MEMO

TRANSFORMING LIVES WITH UNSTOPPABLE HOPE

WINTER 26



WHEN HOPE SPEAKS TO HEARTS

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends,

As I write, summer is bidding farewell. The days are getting shorter, darker, colder, wetter. And my garden is grateful.

When winter sets in, we naturally turn towards **Christmas – a time of hope and light in the darkness.** It's especially needed after a year of conflict, disaster and tragedy.

I believe reading MEMO will give you a boost of hope. Our feature story (see page 6) includes some great testimonies of people finding Jesus, even when they didn't know they needed him. And we're inviting you to take part in our own Christmas events: our Soirée in November (more on page 5) and our Three Kings campaign (see page 19).

I also want to draw your attention to Marianne's interview with our newest trustee, Hanaan (page 14), who shares a little of her faith journey. Hanaan found Jesus despite growing up without any Christian input and she attributes part of this to the stories, pictures and movies she watched as a child. **This is hugely encouraging for us as we run projects aimed at children and a reminder to pray for the 2,730 children who learnt their God-given value at our workshops in the first six months of the year.**

You're always welcome to contact me if you ever have any questions, feedback or want to know more about a project.

With every blessing,

James Baldock

Senior Communications Manager
hello@mem.org

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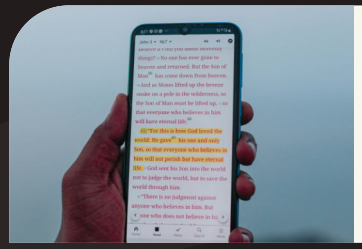
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QUICK NEWS



MINISTRY

Our new Bible application in Western Libyan Arabic (Tripoli) dialect had over 100,000 downloads inside the country. It's estimated that about 36,000 Christians live in Libya, but only 150-180 of them are native Libyan Christians.

UK TEAM

Ruth Selby *(pictured)* joined us as a Supporter Engagement Volunteer following an inspiring visit to our offices in the Middle East. Two new trustees, Megan Thompson and Hanaan Basma, joined our UK Board (see interview with Hanaan on page 14).





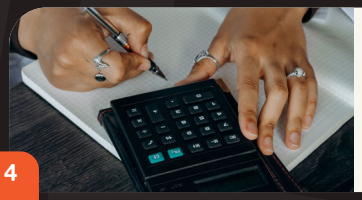
INTERNATIONAL TEAM

John McGee started as USA Director of Development and Angela Morford *(pictured)* as USA Administrator. MEM's International Director Wayne took a two-month sabbatical this summer, and has now become an expert on rest!

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

It takes time and effort to become interculturally competent and successful working across many different cultures. This year we are heavily investing into leadership training for our current and emerging leaders. Focusing on findings from our Strengths and Intercultural Effectiveness tests, we have also been busy practising what we are learning.





FINANCE

Following the examination of 2025 accounts by our auditors, we are grateful to see a 32% increase in overall unrestricted funding from 2024.

Christmas Soirée

THURSDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2026

Mark the date in your diary. Get your tickets today. Definitely bring a guest or two.

For the second year running, MEM brings you our Christmas Soirée.

Join us in **London, on 26th November**, for a festive evening celebrating the work of Middle East Media and hearing updates from the region. Enjoy live entertainment, festive drinks and Middle Eastern canapés.

Doors open at 6pm, main event starts at 7pm. Venue: **King's House near King's Cross and St Pancras (N1 9JY)**. Dress code is festive.

Find out more and purchase your tickets using the QR code or at **mem.org/christmas-soiree**

MICRO EVENTS

"I think the whole group left the meeting a little bit more informed about these subjects than they were when they arrived. The video material was really helpful."

David, MEM Trustee and micro event host

This year, a number of MEM supporters have run micro events, finding them to be helpful and inspiring.

Micro events are about sharing what's on your heart with the people in your life and encouraging them to support MEM. It could be as simple as eating food in your home while sharing MEM's videos and praying for the Middle East.

Sign up to receive your free resource pack at **mem.org/micro-events**. We'll be happy to support you in any way we can.

