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Dear Supporters,

Ahlan-wa-Sahlan, the greeting which echoes throughout every day one spends amongst the Palestinians. Rather tamely we tend to translate the greeting as 'welcome.' However, since hospitality is the genus of Arab culture, the roots of the words carry far richer meanings – not only 'welcome' but 'now you are part of our family and may your life with us be smooth.' These words are those of Professor Donald Nicholl, former rector of Tantur Ecumenical College and former ABCD trustee.

Life for the Palestinian people is anything but smooth, limitation of freedom, poor infrastructure and sanitation, lack of water, intermittent electricity supplies are just a few of the daily challenges, as outlined briefly in the WHO (World Health Organisation) May 2017 report on page 2. Life is difficult enough for the able-bodied but to be disabled, life can be, at times, almost unbearable. And yet, the images I constantly see on our field visits are of happy, smiling children who have so little but are so grateful for ABCD's help.



Maazim receiving treatment

And so, dear supporters and friends, it is with your devoted and determined help that ABCD is able to make a significant difference to improve the lives of the many children and their families we help year on year. A HUGE THANK YOU. Phrases used by two of our supporters this year – 'ground-breaking' and 'punches above its weight' – is only possible through the generosity and solidarity of ABCD's wonderful and loyal supporters.



Val Jourdan

2017 has seen the charity move all our projects forward at a great pace, this newsletter updating you on our successes. It's exciting. This past year we have experienced sadness, bidding a fond farewell to dear Georgina, our co-founder and immediate past Chair with a beautiful and moving memorial service last January and a further sad loss with

our former Chair, Rupert Ridge, in March. ABCD has lost two dear friends. We are fortunate that Rupert's son Tom is continuing in his father's footsteps as a Trustee.

The Christmas season is approaching when Bethlehem at the forefront of people's minds. On behalf of the ABCD Board, I take this opportunity to wish all our supporters well and good health into 2018.

Val Jourdan, MBE, Chair

Contact us

May 2017 WHO report on health conditions in occupied Palestinian territory

The report outlines the support given by WHO to the Palestinian Ministry of Health to enhance access to high-quality, safe health care and medical services. The health system in the occupied territories is operating under severe pressure due to rapid population growth, lack of economic opportunities and adequate financial resources, shortages in basic supplies and the limitations of occupation or blockade. The Palestinian Ministry of Health relies heavily on increasingly unpredictable donor funding. Donor aid is projected to decrease further in 2018 predicts the International Money Fund. ABCD can play a part in our work in two refugee camps, Jalazone and Nour Shams:



Read a short overview of the WHO report which has an impact on ABCD's work:

- The estimated population living in the occupied Palestinian territory in 2016 was 4.8 million: 2.9 million in the West Bank. More than 2 million are registered refugees of whom 1.3 million are in the Gaza Strip. About one third of the refugees live in refugee camps located both in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. The population is predominantly young: nearly 40% of Palestinians are aged 0–14 years, and 5% are 65 years or older. Due to the occupation's lack of freedom of movement and subsequent lack of economic opportunities, 27% of households (1.6 million Palestinians) experience food insecurities.

- The health system in the occupied Palestinian territory is operating under severe pressure due to rapid population growth, lack of economic opportunities and adequate financial resources, shortages in basic supplies and the inherent limitations of occupation or blockade. The coordination and collaboration challenges between the West Bank and Gaza Strip are further impediments for efficient health sector planning and management.

- Health access: physical barriers including the separation wall and checkpoints, prevent patients from directly accessing hospitals located in East Jerusalem due to permit approvals. The back-to-back procedure is used: Palestinian ambulances stop at

the crossing point, unload the patient who is transported to the waiting ambulance on the other side, resulting in 91% back-to-back transfers.

- As the mental health in the occupied Palestinian territory has been affected, there is a noted increase in impulsive behaviours leading to emotional behavioural problems among children and an increase in personality disorders. Non-governmental organisations play an important role to help with mental health counselling, physical therapy and rehabilitation. **This is how ABCD helps via Sensory rooms and providing small rehabilitation units at local level, the funding raised by the Georgina Mortimer Appeal reported on page 4 at the two refugee camps and at BASR (Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation in Bethlehem).**

ABCD PROJECTS:

When ABCD started over 30 years ago we brought **ground-breaking** help to the most remote and rural areas through our support of the Bethlehem Arab Services for Rehabilitation in the Greater Bethlehem and Hebron areas; helping to break the taboos of disability and bring access, understanding and treatment to hundreds of families. With this knowledge and the experience we have gained over the decades and following our tried and tested methods, we have expanded our work to enable two refugee camps to access treatment. Our projects are exciting.

Please read on to learn more.

