

Snap Shots from our partners and the Refugee ministry fund

We have been pleased to forward funds to a pastor in Damascus, Syria, to help with ministry to people affected by the civil war. Goods and Bibles are offered and people respond to God's love because of witness.



DONATIONS AND SUPPORT

We have a variety of ways in which our work and ministries can be supported.



On-line – donors can use Visa and Mastercard - www.meco.org.au/donate/index.html

Internet – direct transfer to our account – BSB: 704 874 100009416.



Pushpay – is a new way to give electronically via your smart-phone (iPhone and Android). The app can be downloaded directly on to your phone. Visit <https://pushpay.com/nonprofits> and donate direct to MECO Australia – very easy and very quick!



Legacies – Legacies are a significant way for Christians to continue support of taking the gospel to the people of the Middle East. You can have an 'ongoing support' of MECO and its ministries by remembering MECO in your will.



Newsletter Issue 2, 2016

“..no one puts new wine into old wineskins...” Matthew 9:17, NLT

We live in a changing world that constantly creates new pressures and demands adjustments. It happens in our communities; it happens in our churches; and, it happens in the world of missions.

Across the past twelve months our MECO International Board has been talking with SIM International re the possibility of joining forces so that our respective ministries might be both strengthened and more effective.

This magazine highlights the process and commitments that the two Boards have made to work together. In the long-term it is anticipated that MECO will become part of SIM with a new Middle East entity to continue the focus and ministries in the region.

This step is not new for MECO. While MECO has a heritage and history that goes back to 1860, it should be remembered that MECO itself came into being through a merger of the Middle East General Mission; the Lebanon Evangelical Mission; and, the Arabic Literature Mission in 1976.

We believe that in the coming together of these two great mission organisations the ministries we have in the Middle

East, together with the National church and believers, has the potential to be enhanced.

SIM had workers in the Middle East until 1979 when the revolution took place in Iran; MECO has had a continual presence throughout the region since 1860. In the coming together of the two organisations, it enables for greater capacity and recruitment as well as the utilisation of resources and being good stewards of what God has both given and blessed us with.

At the present time the two Directors, Richard (MECO) and Omar (SIM), are discussing together with our Boards what shape this might look like in Australia. There are details that need to be worked through to the satisfaction of both parties. Please pray for discussions and decisions to be made.

For the immediate future, we continue to operate in the same way. Our office remains; Richard still speaks and preaches and recruits; Annette still deals with support and finances – we will advise people of when changes will be implemented.

Since last writing we have been able to forward \$25,000 to partners in the Middle East involved in refugee ministry, and a further

\$20,000 to various ministries of translation, training pastors and church leaders, and education work in the region. We thank you for your support with us.

Are you able to continue to help? The people we work with in the region also partner with the Bible Society and scriptures are also delivered with the aid packages that are supplied. Some of our workers have set up small schools to help educate the refugee children.

There is now more need than ever. We value your partnership with us and appreciate your help for our brothers and sisters in the Middle East by supporting us in prayer and financial gifts that are distributed to them.

(A flyer is available from our office that can be used in your church – we are happy to forward it to you upon request.)

Your brother in Christ,

Rev Richard Coombs
Australian Director



Attention! Postage costs

You will be aware that Australia Post has increased postage costs by 30% from the beginning of this year and we are looking for ways to reduce our mailing costs. If you would like to receive a notification by email that our magazine is available to view online or download from our website instead of being posted that would be appreciated, and this helps us with our stewardship. Please advise Annette at office@meco.org.au of your email address if you would like to make this change.

AUSTRALIAN NEWS

Richard Coombs has been speaking in churches and at different Mission Conferences recently. He is available to speak in churches and other meetings and can be contacted on (03) 98980077.

Annette Cook is our Office and Finance Manager at our National Office in Melbourne. Pray for Annette as she continues to help us with all the financial, legal and governance issues that are required for us to work effectively.

Noel and Ros Uebergang (Mildura) continue to have excellent opportunities in their ministry in north Victoria among people from the Middle East. Folk can help with their support by forwarding gifts to our office.

John and Magda Ackad (Sydney) are available for speaking at churches and other groups and can be contacted on (02) 9822 2303 or 0404 058 569. Folk can help with their support by forwarding gifts to our office.

OVERSEAS WORKERS

Continue to pray for our workers in the region of the Middle East at this time.

Ken and Kerry are back in Australia and having a well-deserved break. They found their last few months in Egypt frustrating and stressful. They are praying for guidance as to whether or when they should return to their school. We are keen to help them build up their financial and prayer support and if you would be interested in supporting Ken and Kerry contact our National Office.

