". The charity cannot be responsible for donations given to individual person/persons who are collecting as individual/s and who are wholly unconnected in any way to the registered charity Friends of the Lazarus Home For Girls (1075024).

The charity has no jurisdiction over such fund raising and is therefore not responsible or accountable.

Sadly, I am not in a position to assist those persons who have contacted me regarding information on such donations.

May I wish you all a blessed Christmas and a Peaceful New Year,

Love in Jesus
– Shirley Anderson, Hon. Treasurer

SPONSORSHIP NEWS

The charity is forwarding by International payments £3,000 each calendar quarter to meet some of the daily running costs of the present home. At the present time we are still not quite meeting our monthly commitment on this amount and therefore need more monthly sponsors to rectify this shortfall. If you know of anyone willing to help us to resolve this problem your assistance would be a great help. Sponsorship forms are available by downloading from our web site or by requesting a sponsorship information pack from the office.

As you know, many of our children attend The Russian Orthodox School in Bethany. They have increased their special needs provision, not only in school time but during after school hours as well. They are providing a special needs teacher who has to work with very limited resources; however, the school where I teach have agreed to provide more for them, including computer programmes. When Alan and I were there in October, we managed to source a computer for the use of the children; until now they have not had access to a computer in that department.

At the start of the New Year we are planning a massive drive to increase our sponsorship base to raise the money we require to complete the final building phase, Phase 5. The cost of this last stage is £600,000. The more people, groups, companies and organisations we can persuade to help us, the easier the task will be for everyone. The rate at which we are able to complete the work our Lord has set for this ambitious project will also be increased.

In February our new school trust will be launched, with an 'In Depth Learning Day.' The theme for this day will be Global Awareness. Our new Head teacher has suggested to me that at that time I should present to the trust the current situation in the West Bank of Palestine and in particular the work we are all doing there for the children.

– John Gregory

PRAYERS FROM REVD DAVID ATTFIELD

Prayers for the Homes and for peace in the Holy Land. They can be used as biddings in Church Services; for expansion into extemporary prayer; and as themes for meditation.

Mondays – For the Jeel Al Amal Boys' Home; for the helpers and teachers at the school; for the safety of the boys and their hopes of a better future.

Tuesdays – For the Lazarus Home for Girls in Bethany; for Samar and the house mothers; for the safety of the girls and their hopes of a better future; for those girls and staff who have been rejected by their families; for success in our fund raising for the Home.

Wednesdays – For the future of the Lazarus Home; for the successful completion of the new building; for the order of Sisters to which Samar belongs, that it may take responsibility for the Home and the welfare of the girls.

Thursdays – For the peace witness of Alice and Samar and their Jewish women friends; for the wider reconciliation of Jews, Christians and Moslems in the Holy Land, in this country and in the USA.

Fridays – For lasting peace and justice in Israel, the Gaza strip, the Palestinian Territories and the Lebanon; for Tony Blair as he tries to mediate in difficult situations.

Saturdays – For the protection of Israel from suicide bombers; for the overcoming of problems caused by the wall; for Hamas and Fatah, as they try to lead the Palestinian people; for talks with Israel about the way forward.

– David Attfield