

# BRIDGES FOR PEACE

## 2015 YEAR-END SUMMARY REPORT

**2015 WAS A SIGNIFICANT YEAR.** We witnessed signs in the heavens (blood moons) on Jewish holidays; the end of the *shmitah* year; an increase in anti-Semitism, and subsequently an increase in *aliyah* (immigration to Israel). In September we experienced an increase of terror activity. We recognize that we are living at a time when God is speaking and fulfilling ancient biblical prophecies. At the same time the opposition has flared requiring us to trust in God for protection and discernment.

### OPERATION EZRA OUTREACH

#### Feed a Child

Feed a Child Program currently meets the needs of 390 children (210 in Beit Shemesh, 80 in Karmiel, 50 in Jerusalem and 50 in Kiryat Ekron) in ten schools. The program provides a hot meal every school day, textbooks, backpack, school supplies and participation in all school outings, events and after school programs. In 2015 our major focus was to bring awareness of Bridges for Peace to the schools and parents as well as to better connect donors and recipients. We have seen many positive results. What joy for children to meet their donors, and what joy for donors to see the fruit of their efforts!

#### Adoption Program

The Adoption Program provides a much-needed safety net for the new immigrants who are struggling to become fluent in Hebrew and established in Israel. Each month Bridges for Peace assisted an average of 178 needy immigrant families—88 in Karmiel, 50 in Jerusalem as well as 40 lone students.

A major focus in 2015 was to better connect donors and recipients, connecting hearts. One of our previous adoption families blessed us with cake and a Hebrew spoken blessing, thanking us for the help they received. Despite the currency rate changes, we thank God that donor support has gone up!

#### Cheer Baskets

We also gave out 988 cheer baskets to children and families on our programs, as well as 674 special baskets to Victims of War who were in the hospital. The BFP assistance centers are visible evidence to the Jewish people of the love that Christians around the world have for them.

#### Food Banks

Our food banks in Jerusalem and Karmiel purchased and distributed a total of 1,220,256 pounds (554,662 kg) of food, feeding an average of 26,171 people per month. Direct aid was given to 18 communities through our Adopt an Israeli Town Program, and we assisted 65 organizations that distribute food to the needy in communities all over Israel, as well as six Christian Arab organizations.

#### Karmiel Food Storage Facility

In 2015, between the two assistance centers and the bulk storage facility, we had an average of 318.346 US tons (289.405 metric tons) of food on hand at any given time. Of that amount, 246.775 US tons (224.341 metric tons) were specifically designated as bulk storage, kept in readiness for times of crisis—enough to supply five months of food for the 26,171 people to whom we are committed. Careful attention is taken to rotate the food so that our bulk stores do not reach an expiration date.

#### Immigrant Welcome Gifts

Bridges for Peace distributed 1,515 blankets, 817 kitchen gifts, and 1,168 Bibles welcoming new immigrant families to Israel. We also blessed children from the Feed a Child, Adoption, and Adopt a Town programs with 2,705 pencil cases and 692 backpacks.

#### Home Repair

Our team of home repair experts renovated 41 homes, bringing the overall total since the program's beginning to 1,062. Volunteers who work in Home Repair have a unique opportunity to bless the Jewish people. For example, a 95-year-old Ethiopian woman who was still cooking for her family in her rundown apartment with broken windows now enjoys a fixed and renovated home.

#### Project Rescue

Project Rescue helped 5,009 Jewish people immigrate to Israel in 2015—724 more than in 2014. This brings the total number of Jewish people we have helped “rescue” to 54,249. Jewish families who immigrate often make difficult choices when they leave their familiar surroundings to come to Israel. Many of those helped during 2015 came from war-torn eastern Ukraine, making the risky journey through dangerous checkpoints and fighting.

#### Project Tikvah (Hope)

We sent US \$179,200 to western Ukraine and Siberia to support soup kitchens and provide heaters, medicine, clothing and other needs for destitute Jewish people who cannot immigrate.



## Publications

The bimonthly *Dispatch* was distributed to 18,000 subscribers and the monthly *Israel Teaching Letter* to 22,000 subscribers. Our weekly Israel Prayer Update was emailed to approximately 18,000 subscribers. In March we published a Special Edition of the *Dispatch* that can be used as a resource to show the mission and outreaches of Bridges for Peace. In addition, we published our seventh calendar.