FEATURE

WHEN HOPE SPEAKS TO HEARTS

Written by: **Marianne Monk**
Communications Assistant
MEM UK & Europe

THREE STORIES OF GOD'S LOVE SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

Across the Middle East, men, women and children are longing for more. Something deep inside of them cries out for more than the religion, tradition and distant God they've been following.

MEM's calling is to respond to this cry; to give every unique person an opportunity to explore and engage with the truth for themselves.

These three stories represent three of our projects and show how God is moving today in the lives of Middle Easterners.



BETRAYAL TO BELIEF – HADIA'S STORY

Hadia from Yemen endured sexual abuse from her stepfather and brother-in-law, with no support from the rest of her family. Feeling betrayed and disillusioned by her religion, she came across the social media page of the media team we trained and mentored in the Gulf.

Hadia was captivated by the videos and found solace in online conversations with the team. They discussed Scripture with her, sent her a digital Bible and answered all her questions.

Through these conversations, Hadia began to express an interest in Christianity, eventually giving her life to Jesus. She wants God to change her and set her free.

The team are now walking alongside her as she delves deeper into Christianity and seeks to understand the concept of relationships based on love and equality. If and when safe, they will connect Hadia with a church in her area.

As a young teen, Hadia falls into the target age range (12-15) of our Crown of Splendour project. Creating short videos for TikTok and Instagram, the objective is to empower young Middle Eastern girls, helping them build the faith and resilience needed to overcome life's challenges.

A HEART FOR CHRIST – RAMZI'S STORY

For years, Ramzi in Algeria had been struggling internally. His heart was drawn to Christ then pulled away by life's distractions.

He kept a Bible, hidden under his bed and away from his family. When they discovered it, they tore it up, threw it in his face and insulted him.

Despite this, Ramzi stopped visiting the mosque, knowing deep down that the fearful image of God he'd been taught was not true. His dream was to enter a church to pray and talk with someone who could guide him.

Ramzi found our Change Maker* page and made contact. Our partners began talking with him, explaining what it means to believe in Jesus and follow him.

"I love Christ and I don't have a great understanding of Christianity, except that I love the cross," shared Ramzi. He was very open and just needed to understand a few things before he was ready to make a step of faith.

"They tore my Bible and threw it in my face," he said. **"I love you, Lord. Make my heart happy. I love you."**

The team encouraged Ramzi that his faithfulness to the Lord will transform his life. They will continue to walk with Ramzi on his journey, as he studies the Bible and grows in his faith and knowledge.

**Change Maker is MEM's digital evangelism platform on Facebook, TikTok and soon to be on YouTube.*





"I CHOSE THE BIBLE" – HIND'S STORY

Hind, is a member of our Desert Roses Gulf ministry team.

"I always questioned my inherited religion and its rituals, having many questions about God," shares Hind, "**but I dared not ask."**

Hind had several children with her husband, but was unhappy in her marriage, experiencing both physical and emotional abuse. "**I confess it was the wrong choice from the beginning,"** she shares.

Severely depressed, Hind cried out to God for help. **"For about a week, I cried and prayed,"** she says, "**and one night I felt the presence of someone in my room, standing by my bed."**

"I opened my eyes slightly," Hind continues, "**wondering who this person was and what he was doing in my room at that time. I questioned why he was wearing strange white and red robes**."

"Suddenly, I felt a gentle touch that took my breath away. It felt like my soul had left my body.

"I woke up feeling peace, and my sorrow had vanished…"

Hind woke up feeling peaceful but wondering what on earth she had experienced. Then she heard a voice telling her it was Christ.

"The next thing I did was buy my first Bible, get to know the Saviour of the world, and accept him as the Lord and Saviour of my life," she says.

Hind dedicated what time she could to studying the Bible, keeping all of this secret from her husband. But one day, he returned earlier than usual and caught her reading her Bible. He snatched it from Hind's hands and threatened to throw it in the bin.

"That's when I stood up," Hind says, "**and he gave me a choice between continuing our marriage or keeping the Bible."**

"Without hesitation, I chose the Bible."

Hind's husband then divorced her due to her conversion to Christianity, taking away her children. But the Lord was always with her.

"I felt a strange peace inside regarding the children," she shares. Although it felt unjust that she lost them, Hind knew it was the right thing to do. She held onto a promise that God gave her – that they would **"return from the land of the enemy"**.