BASR (Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation in Bethlehem) REPORT:

Through the expertise of the multidisciplinary Outreach Team of BASR, ABCD reaches out to bring special needs to the most vulnerable children in parts of remote rural areas. BASR Statistics: how ABCD helps individual cases at the centre in the past month.

- A total of 12 children aged between 15 months and 15 years were provided with technical aids. Five live in Bethlehem, the others in the more remote rural areas of the West Bank
- A 15-year-old girl was given medication for osteoporosis.
- Following a full ophthalmic consultation, eye glasses were provided for one child and her progress will be closely monitored.
- Seating and walking aids were

given to four children and hearing aids to a baby girl who will continue to receive audiology tests on a regular basis.

- Twenty further children benefited from the mobile outreach team who gave forty-five families "at home" rehabilitation sessions as far afield as a refugee camp just outside Ramallah and a home in a remote village in the Hebron area.



Aishah with trained therapist and her mother at home

(ABCD covered the majority of the overall costs, with the families contributing approximately 16% of the costs)

An example of our work includes visiting Aishah, a prematurely-born two-year-old girl with cerebral palsy. Mayy, a trained physiotherapist and part of the Outreach team, gave Aishah four months' intensive therapy initially. Mayy believes that monitoring children at home rather than in a hospital environment gives the parents valuable ways in which to continue treatment in their own setting. Aishah can now raise her head and is starting to take her weight on her legs and will hopefully be able to take her first steps. ABCD will ensure that the family has the correct equipment to further their daughter's progress, with Mayy continuing to monitor her development.

REPORT FROM MARY REWERS OF THE SHEEPFOLD:

Despite the challenges such as the drop in the pound and replacing the minibus engine, the centre continues to offer humanitarian and rehabilitation aid as well as providing care workers. We offer medication, diapers, physiotherapy, wheelchairs and other aids to our young charges with varying degrees of disability. The day care centre took three new children, a little girl with Retts Syndrome (rare genetic disorder

affecting the brain) and two boys, both with developmental delay, one with impaired sight. One comes from a family with several disabled children who we also help. Prior to coming to The Sheepfold, they are left in bed without stimulation. A joy to see these children gaining some sounds and responding to play.

We've supplied siblings with specially adapted wheelchairs, access to their house, however, difficult due in part of the terrain, children needed to be carried to their homes from a rocky slope. But this mobility now given to them helps them psychologically as well as physically where they are able to manoeuvre themselves or via their family. Slow but steady progress is our aim and which we see on a daily basis thanks to aids such as IT, music, PE, playing on special swings and other methods which ABCD provides. Our thanks to our supporters who enable us to create happier lives for these children and their families.

(Mary Rewers celebrates 25 years' work on the West Bank.)



JALAZONE AND NOUR SHAMS REFUGEE CAMPS: Firas Sarhan, ABCD Trustee and Project Manager Reports:

Together with the enthusiasm, drive and determination of the medical team in our rehabilitation centres at both camps, progress has been exceptional during the past year as camps are now confidently engaging with other organisations in Palestine; linking with academic establishments for upgrade and future training possibilities; starting to engage with other international NGOs; extending help and advice into families' homes; helping families with psychological and educational support; providing technical devices and home adaptations through ABCD's Child Fund and in service training to help documentation and administration. To put it more into context, points below will give you more information of these initiatives we have been working on with the centres' heads:

- Both camps are part of the Project Hope programme, to addresses the needs of children with speech and language issues with regular sessions at schools and centres.

continued over

- Nour Shams is linked with Jenin's American University, Jalazone to Ramallah's Open University, their students working with social workers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists plus nursing students to help with the camps' disabled needs.
- Both camps have expert technicians visiting the children to assess individual children's needs such as walking aids, hearing aids and other therapeutic aids.
- In collaboration with the UN and ABCD's Children's Fund, five homes have been adapted for disabled children's needs in recent months.
- Home visits one day a week to families with disabled children by therapists from both camps offer support to aid home development.
- We identified during one of our recent field visits a way forward with the uncollected water bottles and other recycled waste to raise funds for our work. Nour Shams is working with an Italian organisation to collect and recycle, an exciting new project.
- Efficient IT is vital for running our projects, centres' heads now in training with the UN on documentation and administration to support each child's case, a huge bonus for both centres and the children they support.

This is **Maazim** (age 7) who lives in Nour Shams and is an amputee and has scoliosis of the spine. His condition is congenital. This small boy, one of eight siblings, can speak but has hearing problems and cannot attend school due to lack of independence. He is the first child with a prosthesis to be treated at the Nour Shams centre, funded by ABCD.

