

Spring **2021**



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Dear Friends,

I pray that you find this MEMO as encouraging as I do. To look at all the challenges from last year and still see God's goodness in lives changed through our live and online work, and all of the other accomplishments – it is inspiring. Please read through this MEMO and know that we serve the God of hope!

I want to personally thank you for all of your prayers and giving last year. It was a tough one for us all, but we have seen breakthrough and provision for our teams across the Middle East and North Africa. Many of you gave towards our Christmas campaign and as a team we were encouraged to see your generosity in action.

Thank goodness we serve the God of hope! If we can pray for you at all, please get in touch with me and I would love to hear from you.

*James Baldock*  
Senior Communications Manager  
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## Zoom Prayer Meetings

We hold monthly prayer meetings on Zoom to pray through our work, and provide you, our supporters, with updates. The next quarter's meetings will be held on 4th February & 4th March at 2:00pm, and 1st April at 2:00pm and 8:00pm (UK Time). You can sign up to receive more details here:

<https://www.mem.org/sign-up>

# New for 2021: MEM Week

MEM  
Week

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**2021** has been saved – we bring you MEM’s first ever week-long event – **MEM Week** – coming this June. Bringing updates directly from the Middle East, day-long prayer events and fun fundraising activities, this is not to be missed. **Make sure you add it to your diary!**

**What:** A week of activities, talks and fundraisers, connecting staff, volunteers, friends and supporters - including you!

**Why:** To spend time uniting and strengthening our MEM family, learning and growing together whilst fundraising for our vital work, and most importantly... having fun!

**When:** 14th - 20th June 2021

**How:** We are unsure as to what social-distancing rules will be in place this coming June, but whatever happens, **MEM Week** will take place either with in-person events, online, or (most likely) a combination of the two!

Keep an eye out for further information over the next few months. We look forward to seeing you there.



# 2020: Our Year in Numbers...

Amidst a global pandemic, and numerous other significant trials faced by our field teams, our operation has naturally had to change and adapt. Yet, we have been amazed time and time again by the Lord's kindness, His provision, and His ability to bear fruit through our work. Here are just some of the highlights from our work over the past year, in numbers and stories.

**129** episodes of  
Christian drama and  
animation produced

**428,743** views  
of our online womens'  
magazine, Nisa'a

**175** creatives from  
'The Path' attended a  
live training event

**32** videos on  
emotional health for  
women produced

**2.6 million**  
young people reached  
online by 'The Path'

**3000+** church  
members given media  
equipment & training

Almost **2000**  
children reached by  
'Life in the Desert'

**40** trained in media,  
Christian leadership  
and trauma material



# ...and Stories

2020: Our Year  
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*Ree\*, Nisa'a*

Suddenly divorced and a single mother, Ree found herself overwhelmed with pain. Women in the Arab world are held responsible for holding a marriage together, and are blamed when things go wrong. But after attending 18 weeks of our post-divorce stress course, her life was transformed from the inside out. She now is trained to lead the course to help other women like her.

“

“Now I am able to help other women and give them hope in the future just like Nisa'a did with me: it gave me hope and transformed my life.”

*Anah\*, school cook during a filmmaking workshop*

A schoolgirl who bullied the kitchen staff began to identify with their struggles as she interviewed the cook for her film. At the end of the workshop, this girl brought a very expensive perfume bottle to Anah as a sign of her appreciation.

“

“What happened? The girl who was bullying us is now helping us and defending us against anyone else who tries to bully any of the staff!”

*Camila\*, Future Leaders graduate*

Camila attended our Future Leaders training course (run online due to Covid-19). She is now committed to taking what she has learned not only about media, but the importance of leadership, to her church.

“

“I have heard an important message, and I decided to teach what I have learned about leadership to those I serve at my church.”

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Christmas  
Campaign

# Christmas Campaign Results: THANK-YOU!

Together we  
have raised over  
£8,300 towards  
our Christmas  
appeal...a huge  
**THANK-YOU!**

# New Media Teams: Our Vision

## Did you know?

- The MENA region is made up of 19 distinct nations, but within these there are at least 580 unique people groups with their own cultures, dialects and traditions.
- As many as 390 of these groups are classified as unreached, meaning that less than 5% are professing Christians, and there are inadequate local resources available for evangelism.\*
- The majority of Christian media in the region is produced in only two countries, and by Christians from a Christian background, not those from a Muslim background.