It took 11 years for that promise to come true, but some years later she was reunited with her children.

As an integral part of our Gulf women's team, Hind has dedicated her time to producing media for other women in the Gulf and walking alongside them on their faith journey. Just like the team mentioned on page 12, she received training and support from MEM staff. Today, their ministry is thriving with thousands responding to their content.

This year, as a celebration of Christmas, you have the opportunity to support one of the projects that has impacted Hadia, Ramzi and Hind. They are our gold, frankincense and myrrh. Turn to **page 19** to read more about our Three Kings Christmas Appeal.

IMPACT NUMBERS

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM JANUARY-JUNE 2026

In the first half of this year, our teams in the Middle East worked hard, producing media for our own projects as well as building media ministries across the region.

8.6 MILLION

videos viewed on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

11

videos are nearly ready for distribution for Crown of Splendour – our new social media project reaching young teenage girls.

26

episodes (two seasons) of our 3D animation have been dubbed into Sudanese Arabic, helping more refugee children recover from trauma and find hope in God.

12

local teams worked with and equipped to become media ministries – from countries like Morocco, Libya, Sudan, Jordan, Iraq and Mauritania.

52

people shared that they came to faith in Jesus through our social media. Many more will have done so quietly, choosing not to tell us because of safety fears.

48

charity workers and church leaders were equipped to use our animations and educational resources in helping children heal from trauma.

2,730

children learnt about their God-given value at our interactive workshops in local communities and schools, mainly in deprived areas.

18,000

digital Christian resources and Bibles sent to people wanting to learn more about Jesus.

320

private conversations with parents on Facebook, helping them learn how to parent in a healthy and godly way.



NEW FOUNDATIONS

TRAINING ENABLES A NEW TEAM TO BEGIN MINISTRY

Written by: **Marianne Monk**
Communications Assistant
MEM UK & Europe

This year's numerous UK heatwaves have given us all a taster of what it's like to live (and maybe also work) in extreme heat. So perhaps you won't have quite so much difficulty imagining what it felt like for Mike, Mark and Isaac as they stepped off the plane and into the heat of West Africa for a packed week of media training – and with only one fan to keep them cool!

The fruition of 18 months of planning, they travelled to meet nine men and women, all of whom are believers from a different faith background, eager to reach their own people with the gospel message.

We've been asked to withhold country names (host and country of origin) but the population of this particular team's home country are 99.8% unreached and there is no established church. New converts face intense persecution and, rather than giving individuals protection, the law encourages physical harm and honour killings.

Despite this, we brought together a spiritually mature group who are willing and ready to bring the hope of Jesus to their people through media.



There Were Challenges…

Every trip comes with its challenges. In the last edition of MEMO, we shared how our team visiting Iraq had been staying close to where missiles from Iran were striking. This time, there were no such disruptions, for which we praise God.

For added safety, training was conducted in a rural area but this impacted meals. The local shop had very little suitable fresh food, so they mostly lived off canned and dried food.

Language was also difficult, with trainers and trainees speaking different languages and types of Arabic. Thankfully, they got by speaking a mixture of classical Arabic and English.

> **"We've learnt that time is an opportunity. We should make the best use of it because the things and opportunities available today may not be available tomorrow."**



… And There Were Blessings

Mike shares this: "What impressed us most was that the majority of the team members we met were very interested in technology and social media. This was not what we had expected, and we were surprised by how quickly they learned and adapted to new technologies."

It was also very special to be able to be together and pray together. **"I felt like I was living a dream that I had been trying to achieve for a year and a half,"** says Mike.

These nine believers are not all from the same part of their country and won't experience fellowship on a regular basis. How precious this time will have been, singing, worshipping and praying together.

How You Can Pray

Please lift up this new team, in the first phase of their ministry. May they be bold and creative as they build content for social media and prepare to begin reaching out with the love of Jesus. May the Lord also keep them safe and well.

Pray also for our team as we provide ongoing support and guidance. Pray particularly that communication will be easy and clear.

One of MEM's strategic aims is not just to produce media ourselves, but also to develop new ministries that share the Gospel across the Middle East. Since 2022, we've worked with 21 emerging media teams from 10 countries like Sudan, Turkey and Libya. We give teams up to three years of training and support, to ensure they are sustainable and able to train other teams in the future.

