



peacemaker mediators



Peacemaker e-News July 2017

It is a delight to write and thank you for being part of the *Peacemaker Team* and update you on our recent activities.

Reflecting on the Storms of Life



There is deep inside each one of us a subconscious awareness that life is precarious. It is implicit when we kiss the children goodbye on their way to school and hear ourselves say "Take care" or to an adult friend, "Hope you keep well." The fact is, disease can strike, accidents do happen, and unforeseen events interrupt our carefully planned and manicured lives.

As we watch the news on TV or read the papers we can easily convince ourselves that bad things only happen to other people. If the big issues in life have become the length of the grass on our golf course or which supermarket stocks our favourite wine, we are becoming immune, in danger of taking life itself

for granted. And we forget to thank God for the daily blessedness of life - for sunrises and sunsets, for spring rains and autumn mists, and loved ones, for all he has blessed us with, for life itself.

Having recently retired as a parish priest after 20 years in Virginia Water, found and rennovated a new home in Southampton, taken out a mortgage and launched the charity, Peacemaker Mediators, I thought I would complete the [Holmes and Rahe stress scale survey](#). It was a bad idea. Having ticked all

the boxes truthfully, it gave me a score of 339. Apparently, I now have a "high or very high risk of becoming ill in the near future". Thankfully, today I have my new gym induction session... [Read more here](#)

Peacemaker Projects Update

Promoting Religious Harmony in Morocco

In May I delivered a paper at a conference at the University of Oujda in Morocco, on defending the human rights of Palestinian children held in Israeli detention. My presentation was based on testimonies gathered from families living near Bethlehem together with the observations and recommendations of [UNICEF](#) and [Defence of Children International](#).

The visit also included opportunities to preach in the [Anglican churches](#) in Rabat and Casablanca on the [Parable of the Good Samaritan](#). Read the text [here](#). Read more about the project [here](#).



Please pray for Canon Medhat Sabry at St John the Baptist church in Casablanca and his strategic ministry, especially among the expat community in Morocco. Pray also that the leadership the king, political and religious leaders in Morocco have shown in promoting religious tolerance through the [Marrakesh Declaration](#). Pray that this respect for religious minorities would spread to other countries in North Africa. Morocco has one of the most enlightened approaches to religious harmony in the Middle East. The [Declaration](#) concludes: [We] "AFFIRM that it is unconscionable to employ religion for the purpose of aggressing upon the rights of religious minorities in Muslim countries." Pray that the words are translated into action.

Launch of the Arabic Christianity Explored



The launch of the [Arabic Christianity Explored](#) (both adult and youth versions) took place in Cairo and Beirut in June. Nate Locke (who produced the SOUL CE youth edition) and I provided the training. Approximately 300 Egyptian, Lebanese, Sudanese, Druze and Bedouin Christian leaders were introduced to the course.

In Egypt, the event took place at a Christian centre near Alexandria. In Beirut, the event was hosted by the [Arab Baptist Theological Seminary](#) in conjunction with the [Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development](#) (LSESD).

Photos of the two conferences are accessible here: [Cairo](#) and [Beirut](#).

[Christianity Explored](#) is based entirely on the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of Mark answers three questions addressed in the course – Who is Jesus? Why did Jesus come? How can I follow Jesus? If you would like Stephen to help introduce the course to your church or community [get in touch](#).

We also met with staff of the [Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development](#) (LSESD) who introduced us to their work, training pastors from across the Middle East and North Africa, as well as among Syrian refugees in Lebanon. We visited a new church in the Bekaa Valley, serving between 2,000 and 3,000 Syrian refugees. With limited resources, they provide education for children, health care and PTSD support.



Please pray that those who attended the Christianity Explored launch in Cairo and Beirut will help equip Christians not just in Egypt and Lebanon but throughout the Middle East to share their faith, build up their churches and equip a new generation of leaders. Pray also for the vital ministry among Iraqi, Syrian and Palestinian refugees especially in Lebanon and Jordan, as well as those internally displaced.



Fasting for Justice

During Ramadan, I gave a biblical presentation on Fasting for Justice at the Idara-e-Jaafariya, in Tooting, South London, alongside a Jewish rabbi and Muslim sheikh. The aim of the event was to promote religious understanding and harmony among the three Abrahamic faiths. You can read my presentation [here](#)

Please pray for greater cooperation among Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders to promote religious harmony and counter religious extremism and intolerance.

Forthcoming Engagements

God-willing I will be visiting a country in the Middle East in August to give a presentation on the biblical relationship between Israel and the Church, as well as preach in a local church.

In September, I have been invited to speak at a [Sabeel-Kairos Nederland](#) conference and Will be visiting Rwanda to help equip pastors from Burundi, Rwanda and the DRC to use the [Christianity Explored](#) course.



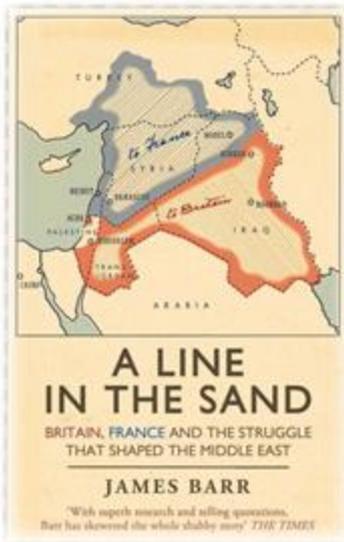
You can keep up to date with the latest Peacemaker news on [Facebook](#) and our [website](#).

Peacemaker Mediators is committed to the [Five Marks of Mission](#).

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- To respond to human need by loving service
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

We seek to be catalysts for peacemaking, especially where minorities are persecuted, where justice is denied, human rights are suppressed or reconciliation is needed. If you would like me to preach or speak at an event that is consistent with one or more of these priorities, please let [me know](#).

Summer Reading



Colin Chapman has kindly allowed me to publish a summary he has written of James Barr's excellent book, "A Line in the Sand", subtitled, "Britain, France and the Struggle that Shaped the Middle East".

"This book seeks to explain how many of the problems of the Middle East in the last century can be traced back to the colonial ambitions of Britain and France and in particular to the 'venomous rivalry' between them in their struggle for mastery of the region. It was this rivalry which lay behind the Sykes-Picot agreement, the Balfour Declaration, the creation by Britain of the kingdoms in Iraq and Transjordan, Britain's support for the independence of Syria and Lebanon, and French support for the Jewish underground which was working against the British in Palestine in 1948."

You can read Colin's summary [here](#).

Thank you

Thank you for your prayers and your financial support.

Peacemakers is a faith ministry. By the grace of God, we are entirely dependent on your prayers, advocacy and financial support. If you wish to contribute [see here](#)

Please feel free to share this e-News with others who may also like to join the Peacemaker Team.





stephen@peacemakers.ngo
<https://peacemakers.ngo>
+44 (0)7970 789549

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Registered Charity No. 1171163
Registered Company No. 10033523