

May 2017



A Yazidi girl we met last year and we just can't get her eyes out of our hearts...

THE LIAISON

Bringing Hope to Iraqi Refugees

The biggest challenge most Americans face (besides the obvious prepping our grills for summer), is keeping up with Presidential tweets and movie updates. Then there's the media news from overseas. Baffling. Overwhelming.



Refugee camp, N. Iraq

You, like so many Americans we know, probably do care about the refugee crisis in Iraq and Syria, but have found it challenging to respond. Who is effective? What is the best way to help? Who receives the aid? In this month's issue, we're focused on exactly what our relief aid looks like, including firsthand refugee accounts.

Since 2014, many of our Indigenous Ministries family have responded with prayers and generous gifts enabling us to help many. Thank you; together we've helped many thousands of refugees. Unfortunately, the need for relief aid continues to grow; again we appeal to you for help.

UN Secretary General Guterres, recently stated that only 8% of the UN operations in Iraq are funded. Yet these operations meet the needs of more than three (3) million displaced (*read: refugees*) Iraqis. While this is disconcerting news, the underlying unseen event is the opportunity we have as the Body of Christ to help many in their ultimate time of need.

We work directly with the local Church to bring relief aid and the healing message of hope and forgiveness in Christ to refugees. The Church also brings community and fellowship...something that truly becomes a big (continued on page 2)

We're so excited to prepare for the new school year at GBC with the completion of the library building and purchase of new desks for the students (only \$30 each!). See page 4 to join in!

New Tiger Fence Protects Children & Students, Baffles Tigers

India - Thanks to the generous donations of our IM donors and quick action of our construction team, the campus is now completely enclosed by a fence, pictured on the right, and five new solar lights have been installed. We're very grateful to the Lord and to each one who responded. As a result, this has brought a much higher level of security to the students, children and staff. The new school year begins in July. Pray for the staff as they prepare for the students.



Above, the newly completed Tiger Fence

Relief Aid and Hope in Iraq

(continued from page 1) need in the refugee camps later on. What are some of the situations our teams are faced with when they visit refugees and how are we responding to the needs? Here are three families' accounts - each one has fled being 2 1/2 years under ISIS in the last few months:

** A family with mother, 68 (her husband died) and her two adult daughters with their children. One daughter's husband was killed by ISIS, the other daughter's husband left. There are no men in this family for protection; a man living in the same refugee camp has been threatening the women and little girls. Our team has reported this situation to the camp authorities (they are most likely going to be relocated, and the man put on a watch list), helped with food, clothing and counseling.*



This sweet little 3 year old was abducted by ISIS 3 years ago. Pray for her safe return.

**Another family shared that when ISIS came through and displaced them, the father died of cancer in a refugee camp. Shortly after that the mother also died of cancer leaving four children. We have helped with food and clothing; the children have temporary care. Our teams will keep monitoring this situation.*

**We also work with a mother (her husband died) who has been struggling with severe depression because her 3 year old daughter, pictured on the left, was taken by ISIS in 2014. Our team has gotten her counseling and helped with food, clothing and other personal needs. See the next page for more.*

We continue to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the refugees in Iraq and Syria. Here's how your donations are helping:

Food - This is what a typical food basket looks like on the right: dry goods, rice, cleaning supplies, toiletries and oil. This helps the care of a family of 2-4 with basics for about one month.



Clothing - When they hear the lull in gunfire on their street, refugees just run out of their front

door and into a waiting transport bus. They are then taken directly to refugee camps to begin their new existence. *Can you imagine how you would handle this?* Most have only the clothes on their backs, so our teams provide inexpensive clothing and shoes for family members.

Counseling - After assessing the needs, our teams bring in qualified counselors to help refugees. This is where you can pray. Pray for healing, for comfort. Pray that the Scriptures given will be received, and that our pastors will be able to also be an encouragement in the days to come.

Children - Let's not forget that kids are kids. Our packets of aid include small toys, crayons and coloring books for the little ones, and a book or suitable toy for the older ones.

Backpacks & Uniforms - School starts up in September and we are preparing once again to equip refugee kids for school. Each backpack will include pencils, crayons, pens, paper, glue, etc.