## Web

Once again the Bridges for Peace website showed a substantial increase in the number of users and page views when compared with the previous year. In 2015 there were 325,514 users (an increase of 27.7% over 2014) and 852,235 page views (an increase of 18.6%). We spent a good part of the year developing a “new look” in our website which will be launched in the spring of 2016.

## Facebook

Social media has a global reach and impact that print material cannot even come close to attaining. In the four years since its introduction, our BFP Facebook page has grown to an astonishing 25,361 members. In fact, more than 15,000 new members were added in the last six months of 2014! The goal is to encourage viewers to become lovers and supporters of Israel; familiar and involved with the work of Bridges for Peace. God is blessing this outreach as the page has been receiving comments and private messages from people who promise to pray and speak up for Israel as well as support Bridges for Peace.

## Video

The BFP Video Department played an active role in 2015, producing videos and photographs that enabled us to “tell the story” of Bridges for Peace and its role in supporting Israel and building relationships. Visitors to our website could view the video footage that showed the city of Jerusalem on high alert during the last three months of the year. A wide variety of events were photographed, resulting in quality pictures to be used in our print publications.

## Jerusalem News Bureau

Our news staff, based here in Jerusalem, wrote a significant portion of the articles we posted on our website, bringing local insight and on-the-ground intensity to our reports.

## Group and Guest Relations

One of the ways Bridges for Peace reaches out to visitors is by giving them a tour of our facilities or even the opportunity to do a community service project. In addition, some groups request a special Land of the Bible dinner which includes a reenactment of life in the first-century. In 2015 we hosted 83 groups (643 people) who toured our facilities and/or participated in a community service event and hosted three Land of the Bible dinners with 70 guests.

## Zealous8:2

In 2015, the Zealous “Call to Zion” tour provided 18 young adults with a 12-day illuminating experience of Israel. These young adults are returning to their home countries as strong advocates for Israel. Zealous continues to expand its influence in social networking. Facebook has moved from 6,146 “likes” in January 2015 to 10,895 likes a year later. Also, Instagram and Twitter went from being completely inactive to 280 Instagram followers and 70 Twitter followers.



The inaugural year of the “Zealous Israel Project” kicked off with 10 participants arriving from the U.S.A., Canada, Japan and Australia. Each team member has brought a fresh excitement and energy into the departments where they are assigned. In addition, their experience with Bridges for Peace is heightened by the discipleship and volunteer component, which includes community and spiritual growth through weekly meetings, Scripture memory, book studies, and monthly excursions.

## Education around the World

The year 2015 was a busy one for our national offices. South Africa continued toward its goal of reaching pastors through Israel Briefings and Foundation Seminars. Australia, New Zealand and Japan broke new ground with special programs, church meetings and seminars, and visitors from BFP International, as did the United States, Canada and the UK. Korea continued to translate our BFP educational resources, making them available to ever increasing numbers of Korean Christians. Using radio, television, print media, the internet, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, the worldwide BFP team left no stone unturned in its quest to bring the message of God’s love for Israel displayed through the projects of Bridges for Peace to Christians the world over.

## Staff

As of the end of the year, we had 52 volunteers from nine different countries serving in Israel, in addition to eight paid Israeli staff. An average of six volunteers worked in Karmiel. God has graciously called our volunteers into service for periods of time from two days to over five years. We are Christians from the nations serving His people in the Land of Israel.

## Relationship-building Efforts

Speakers from Bridges for Peace had many opportunities to share from the Word, and our experience throughout the year. International leadership went on ministry trips to Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, South Korea, Canada and the United States. We found Christians eager to hear the reports from Israel.

A highlight of the year was the introduction of our Zealous Israel Project, with 10 young adults joining us for a year of service, discipleship and discovery. They are ten special people that the Lord has brought to Israel. We pray that He will meet with each of them in a special way that will influence the rest of their lives.

Our relationships with the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus, Israel Allies Foundation, Shavei Israel and the Center for Jewish Christian Dialogue and Cooperation strengthened in 2015.

During the Hebrew months of *Elul* and *Tishri* (Aug-Sept), we had a special 40 days of repentance. Many around the world joined us

in this special time. Regardless of the actions of our national leaders, God calls us, as the Church, “a holy nation,” (1 Peter 2:9). Each of us spent time asking God to make us holy. My prayer for the Bridges for Peace family worldwide is that we all will surrender totally to the work of the Lord in our hearts, lives, families, churches and communities. Love God, love others and live as a Holy Nation!

Blessings from Jerusalem  
Rebecca J. Brimmer  
International President and CEO