TEAM

MEET OUR NEWEST TRUSTEE

MARIANNE TALKS WITH HANAAN BASMA

Written by: **Marianne Monk**
Communications Assistant
MEM UK & Europe

Quick Facts

Favourite food: Singaporean
Coffee or tea? Coffee
Favourite place: Richmond Park, early in the morning
Inspirational person: Anthony Bourdain
Bible verse: Jeremiah 29:11
Guilty pleasure: Reality TV



Hi Hanaan. It's lovely to spend time with you this morning. How are you?

"Good, though maybe a little tired from the weekend. I went to David's Tent – it was really good."

Tell us a bit about yourself.

"I grew up in Singapore, mostly. My family still live out there. My dad's Lebanese and my mum's English.

"I wasn't born into a Christian family, wasn't raised a Christian. Because of my dad, I'd tick the Muslim box on a form. My dad's a Muslim still.

"People would talk to me about Jesus when I was younger, and I always thought, he was from England because only English people would tell me about him.

"I had no concept of who Jesus was until I was about 13, when I had a radical encounter and came to faith. My oldest sister as well – she was a very strong Muslim and she had a radical encounter and came to faith at the same time. So, it was a really interesting time in our family, where we shifted from one thing to another."

With your dad being Muslim, how did he feel about all of this?

"He took it really hard. Culturally, it's not okay. He's warmed up a little bit and he's on his own journey. He's open to us praying for him and we've been able to share our stories and tell him about Jesus. He's the top of my prayer list, every day. There's maybe an opening up, but we're not there yet."

How are you finding being a trustee?

"So far, so good. What I have seen, I'm really encouraged by. Everyone here has a real passion for this. There's so much experience and wisdom shared among the team and the trustees. These are serious Christians – the real deal. People who really want to see the gospel message go out."

What excites you most of all about MEM?

"When I was younger, I would watch movies and read stories and see pictures, and I would feel this presence – and I now know it to be the presence of God…

"I wasn't going to go into a church, nobody was telling me the gospel… God still found a way to find me through that. And still to this day, I remember some of those things that I had felt he was speaking to me through those pictures and movies and stories.

"I know the power of media and I know the power of a good story. I definitely know the power of a good story to reach a child. Having had that experience myself, I know that God will and wants to use this particular way to communicate to the people of that area. I think especially women and children. That's what I'm excited about, because I know the power of it.

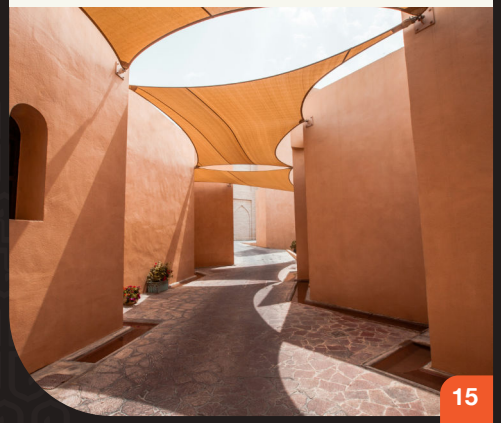
"I think I'm standing partly where I am now because of a good story."

How can we pray for you in your role?

"Always for wisdom, to know how to do what God's asked us to do. One of the things I feel like I'm meant to bring to MEM is just to tell people about MEM in the world that I'm in and people that I know. I would just love opportunities to share what MEM does with new people who don't know about it. That's a top priority for me."

"And for my dad, always my dad."

Please pray for Hanaan and our other trustees as they guide, support and help direct MEM's activities in the UK.



REFLECTIONS ON MEM WEEK

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO TOOK PART

Written by: **Marianne Monk**
Communications Assistant
MEM UK & Europe

"What on earth is MEM Week?"
I asked myself back in April, when I was an MEM newbie. I'd stumbled upon an entry in the company calendar and was intrigued that MEM had a whole week of… something. What would it involve?

It wasn't long before I found out. And it wasn't much longer before I was knee deep in preparations.