Maazim receiving treatment from physiotherapist Raia



Alyas is also seven and has cerebral palsy. He lives in Jalazone with parents and four siblings in a third floor apartment with no lift and narrow concrete stairs. He shares a child's buggy with a brother to access the centre which is damaging to his back as it has no support, the alleyways to the centre are rocky and difficult to access for his mother. At the centre he is treated on a standing frame to help correct and strengthen his back and needs a similar device at home. Your funding will aid this little boy to progress. ABCD would like to provide a standing frame for his use at home.



GEORGINA MORTIMER APPEAL: UPDATE

BASR Sensory Room Update:

Those of you who have followed our appeal to commemorate our much-loved co-founder, are aware of the overwhelming response to our request for donations, a remarkable £60,000 raised for sensory rooms at BASR and at Jalazone and Nour Shams Refugee Camps. These rooms benefit children psychologically including a feeling of freedom, of peace and security and fits with the WHO report in this newsletter on mental stress which many of these children are affected by.

Rima Canawati, BASR's director of programmes, reports that the BASR Beit Jala sensory garden, off the children's ward and constructed as a roof garden, is virtually complete



with views of Bethlehem and towards Jerusalem. Shaded by glass, the tactile flooring is now being laid, sensory educational and play equipment ordered and will be in place this autumn.

Jalazone and Nour Shams sensory rooms update: progress is slow but steady.

Due to the lack of accessible space at both camps' centres and lack of staff-training to further these vital rooms, Firas Sarhan, ABCD's

project manager is working with Paul McTernan from Barnet and Southgate College's Sensory and Educational Technology Department. Paul has offered his advice to devise and conduct a training programme. Our very warm thanks go to forward-looking, dynamic expert Paul and to Firas for working on ways to succeed in offering sensory spaces for children who are challenged by their circumstances.

MUSIC THERAPY: Canon Claire Tillotson, music therapist and ABCD trustee reports:

Music therapy is an interactive, primarily non-verbal intervention, provides a process through which children can express themselves, become aware of their feelings and interact more easily. Music therapy can provide insights into a child's functioning. source BAMT (British Association for Music Therapy).



That's me on the left discussing music therapy methods to professional health-givers at BASR

In June, I ran a training programme at BASR (Bethlehem Arab Society Rehabilitation) for fifteen professionals working at the hospital. Speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists, mental health workers and the drama therapist attended the two day course. The training included a presentation on music therapy to demonstrate how music therapists work and why. Participants also took part in a workshop to improvise and give scenarios of their client groups to see which music activities would fit their charges most appropriately. Some had previously worked with Eleni Tsolka, a music therapist sponsored by ABCD and wished to further their training to develop their skills so that they can provide a further layer of help to children. New instruments are needed at a cost of £1,850 such as percussion. Sophie Williams, a qualified Music Therapist from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, will take up a 10-week post this autumn at BASR, ABCD sponsoring this valuable position. Our thanks and good wishes go to Sophie.

Plans are in place to implement music therapy in Jalazone and Nour Shams camps. See the website for further details or how to donate in order to be able to offer a constant therapy, which Claire urges. Otherwise it loses its ability to make a difference to these children.



We pay tribute to Nick Wilsdon, a student music therapist who ABCD also

sponsored for his time at BASR last year. Tragically, Nick lost his life in a bike accident when back in the UK in June 2017. Nick made a huge impact on us all and will be sadly missed.

NEW TRUSTEES:

ABCD has welcomed three new Trustees this year – each bringing with them different skills to further our work.



Alastair Harris is a risk manager and accountant working in the City of London. Alastair first visited Bethlehem on pilgrimage in 2001 in connection with ABCD and was delighted to become a trustee in 2016.



Daniel Burton is an Anglican Team Rector in Salford, Greater Manchester. Originally from the Rossendale Valley in East Lancashire, he read theology at Oxford and then worked for two years in a Palestinian Children's Home in Ramallah in the mid 1980s. This gave him a love of the Middle East and for 20 years he was a trustee of the charity "Embrace" – formerly known as BibleLands. In that capacity he led many pilgrimages and visits to the Middle East. Before working in Salford he spent 10 years in parish ministry in South Wales followed by 9 years in North Manchester. He is excited about being a trustee for ABCD.



Carol Godsmark, a journalist-PR, originally from Canada via other countries, has written about the Middle East for the media and has been a past and recent visitor to the camps and other ABCD venues on behalf of the charity. She writes the newsletter and other ABCD publications and spent five days in Autumn, 2016 visiting the camps and BASR with Firas Sarhan. 'I have known Val since the beginning of ABCD and Georgina subsequently. It is a pleasure and honour to be part of this vital network of professionals here and in the West Bank helping making aware of these children and their families' needs and aspirations and furthering them medically and emotionally.'

Honorary Treasurer Post

Due to René's retirement at the end of 2017, we are seeking an Honorary Treasurer. The role is home-based with four meetings annually of the Trustees held in London. If you are interested in this role, please contact Val Jourdan.