Rick, Anne, Matthew and Stephen will be in New Zealand and Australia for Home Assignment during July and August. They are enjoying their ministry with PTEE in Jordan. Rick will also be awarded his Doctoral degree while he is at home.

DARREN'S PROJECT

Darren is wanting to purchase some MP3 players that contain the Arabic Bible. These players are a useful tool for his outreach work and can be distributed to those who cannot read. Gifts can be forwarded to the office marked 'Darren – MP3'

Darren is back into life in Lebanon after a break in Brisbane. He is still working on his Arabic language but is grateful for fluency to be able to share the gospel with many and also lead some Bible studies.

Perry and Karen will also be in Australia during August and September. They will be visiting friends and family on the East Coast. They will be re-settling Phoebe back into life in Australia as she will be doing University study here. Chris is completing his Honours degree at Monash University in Melbourne.

Vicki is back working with MEC and based in the UK. She is currently travelling in Mexico and then to South America, meeting with politicians and interested groups, speaking about persecuted Christians in the Middle East. She would value your prayers.

Stian and Katrina, Oskar and Sebastian are ministering back in Jordan and the hospital where they are working. Katrina is involved in home-schooling now as the teacher that was there to help the boy's education (and some other family's children) has left. This is an added burden for them.

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Papyrus Scrolls and Bookmarks:

The Bible as it was first written – **Papyrus scrolls**
Papyrus scrolls are made with papyrus paper. Papyrus is very durable. Some of the oldest Bible manuscripts are on papyrus paper and have survived for thousands of years.



Bookmarks – There are a variety of bookmarks with texts from scripture. Each bookmark is inside a plastic cover for protection.

These can be ordered on-line at www.pyriam.com

BRIDGES

Christians Connecting with Muslims (Home Group study DVD)

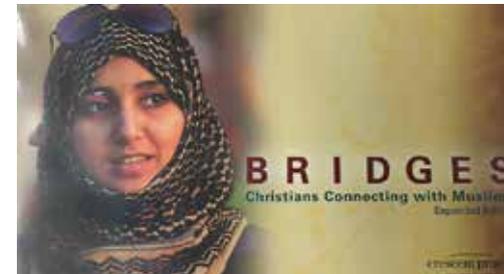
Bridges is a curriculum that helps introduce Christians to Islam and pave the way for building relationships with the Muslims in your community.

Why Bridges?

Christians have responded to Muslims in many ways, but all too often, without the compassion that characterized Jesus. Bridges seeks to replace fear and intimidation with love and gentle boldness, reshaping the way

Christians view and respond to their Muslim neighbours. Bridges focuses on similarities, not differences. Christianity and Islam are not the same, but they are similar. You can learn how to take similar concepts in Christianity and Islam, and build a bridge.

The teaching found in Bridges is easy to understand even if you don't have much prior knowledge of Islam. The material is also valuable to those



seeking to build on what they already know about Muslims.

Bridges is practical and biblical. Bridges allows you to gain biblical insight into Islamic history and Muslim beliefs, while providing useful next steps and stories that help you put the teaching into practice.

Bridges is helping Christians connect with Muslims. This

6-session DVD Small Group Study provides biblical teaching about Islam and what Muslims believe, opening the door for better understanding between the religions.

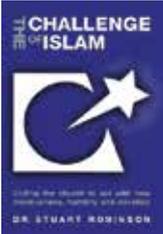
Often, the image of Muslims can evoke fear and mistrust. Yet, Jesus teaches compassion and challenges his followers to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

Refugee Ministry Fund

– With recent developments in the Middle East, the 'Refugee Ministry Fund' is used to help people in Syria, Iraq, Egypt and Gaza. We are partnering with pastors and churches in the Middle East to help bring some relief to persecuted families. Gifts can be forwarded through phone, post and online – see donations and support section. Prayer Points – monthly Prayer Points for the Middle East are distributed by email and print. We would be delighted to add your name to our list – please forward an email to office@meco.org.au requesting the Prayer Points and specify how you would like to receive them (email or print).

Books

MECO AUSTRALIA | PO Box 136, Kerrimuir, Victoria 3129 | Tel: 03 9898 0077
Email: office@meco.org.au Web: www.meco.org.au



The Challenge of Islam

Stuart Robinson

\$7.00*

Dr Stuart Robinson in his book *The Challenge of Islam* writes a compelling call "...to the church to act with new decisiveness, humility and devotion". This is not a call to war, to viciousness or turmoil; but rather a call to effective witness, evangelism and love.