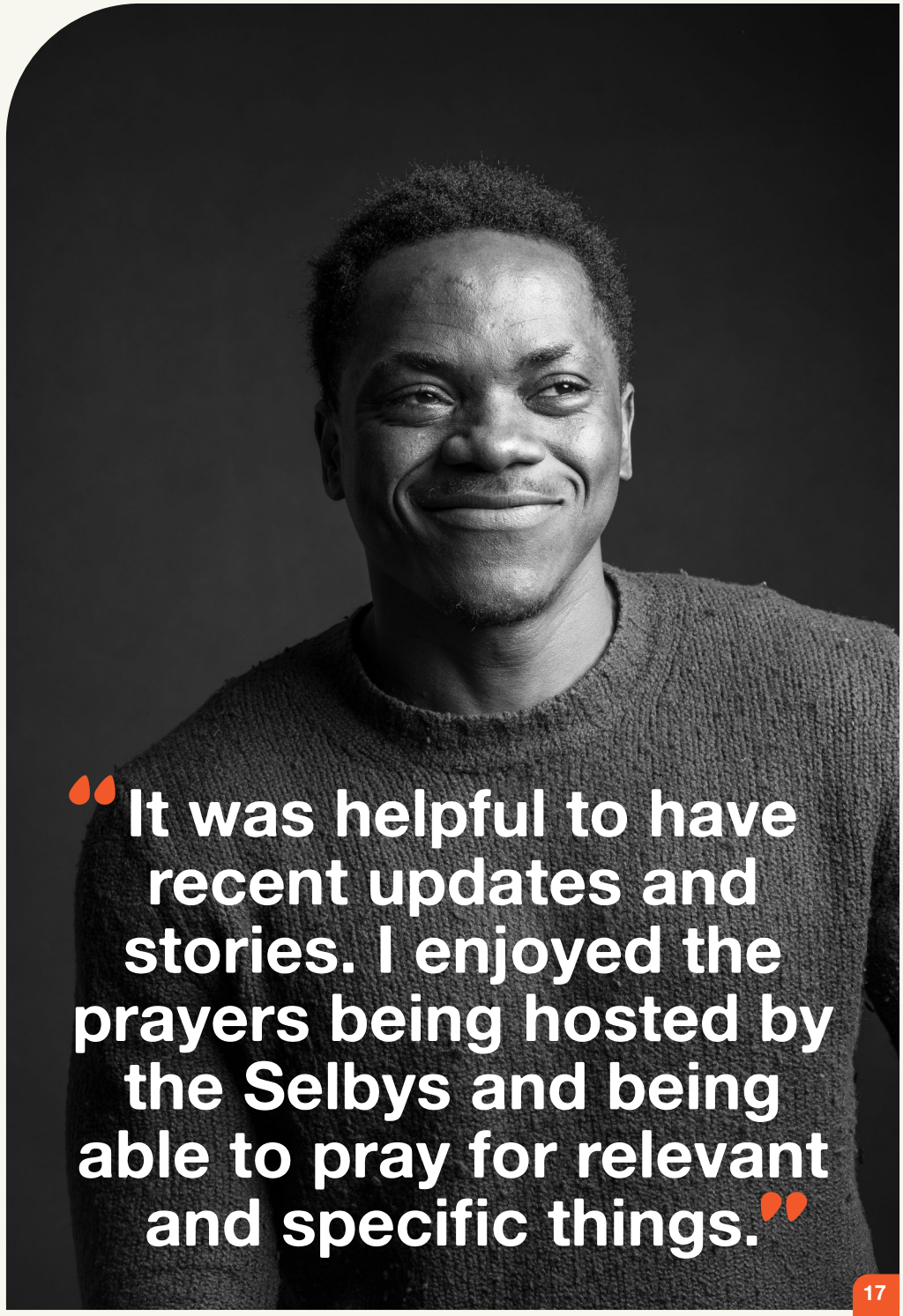
If you haven't experienced MEM Week, I have to say you've been missing out. It's a fantastic opportunity to meet the team – including those of us based in the Middle East region. It's also a chance to hear more about what we do and pray alongside us for the work. And with most of it on Zoom, it couldn't be easier to be a part of it.

