

## BEIRUT COMPASSION FUND

In Beirut, on August 4, at around 6 pm local time, an explosion at the port rocked the city. Within minutes, videos of a huge fire, followed by a deafening “boom” and a massive mushroom cloud---spewing toxins--- went viral around the world. Within hours, international news media was capturing the aftermath of destruction and chaos.

Anyone who watched the disaster was horrified by the scale and impact of this cataclysm, playing out a world away, even if they had had no prior connection to Lebanon. Our collective humanity was deeply impacted. But for The Outreach Foundation, what unfolded in Beirut---and continues to unfold --- is deeply “personal” as we have nurtured and been blessed by partnerships there which go deep and wide. (Were it not for the pandemic, we would have had an Outreach team in Lebanon at this moment).



Hala Bitar (here with husband and daughter) is a member of one of the Synod churches in Beirut and teaches at the Synod School

As we reached out quickly, we heard of the direct impact to ministry facilities (much damage). But we know that the “collateral damage” of this disaster will be extensive, particularly in light of an already destroyed economy and the hyper-inflation that is dragging the middle-class towards poverty. With Lebanon importing 80% of its goods---via that destroyed port---it is hard to imagine the strain upon the available food supplies, let alone materials like glass for the tens of thousands of windows blown out.

Much is unknown, but this is sure: our partners in Beirut will need financial help, quickly, especially those which serve fragile communities for whom the impact of this disaster will be magnified:

- [National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon](#) (our primary partner) which has two congregations and a large school in the city
- [Near East School of Theology](#), the seminary which trains Presbyterian pastors and educators for the Synod’s 40 congregations, was closed for the summer break, thankfully, but suffered much damage
- [Our Lady Dispensary](#) (Iraqi and Syrian refugees)
- [Blessed School](#) (autistic and blind students)
- [Philemon Preschool Project](#) (children of migrant workers and refugees)

We appeal to you, our supporters, to join us in standing with our Christian family in Lebanon at this time of an unprecedented crisis. May we be encouraged by Paul’s gentle admonition: So let us not grow weary in doing what is right...So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

Visit [give.theoutreachfoundation.org](http://give.theoutreachfoundation.org) to give online or mail a check to The Outreach Foundation, 381 Riverside Drive, Suite 110, Franklin, TN 37064 designate your gift for the **Beirut Compassion Fund**.