

# ARAB VISION

FIFTEEN YEARS ANNIVERSARY

Issue 23, December 2012

## True Joy . . .

Not only for Christmas, but all the year through, the joy that you give to others, is the joy that comes back to you - John Greenleaf Whittier.

Did you ever stop to consider what 'joy' really is? More than giving presents or hosting festive family celebrations, real joy is the opportunity we have to share with people we love; the substance of what they share back with us in return.

This is the joy Arab Vision experiences every day, sharing the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ with Arabs who desperately want to please and honor God - but who do not understand Christ's role in that process.

Our joy is sharing God's unfailing love with all Arabs in this unstable region, enabling those who are vulnerable to violence and persecution to experience His unconditional acceptance and know His peace in time of uncertainty about the future.

We hope you will share the joy we feel by reading about programmes that bring thousands of Arabs each year into an enduring relationship with Christ. While we face uncertainty, share mounting hardships, and are threatened with persecution like other Arabs, our joy is knowing that we will one day meet in heaven tens of thousands of souls who are there because you share in our joy during this lifetime.

This holiday season, please pray for Arab Vision and its ministry in the Arab World. As we write this, there is a (temporary?) cease-fire between Gaza and Israel, has president Morsi of Egypt given himself almost unlimited power, and is the country of Syria still in the middle of violence and death.

Also, please consider your financial support; may we ask you to send a special Christmas gift?

May God bless and keep you,

Abu Karim *Abu Karim*

International Director Arab Vision

## What in the world is happening with Islam?

Secularist dictators in the Arab World have for decades suppressed radical Islamic movements; they favoured a form of Islam that upheld their empires and that supported all political and economic measures. In countries like Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia and Syria those days are over. Radical Muslims are coming out of the woodwork, and many Arabs are scared, especially the Christians.



We always knew that the Muslim Brotherhood, founded in the 1930s by Hassan al-Banna, is holding sway over the minds of many Arabs. We never realized how strong the much more radical Salafi mindset is. The difference between the two styles of radical Islam is not clear-cut, but the two movements do represent different theological and social views.

The major practical difference between the groups is that the Muslim Brotherhood is more prone to work with the existent political systems, while the Salafi's are more easily prepared to use force for reaching their goals. The goals of both movements do not sound very different, as both want the implementation of Islamic law. But in many respects they disagree about what this means.

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## Arab Vision gives a voice to Arab women

During the past 15 years, Arab Vision has paid much attention to the role of women in the Arab World. We have produced TV programmes against female circumcision and other violence against women, both in public and at home.

We also make programmes packed with testimonies of Christian women from all over the Arab world. We have received tens of thousands of reactions from women (and men) after those programmes were broadcast. Our follow up teams have been relating to many of those women throughout the years, to help them with their questions and problems.

We are very concerned about the identity and rights of women in the Arab World. Our (male!) producer says this: "In most Arab societies women are still being treated as second rate citizens and the Arab Spring does not seem to make the situation better. Often girls do not go to school, they are forced to marry young, they are being circumcised. Violence against women is committed on a large scale. And many women are so used to this, they think it is normal. They do not realize that it is more normal that they should be treated as valuable, equally worthy human beings."

This is why Arab Vision continues to produce TV programmes with and for women. In the fight against circumcision, another documentary will be produced with the support of EO, a Dutch national evangelical broadcasting company. With support from the same organization we are about to start another series, to strengthen the position of women in rural areas in the Arab World.



## Testimony: A brave Arab woman

In a series of testimonies of Arab women we followed Samira, a young woman who had been raped when she was a little girl. Because of that experience she has a completely distorted idea about sexuality. When she grew up, she had several partners and had two children outside her marriage. When she became a believer, her life changed completely. She shared her story on screen, which is very brave in the Arab World with so many taboos about sexuality.

Some time after her story had been broadcast, she called our producer and told him that the priest of her local Coptic Orthodox church had seen her on TV, and had invited her to show the video to a group of young women with similar experiences in life, and to share



her testimony with them. Samira had hesitated about telling her story on TV, but now she was so excited as she saw she could be used by God to help other girls and women.

It is uncommon that a Coptic priest organizes meetings like this, giving the opportunity to women to share openly, and support each other in their needs. For Samira it was immensely encouraging to see that many of these girls left the meeting with new hope and a deeper faith in their God 'for whom nothing is impossible'.

Our own producer was also invited to the same group to share about his passion for his work; and he was excited to see and hear how our TV programmes have such a direct and deep impact in people's lives. As we use mass media to share the love and grace of Jesus Christ, we not always realize how many lives are touched by the message of our programmes.

