

**A Thank You Letter from  
Rev. Dr. Jack Sara, President of the Bethlehem Bible College**

**Dear Friends and Supporters,**

Greetings from Bethlehem, where once again we find ourselves in the midst of spiking cases of Coronavirus and an on-going state of emergency. We are thankful for God's protection and also [the support and generosity our brothers and sisters](#) in Hong Kong have shown us. It is also very important to us to keep you informed about our situation as we walk through this extraordinary time.

As you know, with the first reported cases of COVID-19 in March, the Palestinian Authority acted swiftly and decisively, closing everything but essential businesses. The College had to shift to a work-from-home model, including all instruction, as the lockdown continued for nearly 100 days. Since that time we have had additional lockdowns on and off, and the state of emergency is in effect for the next month as the death toll is rising. Currently, the staff is working reduced hours on campus.

Because of our Online Program we were able to convert all of our in-person classes to an online format. All of our students finished their semester's studies online. Additionally, we offered free online (Zoom) courses for the general public who responded with great enthusiasm. Our staff continues to think "out-of-the-box" to offer other new online courses. During the summer we have offered [an online course in Arabic](#), and will be offering a tour guiding course about Bethlehem.

At this time, our desire is to start the fall semester with classes in-person, but we have to receive permission from the Ministry of Higher Education. Our students all prefer that, as well as faculty and staff. So much of the transformation of our students comes through the "family" atmosphere of the College, and from mentoring (both formal and informal) that can only take place face-to-face. The final decision will be based on the safety of our students, faculty, and staff.

We are very aware of the hardships that the Coronavirus pandemic has caused around the world. It makes us more aware than ever of the global Body of Christ who can help one another in every way. At Bethlehem Bible College we are reliant upon the faithful giving of our partners, especially as situation here becomes more dire and our local revenue streams (most of which come from tourism) have completely dried up this year. We know you are praying for us, as we pray for you. If you are able to [support us](#) with an extra gift this year or become a monthly supporter, we would be most grateful.

Thank you again, and may God bless and protect you during these trying times. Please [visit us](#) when the situation allows, and I look forward to visiting Hong Kong in future to share with you how God is using the Bethlehem Bible College to bless the Christian and Palestinian communities here in the Holy Land and beyond.

**Rev. Dr. Jack Sara  
President  
Bethlehem Bible College**



**親愛的朋友和支持者：**

我從伯利恆向各位問安！現在這裡正面對著每天遞增的新冠肺炎確診人數並一直處於緊急狀態之中。我們感謝上帝的保守，也感謝在香港弟兄姊妹們的[支持和慷慨捐助](#)。我們亦想在共渡難關之祭藉此重要的機會向您們分享我們的近況。

當三月首次有人確診新冠肺炎後，巴勒斯坦政府迅速果斷地關閉了除日常生活必須外的大部分店鋪。聖經學院也轉為「在家工作」的模式，教務也沒有例外，期時封城差不多有一百天之多。隨後封城令仍斷斷續續地執行，而緊急狀態亦由於死亡數字日增而將在未來一個月持續。現時我們的教職員和員工們均在校園局部上班。

在此期間，我們成功地將親身授課轉為網上課程，而所有的學生都在網上完成了該學期的課業。除此以外，我們亦透過 Zoom 提供了一些免費的課程供大眾參與並且深受歡迎。我們將繼續嘗試尋找新的方法去提供更多的網上課程。在暑假期間，我們也開始了[網上的阿拉伯文課程](#)，並將舉辦一個有關伯利恆的導遊班。

我們盼望能夠在秋季學期重新開始親身授課，但仍需先得到政府高等教育部的允準。我們的學生、教職員和員工們全都期望能夠回到校園。特別是因為學生們生命上的轉化很多時都是在學院這個「家」的氛圍，和透過面對面的導師指導（包括正式與非正式的）下達成。當然，最後的決定仍會以我們的學生、教職員和員工的安全為首要考慮。

我們也深知新冠疫情在世界各地所引致的苦難。這也讓我們更體會到身處全球各地、各個作為基督身體的每一位姊妹弟兄是可以透過不同的方式互助互勉。同樣地，伯利恆聖經學院也依靠我們的同行者支持得以繼續，特別是此處的境況每況愈下，本地收入（絕大部分來自旅遊業）已見枯涸。我們為您們禱告，也深信您們正為我們禱告。假若您可以在本年度額外[支持我們](#)，或成為月捐的支持者，我們將非常感激。

再一次感謝各位，並願上帝在這個艱難期間祝福及保守您們。請在情況許可時[探訪我們](#)，我也盼望將來能到訪香港，跟你們分享上主是如何使用伯利恆聖經學院，去祝福聖地的基督徒及巴勒斯坦群體，以及聖地以外的朋友們。

**伯利恆聖經學院院長  
撒頌基牧師博士**