

Bishop's Charity 2021



I am designating **Embrace the Middle East** as my Bishop's Charity for this year. Confirmation collections, and any donations I receive during the year, will go to this very good cause.

Many of you will have known this Christian Charity by its former name of Bible Lands Society: there are still many Bethlehem Carol Sheets bearing that name in churches up and down the Diocese! It became 'Embrace the Middle East' (or simply 'Embrace') in 2012.

Currently supporting projects in Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq and Syria, Embrace helps people of all faiths and none to free themselves from a life of poverty and injustice.

They work with some remarkable local Christian communities, bringing healing, hope and lasting change through healthcare, education and community development projects.

The Middle East is an extraordinary centre-point of the major world faiths. Without political, social, and educational justice there, we will not see stability in the wider world. Our colleagues at the Cathedral are also supporting Embrace this year with a particular focus on Lebanon. I have seen the severe poverty and the statelessness of many in the region, in contrast to the relative wealth and comfort of others, which it would be good to see for all. It is good that we can work on this together.

These are the countries of our spiritual heritage. The people we read about and honour in our scriptures are the forebears of the populations so in need today. I'm delighted to do whatever we can to help this excellent charity.

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