



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN JERUSALEM AND THE MIDDLE EAST
A PROVINCE OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

DIOCESE OF CYPRUS AND THE GULF

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DIOCESAN BISHOP

25 September 2024

Dear Family of God in Cyprus and the Gulf

We are all deeply concerned about the escalation of violence between Israel and Hezbollah in recent days, the terrible impact on civilians, and the potential for a wider conflict.

On Monday night I flew into Beirut *en route* from Iraq to Cyprus. From the air, I could see streams of vehicle lights stretching along major highways, as people sought to escape the most dangerous regions of Lebanon. Waiting to board my flight, I witnessed at the gate a father on the phone, making desperate arrangements to get other members of his family to the airport, warning them of target areas and militia—his young son all the while trying to get his attention, unable to understand why his father was so preoccupied. The 40-minute flight from Beirut to Larnaca was packed; we were the privileged ones, able to flee to the safety of Cyprus.

As you will read in the media, Cyprus is receiving increasing numbers of displaced people due to the conflict. I have requested appointments with a number of ambassadors in the Republic of Cyprus to assure them of the support of our Diocese, and that our churches are places of welcome and safety for all people, of any faith or none. Our churches will work with local NGOs, government agencies, municipalities, and ecumenical and interfaith partners to offer whatever practical support we can.

Please join us in praying for a de-escalation of political and military tension; for all involved in peace negotiations; for displaced civilians; for the wounded and those who treat them; for all who mourn; and for a vision of the future where there can be reconciliation between people and a mutual desire for peace and wellbeing. We pray, too, for our sister Diocese of Jerusalem, which includes Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, and for Archbishop Hosam Naoum. Please pray for the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, and especially for our churches in Cyprus as they prepare to offer humanitarian support to those displaced by the conflict. Donations to aid our work can be made through our website: <https://www.cypgulf.org/donate/>

We will provide updates on how we are responding to this crisis, as and when we can.

Yours in the hope that can only come from Christ,

+Sean

Visit the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf at

www.cypgulf.org and www.youtube.com/@cyprusandthegulf

To share news from your parish, please contact helen.perry@cypgulf.org