

## **LEBANON:** praying light into darkness

The previous two weeks we prayed for Iran and Israel. This week we continue the journey of prayer by calling “light into darkness” as we focus on one of the most strategic, wounded and yet resilient nations of the Middle East: **LEBANON**.

*Print out the information below, and at any time of day, place the map of Lebanon before you, light a candle, and hold Lebanon before God. Let the flame remind you that Christ’s light still shines in the midst of fear and fire.*

### **INFORMATION**

Lebanon lies just north of Israel and is home to a relatively small population of about 5.8 million people—roughly the same as the U.S. state of Colorado. Despite its size, Lebanon has a strikingly young population, with a median age of around 29, and nearly half of its citizens under 35.

It is also one of the most religiously diverse countries in the Middle East. Per capita, Lebanon has the largest Christian population in the Arab world (about 33.7%). Its Muslim population is almost evenly divided between Sunni Muslims (30.6%) and Shia Muslims (30.5%). Alongside these major communities, Lebanon is also home to a small but visibly influential Druze minority (5.2%).

Lebanon is home to 18 officially recognized religious groups, making it one of the most pluralistic societies in the region. There are 26 people groups in Lebanon of which 12 are still regarded as unreached with the Gospel of Christ. 52% of Lebanon’s population live in these 12 unreached groups

In recent years, Lebanon has endured devastating crises: the 2019 economic implosion, the 2020 Beirut port explosion, COVID19, and ongoing cross-border violence. Entire communities have been displaced, thousands have been injured or killed, and the nation’s infrastructure continues to crumble under strain. The wounds—physical, emotional, and societal—run deep.

The recent war between Israel and Iran has seen a further escalation in deaths and displacements. Israel dropped over 7,000 bombs and missiles on Lebanon in 34 days. Some villages are now uninhabitable. 99,000 homes were damaged in earlier rounds of conflict. In the past several weeks of the escalating Israel–Lebanon war, over 1,500 people have been killed, 4,700 injured, and 1.2 million people displaced inside Lebanon.

On Wednesday 8 April 2026, it took Israel only 10 minutes to carry out one of the most deadliest and worst mass-killings in Lebanon since the end of the country’s civil war in 1990. Israel bombed more than 100 targets across Lebanon in just 10 minutes, killing more than 300 people and wounding 1,165. The death toll, which was expected to rise as more bodies were found, was higher than Beirut’s 2020 port explosion – one of the largest non-nuclear explosions in human history.

And yet, Lebanon remains a nation of profound spiritual significance. Per capita, Lebanon is home to the **MOST CHRISTIANS** in the Arab World. It is the only country in the Middle East with a **CHRISTIAN PRESIDENT**. Lebanon is also, per capita, home to the **MOST REFUGEES** in the world. 1 in 4 people in Lebanon is a refugee

The convergence of displacement, suffering, uncertainty and an openness to share the gospel of hope and peace makes Lebanon one of the most strategic nations in the region. Many Lebanese believers testify to renewed faith, deeper unity, and a growing openness to the gospel among their neighbours.

This is the Lebanon we hold before God: diverse, wounded, spiritually restless, strategically placed, and profoundly loved by God.

### **INSPIRATION**

In the midst of ongoing attacks, the sounds of fighter jets and the explosions of bombs, stands the Nexus Centre, a Christian Centre that serves as a light amongst Syrian refugees living in the Beqaa valley - a light that will not be extinguished. This is an extract from their recent newsletter:

While 900 schools are closed, we remain open. This is not strategy. This is stubborn hope. Every morning, our doors open. Every morning, children arrive, some walking miles, some carried by parents who have nothing left to give except the determination to get their child to this place.

What happens inside these walls bears witness of a God that will never leave nor forsake His church:

- more than 120 children served every day, a number that grows as the war continues

- Trauma-informed play therapy , because children heal when they feel safe
- Hot meals , for many, the only meal of the day
- A listening ear, for mothers who need to cry, for fathers who need to speak
- Prayer, for a nation that has forgotten what peace feels like

This is not just a centre. This is a sanctuary.

"These days are heavy for our hearts. But when my child comes here, he returns home smiling. You are not just teaching him. You are saving him." said a mother of one the students

"In the middle of fear, this place reminds our children that life is still beautiful. Please. Never stop." Said Hassan, a father from the camp

"I used to come here to learn math. Now I come here to remember how to breathe." Said Mohammad, age 12

In a nation where everything is collapsing, this centre has become the one wall that will not fall.

## **INTERPRETATION**

We pray to the Lord of light and mercy. As we light our candles, we hold **Lebanon** before Him now as we pray for:

### **The Indigenous Church**

Lord, strengthen Your people in Lebanon. Root them in courage, surround them with Your presence, and let their witness shine like a hidden flame. Give them unity, endurance, and hope that outlasts darkness. May they see every challenge as a new Kairos opportunity to reflect your fulness of love, grace and mercy

### **Peace**

Lord, your people hunger for peace. Years of destruction have caused people to lose hope. We pray that Your peace will rest on Lebanon—calming fear, silencing violence, and opening a path toward healing.

### **Reconciliation**

Heal the divides between religious communities, political factions, and generations. Where bitterness has grown, plant mercy.

### **Protection of civilians**

Guard the innocent, shield the vulnerable, and let no life be lost to the cruelty of conflict. Those who have fled the violence in Syria now face the new brutality of another war that is not their own. Protect them Lord

### **Wisdom for leaders**

We pray for Lebanon's political and religious leaders— We pray for the President of Lebanon, Mr. Joseph Aoun, the only Christian president in the Middle East. We pray for the Prime Minister, Nawaf Salam, who represents the Sunni Muslim community. And we pray for the Speaker of Parliament, Nabih Berri, who represents the Shia Muslim community of Lebanon

Turn their hearts toward justice, humility, and restraint. Give them wisdom that protects life and dignity.

### **Comfort for the grieving**

Hold every grieving family close. Let Your comfort be deeper than their sorrow and Your nearness stronger than their pain.

### **Hope for the future**

Plant hope in the soil of suffering. Let new possibilities rise, and let Lebanon's future be shaped by peace, dignity, and renewal.

**Lord, let Your light shine over Lebanon, and let the darkness not overcome it. Amen.**

For practical assistance please visit: <https://dialogos.co.za/project-hope-lebanon/>

Next week we will continue our journey as we pray for **SAUDI ARABIA**