## Producing now

### *TV Programmes for Libya, Algeria and Tunisia*

The scripts for a 13-part series about the roots of Christianity in North Africa are almost written. To give you some taste for what these programmes will offer: 'The oldest proof of the existence of a church in Carthage (Tunisia) is from 180AD. The historical proof is in fact the transcript of how the authorities killed 12 Christians for their faith. These Christians refused to sacrifice herbs on the altar for the Emperor. All people had to do this, or otherwise they could be killed. Actually, not all people had to do this: Jews were exempt from worshipping the Emperor. Initially, Christians were seen as a Jewish sect, but they soon lost this advantage. The first signs of a change came under Emperor Nero; in order to suppress rumours that he had lit the fire that destroyed Rome, he accused Christians of being responsible.'

We will shoot our programmes on location in Libya and Tunisia, as soon as we have the necessary funds to film and edit all programmes. Please, pray with us that we will soon receive the money needed to make this beautiful series available for Arabic TV stations by the end of 2013.

We have also finished the scripts for a series about the Parables of Jesus in the Kabyle language, spoken in Algeria. These programmes will also be produced on location in the mountains of Algeria. The programmes will be a mixture of drama and teaching; it will be a challenge to film all this on location. For the producer, the presenters and the actors of these programmes this is quite an adventure. Pray, please, for their preparations and a safe production in February 2013.



**“I am a Muslim - God brought light into my life and I want to read the bible. Accidentally I watched your TV programme and since then I watch Christian TV channels all the time. I need your prayers!”**

**Iraqi man.**

**“In the official documents I am a Muslim, but I accepted Jesus 10 years ago and I need to have new official papers, like an ID”**

**Male from Egypt**

***If you are interested in receiving the full project proposal for this project, please contact us at [contact@arabvision.org](mailto:contact@arabvision.org)***

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Most Muslims in the Arab World disagree with either group, and hold on to a form of Islam that is much more about personal piety than about legislation. The most well known of those are Sufi Muslims, whose religious jargon is much more about the heart and a relationship with God, than about politics and Islamic law.

The days are sombre for this majority of middle-of-the road Muslims. Islam's image in the Arab World is increasingly rigid and political, with very little time for people of different viewpoints. Obviously, Christians in the Middle East suffer mostly from this. Christians have been escaping from Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003; they are escaping from Syria in substantial numbers; in Egypt the Copts are losing evermore members through emigration.

An increasing number of Muslims in the Arab World is so thoroughly fed up by the impact of religion in their societies that they give up on faith in Islam altogether. Most of those turn into secularized Arabs, with no belief in God. Small numbers also turn to Jesus Christ.

In this complex world, Arab Vision produces its TV programmes. Our TV producers see Muslims coming to faith in Jesus Christ; they also see Christians encouraged to not give up, but to stand strong to present the Gospel in the midst of this increasingly hostile environment of the Arab World.

### *Please pray for the viewers of our programmes*

We received this through the follow up team of one of the channels who broadcast our programmes for North Africa: 'we receive many calls from people requesting prayer for different situations, like all sorts of family issues, prayer requests related to addiction (to alcohol), wives abused by their husbands, and women who have become Christian believers but cannot attend church; most of them use the telephone to ask for prayer and a counseling. Please pray for the many viewers who seek help and encouragement!

### **Hot Topics: answering hard questions of Muslims** *A TV series for the Kurds in the Sourani language*

Again our producer travelled with a team to Northern Iraq for making Christian TV programmes for the Kurds in their major language, Sourani.

The pastor with whom we made these programmes, described the situation in Kurdistan: 'The Kurdish Christians are like babies. Often they have come from a radical Islamic background. Slowly more and more come to faith in Jesus Christ. They have so many questions about the faith. These young believers need much time and attention.'

Filming in this Kurdish environment is not easy. As soon as we enter with our professional TV equipment, we are stopped and asked what we are doing. Another challenge are the technical circumstances. There are many power cuts so we have to often work with generators, which leads to disturbances of sounds and light.

But the most recent trip was a great encouragement as well. Here we were, in the midst of an adventure to help the Kingdom of God grow. What a privilege! We were blessed by the enthusiasm of the speakers, even though we do not understand their Sourani. Hot issues like, 'Has the Bible been changed', 'How could Jesus die on a cross', 'How could God become man', are discussed in the programmes and answered from the Bible.



### New Productions

We are glad to have a number of new productions lining up. The first new series is for children. We produce 365 bible stories, illustrated with pictures and read from a children's bible. The biblical notion of impressing the word of God on our children is being implemented in these programmes. These short programmes will be broadcast by many channels. Please pray for these programmes and for the production process.

Arab Vision is also training young people in raising their voices in matters of freedom of press, freedom of religion and related subjects. We will use the modern media to train these potential future leaders to develop into people who take responsibility for a society in which all people have the same rights and where all people are respected for who they are, irrespective of their religious and political views.



