

“ The light shines through the darkness,
and the darkness can never extinguish it.”

JOHN 1:5

SHINE THROUGH DARKNESS

Adjusting to life in Beirut

I have been in Beirut for just a little over a month now, but it feels like this has been home for a long time. I am getting familiar with the church, and their system. I have been helping with the kids & youth ministry team, as well as attending weekly women's meetings. I have spent a lot of time getting to know the people of Abundant Life Church



**On street near to the church,
with Joset and Tamar**

by helping at the church, and by spending time in their homes, sharing meals together. Everyone here has taken me in as family. With all the exposure to the people, I am beginning to pick up words. The people love it when I practice my new vocabulary. I am also taking classes at an institute to receive formal education. The Arabic language is difficult, and there is a difference between the written language and the spoken language in Lebanon. Even so, I am excited about learning Arabic and being able to speak with the people in their language.

Encounter with Jesus

July 6-8 we held an Encounter Retreat, a weekend short course in freedom - freedom from habits, bondages, bitterness, wrong thoughts and past mistakes. We had 27 attendees and many were new believers. Lives were transformed through the power of the cross. There was one lady, in particular, that I ministered to - she is a Russian lady. Her husband



Encounter Attendees

passed away just one month ago. She came to the encounter with questions as to “why” – but, before leaving, she really received God's love for her, and that He still has a plan and a purpose for her life.

The Encounter was very encouraging to me personally, because I felt so at home. I had only been here 2 weeks and yet I really felt part of the team. This gave me more assurance that great things are to come as I work with the team here at Abundant Life Church. I am looking forward with great expectations to all that God has planned here in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East!

Prayer Needs:

- *The Lord's protection*
- *Provision*
- *Wisdom & Direction*
- *Becoming fluent in Arabic*
- *Adjusting to new life & culture*

E-mail:

marybeth@shinethroughdarkness.com

Website:

www.shinethroughdarkness.com

For more information on the church where I am serving, please visit:

www.abundantlifelebanon.com

Send support to:

Kathryn Smith
P.O. Box 1231
West Plains, Missouri 65775

Make checks payable to
Westside Church.

List “Mary Beth Thoms” in the memo line.

Support received after 20th of the month will apply to the following month cycle.

I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

Philippians 1: 4-6