Literacy - Beautiful International Women's Ministry is currently helping 100 Yazidi widows in northern Iraq with English literacy, relief aid and counseling (see page 3).

**PLEASE DONATE GENEROUSLY TO THE IRAQ RELIEF FUND ON OUR WEBSITE.
YOUR HELP IS NEEDED MORE THAN EVER BEFORE.**

Helping Widows With English Literacy



Young Yazidi woman,
northern Iraq

Working to help Yazidi widows shape a better and more sustainable future is something we've had in our hearts for a while.

Along with the relief aid our Indigenous Ministries team has given them, we've launched an English literacy and counseling program to give the women better opportunities for jobs and a healthier personal life. The 100 widows we're helping have lost their husbands to ISIS and most have children.



Interested in sponsoring a woman? \$75 provides English classes and counseling to a widow. Thank you for your care and prayers as our team shares hope in Christ with them. We will share updates next month and on Beautiful International Women's Ministry Facebook Page and both websites.

Donate on IndigenousMinistries.org, and select Beautiful International Women's Ministry.

More Refugee Stories and Updates

The flood of families that are streaming out of Mosul are bringing with them horrific accounts of forced conversions to Islam, from their traditional Christian faith. Subsequently, once forced to convert, most have been monitored by ISIS (the Islamic State) to watch their attendance at local mosques.

I sat with a 17 year old boy who, along with his mother, had been captured by the Islamic State in 2014 and taken to Mosul. He was imprisoned several times, beaten repeatedly and forced to put on a suicide vest with a remote detonation device. I encouraged him to find comfort in the Word of God, and he turned to me and said, "Jesus is no longer my god!" This may seem surprising to hear, but when someone has lived under that extreme pressure and in fear for their life, it isn't a unusual reaction.

So what is our response? Exactly what we as a ministry are engaged in; to meet some of the physical needs of their lives as the Lord brings opportunities. I was recently reading in the book of Acts as the Church in Antioch began to care for and bring relief to the Church in Jerusalem in the midst of a famine. The council of Jerusalem recognized that the giving of the Church in Antioch was evidence of the validity of their salvation; and they were the first to give in the midst of their own suffering.

The day this family left Mosul, coalition forces were fighting street to street. When the battle line passed over their house, their home was finally released. Iraqi forces came to their front door, and under the pressure of the exchange of gunfire they were taken to a troop carrier. Now the transformation from refugees in the middle of Islamic State control to a refugee family just outside that control has gone from one nightmare to another, and despair has taken hold. The local Church provided a place for several refugee families to live, but now there is mistrust between them and the background Christians because they changed their religious status.

This is an opportunity for us who are the Western Evangelical Church to reach out with the Love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 25:35 & 36, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me..." (NIV)

This photo, right, is of a girl who, along with her family, was captured. She was six years old at the time and she's nine now and is proudly standing next to the clothes and toy that you've help provide for her. The \$125 that was spent to clothe the whole family has been a big blessing to them. **Thank you for reading this, for praying, and for your caring heart.** - John Cook, CEO





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GBC Library Update



How the students have been studying ...

India - With Grace Bible College's new school year starting in July, the need to complete the library building is pressing. The funds needed to complete the building with paint, roof, fans, lights and student desks:

\$25,200

In March, we asked for \$22,000 for the building and the costs to ship the books from California over to India. We received some funds to cover shipment and some of the building costs, and have added in the costs of the desks to this amount. We don't want to confuse you! *(Note: this amount does not include the library shelves)*



Gloria, left, (Principal Pramod and Grace's daughter) and Dee model the desks that have been selected for the students. They are comfortable, *(yet not so comfy as to induce an ill-timed snooze)* yet sturdy, and we felt the desk part gives plenty of space for books and note taking...and there's a nice shelf beneath for books.



Let's help get these students ready for the new 2017-2018 school year, which begins the first week of July, by getting the building completed and desks purchased! Please donate towards this need in the "Donate" button on our website and choose "GBC Building Fund."

One desk = \$30

That's 10 people @ \$1000, 15 giving \$500, 20 @ \$250, 20 @ \$60 and 50 @\$30

Where can you help? Every little bit really helps; thank you!

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 15455 Gleneagle Dr, Ste. 130, Colorado Springs, CO 80921
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