



Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development

To serve the Church in Lebanon and the Arab World through spiritual, social and educational development

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Pressing on

by Nabil Costa - Executive Director

Dear friends and co-workers in His field,

The history of the Church provides many examples of a small number of people initiating enormous change, acting as salt and light in the world. Consider the evangelistic revival movement led by John Wesley, Charles Wesley and George Whitefield in Britain in the 18th century, which opened the gates for reform. Consider also the Great Awakening in America, a wave of religious renewal and activity that was led by a few, which some historians see as having contributed to the development of democratic concepts. Christian history holds numerous noteworthy examples that demonstrate that a small number of people *can* spearhead effective change. Why should it be different in the Arab World?

This Christmas season is unlike previous ones in the Middle East and North Africa. It has been a momentous year with the spread of uprisings, collectively known as the Arab Spring. The region continues to be in the throes of rapid and historic change. There is much uncertainty, yet our trust is in Immanuel - God with us, and He is in control.

There is much work to be done, and a significant role for the Church to play. As LSESD, we need to focus on the opportunities that are arising to train more leaders, open more schools, and find new and creative avenues for Christian witness. Importantly, we can recognize the power and potential in youth, who were able to ignite revolutions.

Looking back on the past year at LSESD, we are able to count many blessings; there is progress in improving the effectiveness of our ministries and expanding their reach that more people can come to experience the abundant life that our Lord planned for those who believe in Him.

Looking ahead, we will pay attention to current events so that we can stay relevant, but also hold an unwavering focus on our mission, to serve the Church in Lebanon and the Arab world through spiritual, social and educational development. It is on our hearts that we be agents of His peace, and channels of grace and hope - highly needed "commodities" - in the communities our Lord has called us to serve.

As we celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, we take time to appreciate those who walk the path with us, our partners and co-workers in His field for as Dr. John C. Maxwell puts it "Nothing of significance was ever achieved by an individual (*or entity*) acting alone." Indeed so. Thank you.

May our joint prayer this Christmas be that the practical expressions of our Christian faith lead people to experience the amazing love, peace, and grace of our compassionate Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year



News from Beirut Baptist School

Scholarship Fund Underway with Help from BBS Elementary Students!

Each year the elementary division holds an enormous bake sale to raise funds, but what's different this year is that the money has gone to a new good cause — the BBS Scholarship Fund.

Enthusiastic young students raised an impressive US\$600 for the Fund, an amount that was then matched by BBS.

“The bake sale is something the children love to do,” says April Armstrong, Elementary School Division Head. “And this year, donating the funds to a good cause — something outside of us — made it so much more meaningful.”

The BBS Scholarship Fund, which launched in November, is an important new initiative that aims to encourage and promote academic excellence. The money raised by students through their families' baking efforts, along with the matched funds, is an excellent beginning.

With God's grace, the BBS Scholarship Fund will grow and go on to support and encourage numerous students into the future, helping them to develop their academic potential in this Christian educational environment.



Introducing New Principal Pierre Michel Rahal



The Beirut Baptist School (BBS) welcomes Pierre Michel Rahal as its new principal this year. Pierre is stepping in where former principal Paul Oueis left off after his 10 years of dedicated leadership at BBS.

Born and raised in Beirut just a few yards away from the school, Pierre is a BBS alumnus and brings great depth of knowledge and commitment to his new position.

After completing his undergraduate studies in Physics at the American University of Beirut, Pierre worked for seven years in Lebanon for Kodak and Agfa photofinishing companies, and then for seven years in the computer industry in Dubai & Abu Dhabi - United Arab Emirates. In 1995 he emigrated to Canada and settled in Montreal, where he held high-level management positions at Amphenol TAT Technologies, a telecommunications manufacturing company. Along with his wife Katia and three children, he was an active member of the Arabic Baptist Church in Montreal.

“God is doing something in our lives. Our move is not for us; it's to be in the will of God.”

God's hand touched the Rahal family in a significant way when Nabil Costa, Executive Director of LSESD, telephoned Pierre from Beirut to offer him the position of principal at BBS, should he feel so called. After prayer and reflection, Pierre and Katia agreed to make the move back to Lebanon.

A self-described “doer,” Pierre is invigorated by the opportunities and challenges that await him as he steps into the leadership of BBS, a Nursery to Grade 12 school - an oasis of tolerance and understanding - in the heart of Beirut. He sees great potential in the faculty and staff at all levels, and looks forward to using his wealth of leadership experience to continue to build and strengthen the school while furthering its Christian mission. **Welcome, Pierre!**

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF BBS [CONTACT US.](#)

Mission Team Opportunities

EASTER & SUMMER 2012

Looking ahead to 2012, LSESD's **Baptist Children and Youth Ministry**



BCYM has **numerous camps** planned for local children and youth from different backgrounds. BCYM invites churches to send in Mission Teams who can share skills and care with the children and youth in their pro-

grams.

The ideal visiting Mission Team would have 7 members and would be able to share the following skills: Sports leadership, teaching experience, gifted speaking, nursing, mentorship (for pastoral care and counseling), arts and crafts, photography.

Our **SKILD** Center for **Smart Kids with Individual Learning Differences** offers yet another opportunity during the summer of 2012: a **six-week Special Education Programme** for children of ages 5-6 years till 11-12 years.



An ideal Mission Team includes Educators—Special Ed, people skilled with music, arts and crafts...

The time commitment for Mission Team members ranges from 8-10 days (including air-travel to Lebanon), and teams cover their own expenses.

To learn more about the different LSESD Mission Team opportunities that impact the lives of children and youth, please contact us at: information@LSESD.org

Prayer Requests

- Pray for the poor and the marginalized in various parts of the world, that they may experience the abundant life;
- May the practical expressions of our Christian faith lead people to experience the amazing love, peace, and grace of our compassionate Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- May His peace reign in the hearts and minds of all people including those who are in positions of authority that influence the lives of others.
- The Beirut Baptist School and its leadership that they may continue to effectively guide its 1,340 students
- Youth —that they may develop their potential to become positive agents of change
- The 2012 Mission Team opportunities and their impact both on the children served as well as on the care-givers
- The Lord's blessings upon the unfolding events in the Middle East and North Africa region, as we enter a new year of continuing unrest