

House of Hope for the Blind and Children with Special Needs Fall/Winter 2007 Newsletter

Dear Friends in Christ

Christmas greetings from the City of David! We pray that the peace of Jesus, that He brought to earth, will be upon you this Christmas season. Let us all join with the angels in announcing the good news of the peace that our Savior brings: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests" (Luke 2:14).

School News

This year we were able to welcome five new students to our day school, four boys and one girl. They are all from the Bethlehem area. We thank God for His provision to us so that we are able to welcome new students every year.

This semester, two of our teachers have had the opportunity to attend training classes so that they can better serve the students. Niveen is currently attending a nine-month psychology course at a training center in Bethlehem. Lurise, who is the Social Worker for our school, took calligraphy and pottery classes, which she will in turn teach to the children.

Jane, who is the teacher of our class for children with learning disabilities, attended a training class in Jordan this summer about the Montessori Method of teaching. She is able to use it in her classroom and it has been very helpful, both to her and to her students.

Profile of Rita, one of our day students: Rita, who is seven years old, arrived this year from a family where her father was very ill in hospital and unable to work. Her mother had to care for the three daughters, and so in September, Rita came to House of Hope, where she was scared for in the boarding section to give her mother a little rest. About two months after coming, Rita's father passed away. Rita is now learning in the school and now lives back with her mother.

Boarding Section

We hired two new house parents at the beginning of the year. Wissam, a man from Beit Sahour, works as a house parent for the boys in the boarding section. Yousef, a student from Bethlehem Bible College, was hired later in the semester to work with Ismael and Anwar, two young men with more severe special needs than the other boarding students. Praise God for the provision of these two wonderful men who are willing to serve at the House of Hope.

We had to say goodbye to three of our volunteers since the last newsletter. Jason and Sarah, an American couple, left after serving for one school year. Arlo, a young man from New York, left in September. We are thankful for the time they served here. Since then, we have received a new volunteer from England, Darius. His expertise is in gardening, but he will also be helping as a house parent in the boarding section. At the beginning of December, we will be getting two more volunteers, two young ladies, who will be here until July. We are so thankful for the time that volunteers contribute and for their willingness to be a part of our ministry.

Profile of Mohammad, one of our boarding students: Mohammad was born with an abnormal increase of fluid around his brain, a condition known as hydrocephalus. His family did not know there was a problem until his head began to swell larger and larger. By the time they brought him to a physician, irreversible damage had been done. Mohammad is developmentally delayed, as well physically impaired due to damage in the muscles of his legs. He has been at the House of Hope since 2001.

Today Mohammad is progressing well in school, learning much from his teacher Miss Violet. He enjoys doing puzzles, coloring, and learning English from the volunteers. In 2005, PCDC (Practical Compassion for Destitute Children) provided 500 Pounds to purchase braces for Mohammad's, so that he could learn to walk independently. With the help of his braces, as well as weekly physical therapy, Mohammad is able to walk for long distances with crutches and short distances on his own.

Christmas Celebrations

We will hold the annual Christmas party for our students on December 13. Each year, we have a group come to sing songs and put on skits for the children. We also pass out presents to all of the school and boarding children. This year, with the help of Musalaha Ministries, we will be able to give training suits to each of the children. The party is a favorite event for everyone at the House of Hope. Praise God for the opportunity we have each year to share with our students about the birth of Jesus Christ and the love of God. Join us in praying that each of our students will truly know how much God loves them.

Family News

Christine was able to spend one month in America visiting her children this summer. The plane ticket was a gift from her family and friends in honor of her many years of service at the House of Hope. It was a wonderful trip and will most likely be her last visit to America. We are so thankful for all of her service and love that she has given to the House of Hope over the years.

We are also excited to share that Christina, Rhoda's daughter, is going to be engaged to Waleed, a man from Beit Sahour. Waleed is a member of the Baraka Bible Presbyterian Church. We are very happy for the two of them!

Projects for 2008

We were unable to start the building renovations this summer due to a lack of funds. We are still planning to renovate the boarding section, move the school to a different part of our complex, and expand the offices. This is costly project and we hope to start it in 2008.

Prayer Request

Please join us in prayer:

- Praise God for the volunteers he has provided for the beginning of next year. Pray that he will continue to provide volunteer house parents so that we can better serve our students.
- Pray that we will raise the funds needed for our renovation projects.
- Pray that we will be able to find a new van, so that we will be able to more easily transport the children to and from school.
- Pray that the peace of Jesus Christ will reign in Bethlehem.

For more information and to see photos, please visit the House of Hope website: www.houseofhopemd.org .

From all of us at the House of Hope, we wish you a Very Merry Christmas and pray blessings on your New Year. God Bless!

In His Service,

Rhoda David and the House of Hope Family



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