



*They set me brooding o'er the desert drear,
Where broodeth darkness as the deepest night.
From many a mosque there comes the call to prayer;
I hear no voice that calls on Christ for light.
But still I wait.
For the messenger of Christ, who cometh late.*

Anonymous

Dear Pastor,

Kurdistan, Iraq
Light of Life Baptist Church

Further ways God "showed up" in 2023...

•Our First Easter Service

As we prepared for for service, I said to Apryl, "Either everyone or no one is coming tonight." Sometimes the practical side of the missionary comes out in a defense mechanism against disappointment. Well....everyone showed up! A record attendance that night! The church had experienced its highest attendance at our 2022 Christmas service and we were thrilled to see that number topped by 5 additional people. We celebrated the resurrection of the Messiah and proclaimed the Gospel to all in attendance.

•A small Easter victory

A dear Assyrian lady attends our church at the invitation of another non-member attendee. She loves the preaching, the cultural diversity of the congregation and the warmth of the people. Several weeks before Easter she began to miss services. We discovered that she, along with 2-3 other ladies, had been forbidden from attending by their husbands. This dear lady's husband told her, "All evangelicals and their churches are liars. They don't even worship Mary! They're all cults!" The church began to pray for her (as well as her husband) and on Easter service she strolled right in about 30 minutes late in good Middle Eastern fashion! Occasionally, her husband has relented and allowed her to come to subsequent services and other times clamps down. Pray for his salvation - nothing else is a satisfactory conclusion from a Gospel perspective.

As always, we ask for your prayers that God would make us effective in the ministry of the Gospel.

Matt & Apryl Haynes

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SENDING CHURCH

Maranatha Baptist Church
2800 N Divis, Bethany, OK 73008

PRAY WITH US

•For Consistent Church Growth



The ladies of Light of Life Baptist Church

•For the Salvation of Souls



A precious Kurdish family



•For Light to pierce the darkness



Young children, in a Kurdish public school, learning to be observant Muslims



The Wife's Perspective

In my portion of the prayer letters, I have included some insight into lives of Kurdish ladies. When giving a testimony, I try to create a picture partially of what we do here but even more of who the local Kurdish ladies are. I hope it has helped build understanding and connection with them just a little bit more. However, the last couple of years has expanded our ministry not only to Kurds but to even more people groups in our area. Our church has become a more diverse body than what we ever expected, peopled with Kurds, Yezidis, Syrians, Egyptians, Assyrians and Chaldeans. My husband likes to tell them that this is what Heaven will look like and this mix is what some of the church people like to lovingly call our “cocktail”. This has given us a lot more insight and shown us that some of the difficulties Muslim women face are not unique to them. That leads me to my prayer requests.

The first is for the Assyrian lady my husband mentioned in his letter. Her daughter and husband make it difficult for her to come but occasionally relent, claiming our church lies and discouraging her from reading Scripture (that is what the priest is for). One avenue to help her situation is if we could get in a foot in the door to visit and get to know them personally. This could soften the edges of their view and give more freedom for her to attend.

The second request is for a Kurdish/Armenian lady and her young children. She had been enjoying coming to one of the Bible studies and her children were showing a lot of interest before her husband quite suddenly told her she could not come anymore. She is concerned about the spiritual life of her children and has expressed her desire to go to a true church rather than the Armenian church. Please pray that God would open his heart and for her children that their choices in marriage would allow them to someday serve God with their own families.

I would like to also include a final prayer request for a group of Assyrian young ladies with whom I recently finished an English course. They are still very much in touch with me and I am looking for more open doors with them.

There are other ladies in similar circumstances that I do not have room to write about but I will say this: in all of their situations, the true key would be the salvation of their husbands or parents. They control them by claiming that churches who teach salvation by faith are cults and that true Christians do not need to read the Bible. Their own salvations would correct all of that! Thank you so much for your investment in Middle Easterners and your prayers for the ladies here in Iraqi Kurdistan!

Apryl Haynes