

# ST GEORGE'S COLLEGE JERUSALEM

## REPORT TO MAJMA' 2016



### MISSION

St George's College is a mission agency of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and a precious gift to the global church. First established in 1920 to serve as a seminary for the Middle East dioceses of the Anglican Communion, the College now serves as an international center for continuing education, interfaith encounter, pilgrimage, and research. We welcome people of all faiths to come and share our programs.

Our mission statement nicely brings together several beautiful elements of our shared vision for the role of the College:

*St. George's College Jerusalem is an Anglican community of education, hospitality, pilgrimage, and reconciliation. Through study, site visits, engagement with the local Christian community, prayer and reflection, lives are transformed and faith renewed.*

The College Foundation has identified a small set of strategic directions for the College as we pursue this mission in the next five years:

- Wider participation from the Anglican Communion worldwide
- Targeting ordinands and younger clergy
- Supporting the Diocese of Jerusalem, and connecting with the 'living stones' of the local Church
- Developing inter-faith courses
- Encouraging lay faith formation
- Raising the scholarly profile of the College

Within the matrix created by our mission statement and our strategic directions, this strategic plan has assisted us to provide realistic but exciting answers to the following key missional questions:

- What is our mission to (how can we best serve) the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem?
- What is our mission to (how can we best serve) the wider Church in the Middle East, and also those churches in other societies with a Muslim majority?
- What is our mission to (how can we best serve) the wider Anglican Communion, and especially at a time when its own sense of identity and mission is so problematic?

During the past year those three questions have challenged us to look beyond the survival of the College as we plan our programs and manage our resources. They remind us to think locally, regionally, globally. They invite us to explore mission possibilities beyond the contours of our recent profile.

Most importantly, they invite us to dream God's dream for the future of St George's College as a mission agency of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, as a mission theology resource for the Church in multi-faith contexts, and as a center for Anglican reconciliation and renewal worldwide.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN 2016–2020**

This plan was adopted by the Foundation of St George's College Jerusalem on 22 June 2016. It draws on research and survey data developed by The Very Rev. Dr. Ian Markham, President and Dean of Virginia Theological Seminary, who generously donated his time to coordinate this strategic planning process for the College in the first half of 2016.

We also acknowledge the valuable input by alumni, church leaders, and College staff who collected data, contributed to the surveys, and assisted with the processing of the information gathered. The draft strategic plan was fashioned in a seminar on 21 June 2016 and then presented to the meeting of the College Foundation the next day, at which time it was unanimously approved.

The plan has five main objectives, each of which has several specific project goals:

1. A campus 'fit for purpose'
2. Letting the world know
3. Connecting through strategic partnerships
4. Global center for reconciliation
5. Adventurous programs for new audiences

### **STAFF**

The Very Revd Dr Gregory Jenks was appointed **Dean** of the College in June 2015 and took up his appointment at the beginning of November last year. He has also been installed as the Canon for Emmaus in the Cathedral Church of St George the Martyr.

The Revd. Dr. Susan Lukens was appointed **Associate Dean** from the beginning of January. She continues to have a part-time teaching role at Msalato Theological College in Tanzania while also serving as a trustee of Virginia Theological Seminary.

Bishara Khoury was appointed **Liaison and Logistics Officer** from the beginning of January.

In September 2016 we welcomed the Revd. Prebendary John Reese as our new **Chaplain**. John is accompanied by wife Hazel, and we have already been greatly blessed by their ministry with us.

In October we were pleased to announce that The Revd. Dr. Hector Patmore had accepted the appointment as **Director of Studies**. He will join the College in January 2017, accompanied by his wife, Lydia, and their four-year-old son, Bertie. Dr Patmore replaces the Rev. Dr. Rodney Aist, who resigned his appointment as Course Director at the end of May.

## **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

During the past year, considerable attention has been given to developing the capacity of the College. This has included a major upgrade to the software in the Edmond & Patricia Browning Library, the development of Online Learning services to enrich the experience of our students, improvements to the College web site, greater use of social media to promote the work of the College, and a major investment in donor management software.

## **INTEGRATION WITH DIOCESE**

We are exploring opportunities to work more closely with the Cathedral Close as well as with the wider Diocese. The Dean greatly values his ministry as one of the clergy at the Cathedral. The College catering services have been merged with the Guest House, and we are actively seeking to collaborate in areas such as buildings and grounds, the diocesan development office, and planning for future infrastructure.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

The College is developing a range of partnerships.

Our academic partners include Berkeley Divinity School at Yale University, Charles Sturt University School of Theology, the international Consortium for the Bethsaida Archaeology Project, and Virginia Theological Seminary.

We are working with international Anglican agencies including the Anglican Centre in Rome and the Mission Theology project. Following a very successful joint program with ACR in October 2016, we are exploring new options for future collaboration.

We have recently renewed the agreement for the Benshoof Cistern Museum to hold and exhibit the material from the Tel Dothan excavations and we are now developing new relationships with other institutions that are part of the Dothan Publications Project.

We are delighted to be working with Jerusalem Peace Builders as we develop our ministry in the area of reconciliation.

## **COURSE DEVELOPMENT**

All of our courses are currently under review to check for gaps and overlaps, to identify areas for improvement, and to ensure that we achieve our objectives for each program that we offer. Alongside our signature **Palestine of Jesus** courses we now offer a short **Introduction to the Bible Lands** course, and in January we shall offer the new **Jerusalem Ministry Formation Program** for the first time. This past year we have also added a **Bible and Archaeology** course, the **Living Stones** course, and the **Women of Bible**. We want to include local Christians in our courses whenever we can, and will offer places with a significant discount for people from the Diocese.

## **FINANCES**

The College operates as a self-funding institution within the Diocese, and also offers some funding support to diocesan agencies. Our annual operational funding covers the normal costs of our activities, but does not provide funds for scholarships or other major initiatives.

Enrolments numbers in 2016 will exceed our target of 400 people, but final numbers are not yet known. We expect to conclude the year with a small surplus.

Planning is underway for a financial campaign to provide endowments for some key aspects of the College, as well as a planned giving program to provide the additional long term funds needed for scholarships, building projects and new technologies (as outlined in the Strategic Plan). We aim to operate without imposing any financial burden on the Diocese, and to be an agency that contributes resources to the shared mission of the Diocese.

It is a deep privilege for me to serve as the Dean of your College in Jerusalem. I am supported by a wonderful staff at the College, some of whom have serving the College for more than 20 years. They are the true heroes of the past year.

I am blessed with remarkable collegial relationships with the Archbishop, with Dean Hosam Naoum Dean, and with the Rev. Canon David Longe. I have been greatly supported by the staff in the Majma' offices, and especially by Amin Abu Hanna in the Property Office and Ghassan Isaacs in the financial office.

GREGORY C. JENKS

**DEAN**