



COMFORT, COMFORT
MY PEOPLE



News from the ICEJ Social Assistance Program

August 2005



"Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness." **Lamentations 3:22-24**

From the desk of SAP...

PRESSING NEEDS IN TROUBLED TIMES

During August the Jewish people enter a period of three weeks of mourning which culminates as a day of fasting on the 9th of the Hebrew month of Av - known as Tisha B'Av. On this day the book of Lamentations is read to remember the destruction of both temples and many other calamities that have happened to the Jewish people.



Dove at the Western Wall. Tisha B'Av recalls the hope of redemption even in the midst of trouble. (Photo: S. Burton)

Yet, the fast is not just an expression of the sorrow of destruction and exile, but also an affirmation of God's faithfulness and the hope of His promised Redemption. Please pray that the Social Assistance Program receives urgently needed funds to express Christian love and concern in a tangible way to the people of Israel - enabling us to meet their needs in these troubled times.

In this issue...

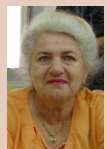


STANDING IN THE GAP IN GAZA - Reaching out for 25 years to both Arab and Jew

Over the years, the ICEJ has stood with the people of Gaza - both Arab and Jew- fulfilling our mandate to show God's love and compassion to all people in every corner of this land. As Israel prepares to evacuate homes and families in all 21 Gaza Strip settlements, we remember the many ways we have been privileged to reach out to these precious people and their Palestinian neighbors in the midst of great hardship and sacrifice. [Read More](#)

NETANYA'S NEW ARRIVALS - A safe haven for Israel's coastal poor

In addition to coping with a series of devastating terrorist attacks, a tourist slump and an economic downturn, the Mediterranean coastal town of Netanya, has had to absorb 45,000 new immigrants in the past decade, 28,000 of them elderly. For many new arrivals life on the coast is lived below the poverty line. [Read More](#)



ROSH HASHANA APPEAL

Remember Israel's poor this coming Rosh Hashana (Jewish New Year)

For only \$50 you can provide a family with food to celebrate this Biblical festival with dignity.

Visit www.icej.org to make a Secure Online Donation - Clearly mark all Gifts for SAP
For more information email sapdept@icej.org

SAP and Gaza

STANDING IN THE GAP IN GAZA

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GAZA CITY SURGERY

Before 2000 when the outbreak of the *intifada* closed the doors to many joint Israeli-Palestinian projects in Gaza, the ICEJ was privileged to facilitate medical aid to needy Palestinians. Left: Specialist Surgeon, Dr. Grace Warren (center) -an Australian Christian and longtime friend of the ICEJ - operates with local doctors on a Palestinian patient in Gaza City in 1998.

PLAYGROUND IN THE SAND

Vacant lots of sand were part of the landscape in the early days of the developing Jewish town of Neve Dekalim, the pioneer community at the heart of the Gush Katif settlement bloc. While parents worked hard to produce fruit from unforgiving soil, the children had little escape of their own. SAP reached out in our own way to make the desert bloom and built a playground.



CHILDREN UNDER FIRE

Rocket and mortar attacks have become part of life for communities inside and close by the Gaza Strip. After one school classroom was hit, SAP stepped in to provide new equipment - enabling suspended cooking classes to begin again. In another kindergarten young children were forced by the army to stay in a safe room for long periods at a time. SAP donated therapeutic gym equipment, TVs and DVDs to help teachers keep little ones calm.

GAZA YOUTH SKILLS

In 2002 an SAP-funded summer camp enabled local teenagers to earn money occupying younger children creatively throughout the long holiday months. Not only did the youth acquire valuable leadership skills, but the organizers were so impressed at the results, they have decided to repeat the project each year since.

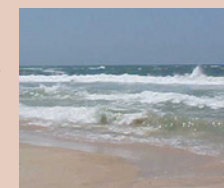


On the Road with SAP

NETANYA'S NEW ARRIVALS

A safe haven for Israel's coastal poor

In addition to coping with a series of devastating terrorist attacks, a tourist slump and the ensuing economic downturn, the Mediterranean coastal town of Netanya has had to absorb 45,000 new immigrants in the past decade, 28,000 of them elderly.



For many of Netanya's new arrivals life on the coast is lived well below the poverty line. But the recent opening of a Day Care Center in one of the town's poorest neighborhoods has provided pensioners with a safe haven. Here they are given a meal - for most their only daily meal - enjoy friendship, take literacy classes, play games, sing songs, do needlepoint and artwork. Unable to afford the bus fare, some walk a long distance to attend.



SAP staff had the pleasure visiting the Center and giving a gift on behalf of the ICEJ's Finnish Branch, which paid for essential kitchen equipment and ongoing food supplies.

While watching members relax in the club, Colin Keye - the man in charge of Netanya's Social Services provision for the elderly- began to thank us on behalf of those Christians who gave. It was hard to put into words, he said, exactly what a place like this can mean for those who have no other means of support.

Lending a Hand with SAP



HARD GRAFT

Scores of young people from a dozen different nations have spent time with SAP this summer lending a practical hand to Israelis in need. Visiting the land as part of the ICEJ's [Grafted](http://www.grafted.org) young adults program - these remarkable college-age men and women have left an indelible impression on organizations with which SAP has worked for many years; demonstrating tough love through hard work in the height of the summer heat. *To learn more go to: www.grafted.org*

SAP fulfills its calling to comfort God's people according to Isaiah 40:1

by contributing to the needs of every sector of Israeli society in every part of the country on behalf of Christians worldwide.

To donate or discover more write to sapdept@icej.org.

The ICEJ stands at the forefront of a growing mainstream movement of Christians worldwide that supports Israel based on Biblical principles and promises. To find out more go to www.icej.org



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