

..... Overseas Partner Fact Sheet

El Saray Church & Fairhaven School

How it all started

The Evangelical Church in the El Saray district of Alexandria began in 1952, as a 'summer church' for people from other parts of the country who came to the seaside during the hot Egyptian summers. It has a long-standing commitment of service to the community and describes itself as an extended family, which cares deeply about its community and welcomes all who seek its help. It runs a variety of social work programmes, two of which, the Fairhaven School and the Medical Clinic, are financially supported by BibleLands.

Key facts

Founded: 1952

Location: Alexandria, Egypt

First Grant from BibleLands: 1989

BibleLands' Grant: £7,200 p.a.

Current Activities

In 1990 the church opened Fairhaven School for children with special needs. In its first year, it had 2 classes; today, the school has 18 classes and over 200 pupils. The children come from families of both Christian and Muslim faith.

The school helps its pupils to discover their talents, enabling them to live as normal a life as possible. The younger children, aged between 5-12 years, are taught social development, motor skills, self-care and safety skills, and learn academic subjects up to their individual ability level.

Older students are trained in vocations such as manufacturing assembly (*see top photo*), sewing (*see photo, bottom right*), wood-working, rug weaving, and vegetable gardening.

As well as taking care of the children's schooling and training, the school gives a daily meal to each of its pupils, thanks to a grant from BibleLands (*see photo, bottom left*).

The school works closely with students' families and with the local community, ensuring the happiness and welfare of each child. Parents who can afford to pay school fees do so, according to their means. However, most families cannot pay very much so the school subsidises almost all the children and also accepts some children free of charge.



El Saray Church also runs a Home for students at Fairhaven School. Some of these students were finding it almost impossible to travel to the centre each day. Others had very deprived family backgrounds and were sometimes left to fend for themselves, which left them particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, both at home and on the street. Others, who had attended Fairhaven for some time, could no longer be cared for by their families, as their parents were growing too old to continue to look after them.

This Home provides a safe place for these students, and those who are able return to their families at weekends and during the holidays.



A student in the boarding home

...Christian Love in Action in the Middle East...



The Medical Clinic is equipped with modern facilities and equipment.

El Saray Church runs a 'drop-in' Medical Clinic, for those who are not served by the standard medical facilities in Alexandria. This Clinic includes an eye care programme, which provides basic treatment and simple operations, as well as glasses and medicines. Patients with more complex eye disorders are referred to local opticians or a professor at Alexandria Hospital.

Nowhere else in Alexandria offers such specialist eye care; if this eye care programme was not available, patients would have to make the long and expensive journey to the Harpur Memorial Hospital in Menouf, another of BibleLands Overseas Partners.

Under the thoughtful and compassionate leadership of the Rev Gendi Ibrahim Rizk, the El Saray Church is a very good example of an inner urban church relating effectively to its community through a wide range of services.

As well as the Fairhaven School and the Medical Clinic, the Church also runs several other programmes, including a day nursery for 150 children, a day care programme for disabled children, employment and housing assistance for poor families, a residential care home and an outreach care programme for the elderly, and special assistance for refugees. Thank you for your support of this church, which serves the poorest of the poor in Alexandria.

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