Every Christian should at least read this booklet; every pastor should know this booklet well.

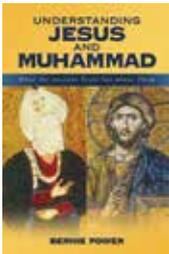


Islam Rising

Stuart Robinson

\$7.00*

Secular political leaders and media minders have marginalized religion unless it serves their professional interests. Historical memory hardly extends beyond yesterday's sound bites or delves deeper than the flutter of social media comment. 'Islam Rising' summarizes elements of how enduring turmoil in the Middle East has arisen and some implications for the rest of the world.



Understanding Jesus and Muhammad: What the Ancient Texts Say About Them

Bernie Power

\$15.00*

Jesus and Muhammad are arguably the two most influential individuals who have ever lived. Over half of the world today claims to follow them and the religions they founded: Christianity and Islam.

But who were these two men? Where did they come from? What did they do and teach? And what was their vision for the future?

This book answers all these questions, drawing on the earliest ancient documents we have about them.

In the light of the current tensions that exist in the world, the future of civilisation may well depend on how humanity responds to Jesus and Muhammad.

Bernie Power holds degrees in Science, Arts and Theology. His doctorate focused on the Hadith. He has spent over twenty years as an Interserve partner living and working among Muslims in Asia and the Middle East. Currently he lectures in Islamic Studies at the Melbourne School of Theology, Australia. His desire is to help Christians and Muslims understand more about each other and what they believe

** Please note – postage is additional*

Resources – We stock a variety of books, Bibles (Arabic and Arabic-English) and DVD's that are useful for being informed about Islam and the Middle East region. Enquiries can be made with the National Office for further information.

BOOKS: (postage is additional)

	Price
Challenge of Islam – Stuart Robinson	7.00
Defying Death – Stuart Robinson <i>(The story of Father Zakaria Botross)</i>	20.00
Islam and Christianity on the Edge – Peter Riddell, John Azumah	35.00
Islam – Human Rights and Public Policy – David Claydon	40.00
Let Your Light Shine – John Azumah	5.00
Islam Rising – Stuart Robinson	7.00
Liberty to the Captives <i>(Islam and Dhimmitude)</i> – Mark Durie	15.00
Light on Islam – John Azumah	5.00
Mosques and Miracles – Stuart Robinson	20.00
Revelation <i>(Do we worship the same God?)</i> – Mark Durie	20.00
Sharing God's Love with Muslims – Bill Dennet	15.00
The Third Choice <i>(Islam, Dhimmitude and Freedom)</i> – Mark Durie	25.00
The Wisdom of Islam and the Foolishness of Christianity – Richard Shumack	20.00
Turn Back the Battle – Elizabeth Kendall	20.00
Understanding Jesus and Muhammad – Bernie Power	15.00

Bibles: (postage is additional)

Arabic Bible (NAV) <i>(Hardcover)</i>	20.00
Arabic Bible (NAV) <i>(Softcover)</i>	10.00
Arabic-English Bible <i>(NIV)</i>	30.00
Farsi <i>NT</i>	15.00
Arabic <i>NT</i>	5.00
Topical Concordance to the Qu'ran	10.00

DVD's: (postage is additional)

BRIDGES <i>(Teaching DVD's on Connecting with Muslims)</i>	60.00
JESUS <i>(Arabic, Turkish, Farsi)</i>	10.00
Behind the Sun <i>(True life story from the Middle East)</i>	15.00
God is Love <i>(Arabic)</i>	10.00
God is Love <i>(Farsi)</i>	10.00
God's Plan – My Role <i>(Arabic with English and French subtitles)</i>	20.00
Magdalena	10.00
More than Dreams <i>(Testimonies of Muslims)</i>	10.00
The Prodigal <i>(Arabic)</i>	10.00
Secrets of the Kingdom <i>(1 & 2) (Arabic)</i>	10.00

MECO DVD's: (A donation would be appreciated)

From Now to Eternity *(Egypt)*; To Win the Nations
(Lebanon), God at Work *(Jordan)*, Shout for Joy
(Syria), Special Needs Ministries, *(North Iraq)*

Teaching DVD's: (postage is additional)

By Dr Ken Bailey <i>(author of Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes and Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes)</i>	
A Clear View of Jesus' Birth	20.00
The Lord's Prayer	20.00
Women in the New Testament <i>(2 discs)</i>	40.00
Jesus the Theologian – The Parables <i>(3 discs)</i>	60.00



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