This year's MEM Week included a live podcast (a first for MEM) in Coventry, Zoom prayer gathering and a special MEMbers event, with guest speakers. James Baldock also managed to get a spot on Premier Christian Radio.

We want to thank everyone who took part this year, from those who hosted or contributed to events to those who showed up, making all the hard work worth it. (Still a newbie, I'm allowed to tell you, the UK team worked tirelessly to make everything happen as it did.)



MEM Week will be back next year, so look out for news of what's on in our Spring MEMO. But don't just wait – head back to **page 5** and find out about our next event, the Christmas Soirée.



"It was helpful to have recent updates and stories. I enjoyed the prayers being hosted by the Selbys and being able to pray for relevant and specific things."

DID YOU KNOW

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

TIKTOK TAKES OFF IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Written by: James Baldock
Senior Communications Manager
MEM UK & Europe

The Middle East and North Africa are experiencing digital growth and it's creating exciting new opportunities to share the hope of Jesus.

Recent social media research estimates that there are around 228 million social media users across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)*. That's remarkably close to the 230 million users across Europe – a difference of just 2 million. As internet access and smartphone use continues to grow across the region, digital engagement is rapidly becoming a part of everyday life.

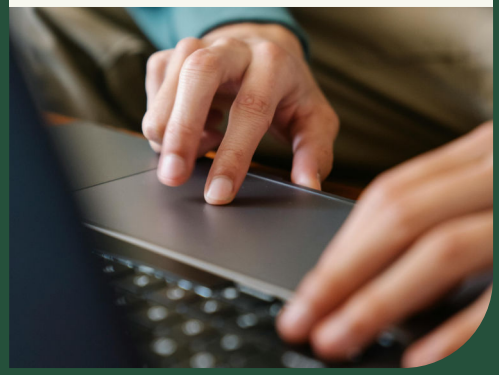
In countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE and Bahrain, TikTok has become particularly popular, in some cases overtaking platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat. With many of these countries having young populations, social media is providing a unique opportunity to connect with a new generation through short, engaging video content.

***Source - Forbes Middle East Link:**
link.mem.org/MEMO-Source-1

For our ministry teams, understanding these changing digital habits is crucial. Social media trends move quickly, and what connects with audiences in one country may not work in another. That's why having teams based in the region, understanding the culture and listening to local audiences, is so important.

Video is now one of the most powerful ways to communicate online. Our teams are creating both short and long-form videos designed specifically for people across the Middle East and North Africa – bringing messages of hope, truth and the love of God into places where traditional forms of ministry can be difficult.

The Middle East is going digital. And that's exactly where we are.



THREE KINGS APPEAL

If you were a king, what would you bring?

"And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising." Isaiah 60:3 (ESV)

This year, we're doing something a little different for our Christmas Appeal.

We've been reading the story of the three kings (or wise men) in Matthew 2:1-12 and have been struck by the significance of the journey they made and the gifts they brought.

Gold signifies Jesus' kingship.
Frankincense points to God incarnate.
Myrrh represents a suffering servant who would die for humanity.

Choose Your Gift

To celebrate Jesus' birth, we're inviting you to choose which gift you would bring. Gold, frankincense or myrrh?

You can do this simply from you to our ministry or for a loved one who'd value an alternative Christmas present. Choose from:

GOLD: CROWN OF SPLENDOUR

Jesus loved and lifted up children and women, valuing them in a world where they had little value. This newly launched project is about helping girls ages 12-15 realise their significance.

FRANKINCENSE: CHANGE MAKER

Change Maker is about bringing the truth of the gospel and helping people overcome major stumbling blocks, including Jesus' incarnation.



MYRRH: BUILDING MEDIA MINISTRIES

The local teams we work alongside have "carried their cross" in ways we'll never understand. Giving those who've lost everything employment and emotional support is a way of walking alongside them.

We'll share more soon, but if you want to give today follow the QR code, visit **mem.org/christmas** or complete the enclosed form.

Note: We will aim to allocate your gift to the above choice, but reserve the right to reallocate it to another one of these three projects.

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middleeastmedia

TRANSFORMING LIVES WITH UNSTOPPABLE HOPE

COULD YOU SUPPORT THE MINISTRY OF MEM?

Giving is simple and secure, scan the QR code below.

mem.org/give

FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

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