***If you want to pray regularly for the Arab world and the ministry of Arab Vision, please sign up for our bi-weekly email prayer letter. Fill out the form on our website  
[www.arabvision.org](http://www.arabvision.org).***

## Coptic Orthodox Church has new Pope

The Coptic Orthodox Church has a new Pope, Tawadros (Theodore) II. In a long ceremony on 19 November he was enthroned as the 118th Pope of the Coptic Church, to lead the millions of Copts inside and outside Egypt. For the Copts it was a great relief to have a church leader again. Many felt orphaned after the death of the last, very old Shenouda III.



This last Pope was so old that for the past years he did not give his church much guidance. Pope Tawadros is 60, and he will more energetically work at the most pressing issues. Much attention is of course given to his attitude toward President Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood and his radical Islamist government. Pope Tawadros will be tougher than his predecessor in

regard to defending the rights of the Christians in Islamic Egypt. A first sign of this is that shortly after Tawadros was elected as the new Pope, the Coptic Orthodox Church withdrew from the committee that is writing a new Constitution for Egypt. This committee consists mainly of Islamic radicals who like to make Egypt an Islamic State. Tawadros II does not like to give the impression that he is part of this effort and spoke strongly against such a constitution. For his church it would lead to very little space in Egyptian society.

Less attention in the Western media is given to the challenges for Pope Tawadros inside his own church. The Coptic Church is archconservative; many well-educated young people are leaving the church. Tawadros may be able to open the windows of the church for a fresh evangelical wind, so that less (young) people leave the church.

### Arab Vision UK established!

We are most happy to announce the establishment of our new support office in the United Kingdom. Trustees of the board are Mr. Tanas Alqassis, Mr. Ian Sutherland and Rev. Tony Mason. Formal registration with the Charities Commission is in progress and should be completed in the early part of 2013. Once registration is complete, the Trustees will be available to visit churches and interested groups and give a first-hand account of Arab Vision's work in the Middle East and North Africa. This is a huge responsibility and privilege but we look forward to meeting and sharing with you in the near future. Contact us at: [isutherland@arabvision.org](mailto:isutherland@arabvision.org).

For donations, we are grateful for Interserve UK to continue receiving them for us until we have registered Arab Vision UK and opened a bank account in the UK.

## CONTACT & FINANCE INFO

**Arab Vision Trust Fund**  
PO Box 21258  
1505 Nicosia, Cyprus  
E-mail: [contact@arabvision.org](mailto:contact@arabvision.org)  
Website: [www.arabvision.org](http://www.arabvision.org)

**In the USA**, checks can be sent directly to our American office. Arab Vision Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization.

Arab Vision, Inc.  
P.O. Box 110354  
Dallas TX 75011

You may also donate by paying through our website [www.arabvision.org](http://www.arabvision.org). This is a secure payment facility.

**In Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand**, cheques can be sent to Interserve with a cover letter indicating that the money is meant for Arab Vision.

Interserve	Interserve
PO Box 231	10 Huntingdale Blvd
Bayswater	Scarborough, ON
Victoria 3153	M1W 2S5
AUSTRALIA	CANADA

Interserve	Interserve
PO Box 10244	5/6 Walker Avenue
Auckland 1030	Wolverton Mill
NEW ZEALAND	Milton Keynes, MK12 5TW
	UNITED KINGDOM

## Now on TV...

### **Truth about my Faith**

Where? Sat7 on Nile Sat, 7' west, TXP8, freq 11355 vertical  
When? Tuesday 17:30, Thursday 3:45 and 21:45 h.

### **Children's Rights**

Where? Sat7 on Nile Sat, 7' west, TXP8, freq 11355 vertical  
When? Monday 11:45 h.

### **Women's Rights**

Where? Sat7 on Nile Sat, 7' west, TXP8, freq 11355 vertical  
When? Tuesday 17:30, Thursday 10:00 and 19:00 h.

### **Women's Testimonies**

Where? Miracle Channel on Hot Bird, 13' east, freq 10949  
When? Sunday 06:00 and 18:00, Thursday 12:10 h.

### **Kurdish programmes**

Where? Life TV (Al Hayat) on Hot Bird, 13' east, freq 11411 horizontal  
When? Monday 20:00, Tuesday 14:00 and Thursday 02:00 h.

### **Bible Study programmes**

Where? Malakoot on Hot Bird, 13' east, Freq 11470 vertical  
When? Thursday 16:30 and Saturday 16:00 h.

### **Pastoral programmes for Women**

Where? Healing Channel on Hot Bird, 13' east, freq 11566 horizontal  
When? Monday 04:00 and Sunday 20:00 h.

### **Music Clips and Music Concert**

Where? Kithara TV, [www.tikilive.com/show/kithara](http://www.tikilive.com/show/kithara) TV

### **Raising Children based on biblical principles**

Where? Karma TV on Nile Sat AB7, Freq 10727 horizontal  
When? Monday 9:30 and 17:30, Tuesday 01:00 h.

### **And many more.....**

**ARAB  
VISION**

*Arab Christians proclaiming the Gospel on TV in the Arab World*