

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

JOHN 1:5

# SHINE THROUGH DARKNESS

## My new home: Beirut!

I been in Beirut just a little over a week, and I already feel at home. My family at Abundant Life Church has welcomed me with open arms. Everyone has been a tremendous blessing in making sure that I am okay and that I have everything I need, making the transition in to the Lebanese culture very smooth. I am living very near the church, in the district of Bourj Hammoud, and staying with an Armenian lady, Kenar,



Grace & me on our balcony

and her ten year old daughter, Grace. Grace is absolutely adorable, and is just starting to learn English. The family has been so kind to me, I feel a part of their home. They even let me do the dishes, because I am not just a guest. The food in Lebanon is amazing! I have had the opportunity to eat in homes and typical Lebanese restaurants and, of course, McDonald's. The weather here has been abnormally hot for this time of year. I am told it will cool off soon, and I will be so thankful. Life in Beirut has been great. I look forward to getting more and more familiar with the people and culture.

## Church & my new family

June 22 was my first church service at Abundant Life Church in Lebanon. It was so wonderful to finally meet everyone in person, and to find out that they have been waiting for me. Everyone is so encouraged that someone from America has come and is staying. My first weekend in Lebanon we held a leader's retreat just outside of Beirut for most of the day Saturday. I spent time with the leadership of Abundant Life Church getting to know them and building relationships. The retreat was a tremendous time of ministry and refreshing for these precious servants. Everyone left so encouraged and filled with vision for reaching our city, Lebanon and the nations of the Middle East.



Leaders Meeting

Back in Beirut, I have spent a lot of time just getting to know the people. My focus for right now is learning the language and building relationships. In July, I will begin studying Arabic with a tutor. To build relationships, I am spending as much time with the people as I can, and I am spending my evenings at the church getting familiar with their system. I have really connected with the people quite easily. I am very encouraged by the warm welcome I have received from everyone and I am looking forward with great expectations for what God will do in Lebanon and the Middle East.

## Prayer Needs:

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

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

[www.abundantlifelebanon.com](http://www.abundantlifelebanon.com)

Send support to:

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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