## Experience & research shows that media is most effective when it is curated by those within its target audience.

By establishing and shepherding new media teams, we hope to enable New Church (NC) believers from a Muslim background to reach their own communities in culturally-relevant ways with the Gospel. Funds raised through our Christmas appeal will go towards seeding the first of our new teams in Libya. Around 0.5% of Libya's 6.7 million total population are Christians, but there are approximately only 150 Christians who are of Libyan nationality (rather than migrants)\*\*. The need here is evident, and this situation is found similarly in many other nations in the region.



\*Statistics: [joshuaproject.net/regions/6](http://joshuaproject.net/regions/6)

\*\*Statistics: [opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list/libya](http://opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list/libya)

Image: [shutterstock.com/g/Olena+Ilchenko](http://shutterstock.com/g/Olena+Ilchenko)

# Praise Report:

We're familiar with the idea that following Jesus incurs a great cost, but this primarily looks like denying worldly comforts for many of us in the West. We don't tend to live our daily Christian lives under the constant threat of imprisonment, violence, or death. Living for Jesus in the UK rarely results in ostracisation, manipulation and abuse from our families. When we turn up to church on a Sunday, we aren't treated as suspected spies by brothers and sisters. Gathering for church isn't marked with concern of being discovered by oppressive governments.

This is the reality for the majority of New Church (NC) believers coming from a Muslim background in the Middle East. Believing the Gospel, in some ways, is the easiest part. Navigating the way through life as a Christian believer is a road paved with deep emotional tension, confusion and struggle. Many NC believers in this region come to faith with an already trauma-laden past, too, from backgrounds of abuse, trafficking, warfare and poverty.



Opportunities to confront emotional hurts and encounter the transformative work of the Holy Spirit are rare. This is why events such as the Inner Healing Conference, attended by nearly 50 individuals from across the entire region and run by our Gulf team at the end of December, are so important.

*“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” – John 10:10*

# Gulf Inner Healing Conference 2020

Healing  
Conference

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Running events like this in the MENA region is extremely dangerous. Christians meeting together in any number is risky enough, let alone the security threats involved in organising a three-day conference with visiting speakers and guests from abroad.

**Yet, praise be to our faithful God!** Everyone attending was kept safe. Practical, technical and logistical details were smooth. But, most importantly, the presence of God was there! The power of the Holy Spirit was at work in many hearts, and lives were changed. There are so many stories of healing and transformation we'd love to share with you, but here are just a few of our favourite personal testimonies from those who attended.

"I have been struggling with a relationship for ten years. The Forgiveness talk liberated me."

"I have been carrying loads of emotional pain that needed to be healed. It was huge."

"God touched my heart in a very special way. It was a turning point in my life."

"I was able to release forgiveness, and hold neither them nor me in bondage any more."

He truly has come to bring **LIFE to the FULL!** We hope and pray for more opportunities for events such as this in the future.



## Focus on Prayer:

### *His Faithfulness Continues*

It goes without saying that 2020 was a year like no other! Yet amidst the uncertainty, the hardships and the restrictions, one thing has remained: The Lord is good, and His faithfulness continues.

As we look back on the year, MEM has so many reasons to thank God for his ongoing faithfulness, provision and generosity. In September, we celebrated 45 years since our humble beginnings in 1975, and we looked back in praise at the stories of hope and transformation that God has crafted through our work over the years.

We trust and believe, as the psalmist, that the Lord's faithfulness continues through all generations. However our circumstances may appear, we can prayerfully depend on our faithful God to finish what He has started. As we look ahead to our renewed vision for the establishment and equipment of new media teams across the MENA region, we come to the Lord with thankful and expectant hearts. Please join us in prayer as we commit the next leg of our journey to Him.

### *Prayer Points*

- » Give thanks and praise to the Lord for His faithfulness, in 2020 and over the past 45 years!
- » Establishing our new Libya media team - for the individuals being trained, and for those from the field involved in training and discipling them. May the Lord guide, protect and nourish them.
- » For more and more breakthrough in the MENA region, that the Lord would be moving in hearts, creating more stories of life transformation. May the Lord use our work and bear it fruit in the coming year.



Enter his gates with  
*thanksgiving*  
and his courts with  
praise;

give *thanks* to him and  
praise his name.

For the Lord is *good* and his  
love endures forever;

his *faithfulness* continues  
through *all generations*.

*Psalm 100:4-5*

# Give

Visit  
[mem.org/give](http://mem.org/give)

# Pray

Visit our prayer &  
news blog  
[mem.org/pray](http://mem.org/pray)

# Advocate

Visit our  
advocacy page  
[mem.org/advocacy](http://mem.org/advocacy)

## Thank You

Your giving, prayers, and advocacy for MEM are what make it possible for us to do our vital work across the Middle East and North Africa.

*Sowing seeds of transformation*

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middle east  
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