Email: val@abcbdethlehem.org
Tel: 01264 369050
www.abcbdethlehem.org
Registered Charity No: 1097623

FUTURE EVENTS:

BETHLEHEM MARATHON – March 23 2018:

Due to the success of the 2017 marathon which raised a phenomenal £20,000, we are repeating the event which some supporters have already indicated they are keen to take part in. Why not join us in this fun event? Not only will it give you the opportunity to see ABCD's work for yourselves in the camps and at BASR but also to see the area. The four-day event, without flight but includes accommodation, full board and transport to and from Tel Aviv plus a day's trip to Jerusalem with a guide, is approximately £225 per person. We ask that participants raise around £500 towards ABCD's work. No visa is needed for UK passport holders. Contact rachel@abcdbethlehem.org or lara@abcdbethlehem.org Please see video clip on our website: www.acbdbethlehem.org



PILGRIMAGE 2018

ABCD will be joining our friends from the Living Stones of the Holy Land Trust on a pilgrimage during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity from 20 to 28 January 2018 on a half-board basis at the Knights' Palace in Jerusalem. The cost is around £1,100 per person sharing a twin room, plus the air fare and includes an extensive itinerary, with trips to the traditional biblical sites as well as more unusual locations such as Taybeh and Hebron. Alison Driscoll, ABCD's current administrator will be leading three specific ABCD day projects including the two refugee camps, BASR and Sheepfold in the Greater Bethlehem area. For further details and a draft programme, please email Alison on info@abcdbethlehem.org

CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT:

Join us for our first Carol Concert at St. George's Church, Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2SA London, a beautiful Hawksmoor church, on the evening of Wednesday 13 December at 6pm by courtesy of the Rector David Peebles. Canon Claire Tillotson, ABCD Trustee, will lead the music sung by the Shortlands Choir. Tickets are free and will be available from mid October through www.eventbrite.co.uk also from rachel@abcdbethlehem.org or by telephone from Alison – 01869 822259 Refreshments will be served following the concert.

ABCD ADMINISTRATION:

Alison Driscoll, our administrator, is retiring in early 2018 after ten years of devoted service to the charity. Her husband, René, our treasurer, will also leave at this time, our heartfelt thanks to this sterling couple. Alison will continue, however, to visit churches on behalf of ABCD to raise funds and awareness. Her successor is Rachel Hobley who has a degree from Edinburgh University with an MA first class honours in Social Anthropology. She has a passion for Palestine and has volunteered in the area as well as learning Arabic and will taking over in January, 2018. Alison will be instrumental in teaching Rachel the charity's administrative ropes, Rachel's role will also encompass social media.

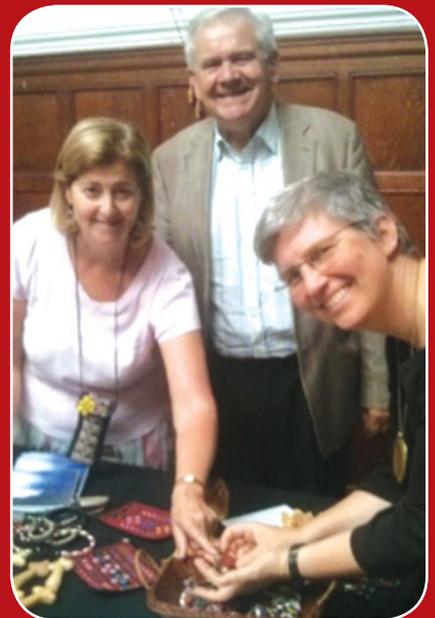
More details and tribute to Alison in the Spring Newsletter. A very warm welcome, Rachel.

To print or not to print – that is the question!

In common with many organisations, newspapers and charities, ABCD is looking at reducing printing costs. By sending our news to you on email, our savings are directed to projects in the West Bank. Please help us to cut costs by sending us your email address so that we can send you an electronic copy of our newsletter and upcoming events. Should you prefer a hard copy, please also let us know so that we can continue to keep in touch with you this way. Contact lara@abcdbethlehem.org

ALISON DRISCOLL'S CHURCH VISITS REPORT:

During the past year I have visited churches in such diverse locations as Gloucestershire, South West London, Felixstowe, Bristol, Oxford and Sevenoaks, Kent to talk about ABCD, the charity just completing a very successful two-year partnership with the Methodist Church at Loughton, Essex with over £3,000 raised. We're also the beneficiary charity for a two-year period thanks to the Hassocks United Reformed church in Sussex. I have more bookings to the end of the year but if you would like me to lead a Sunday morning worship or speak to a mid-week group about ABCD, please contact me. info@abcdbethlehem.org

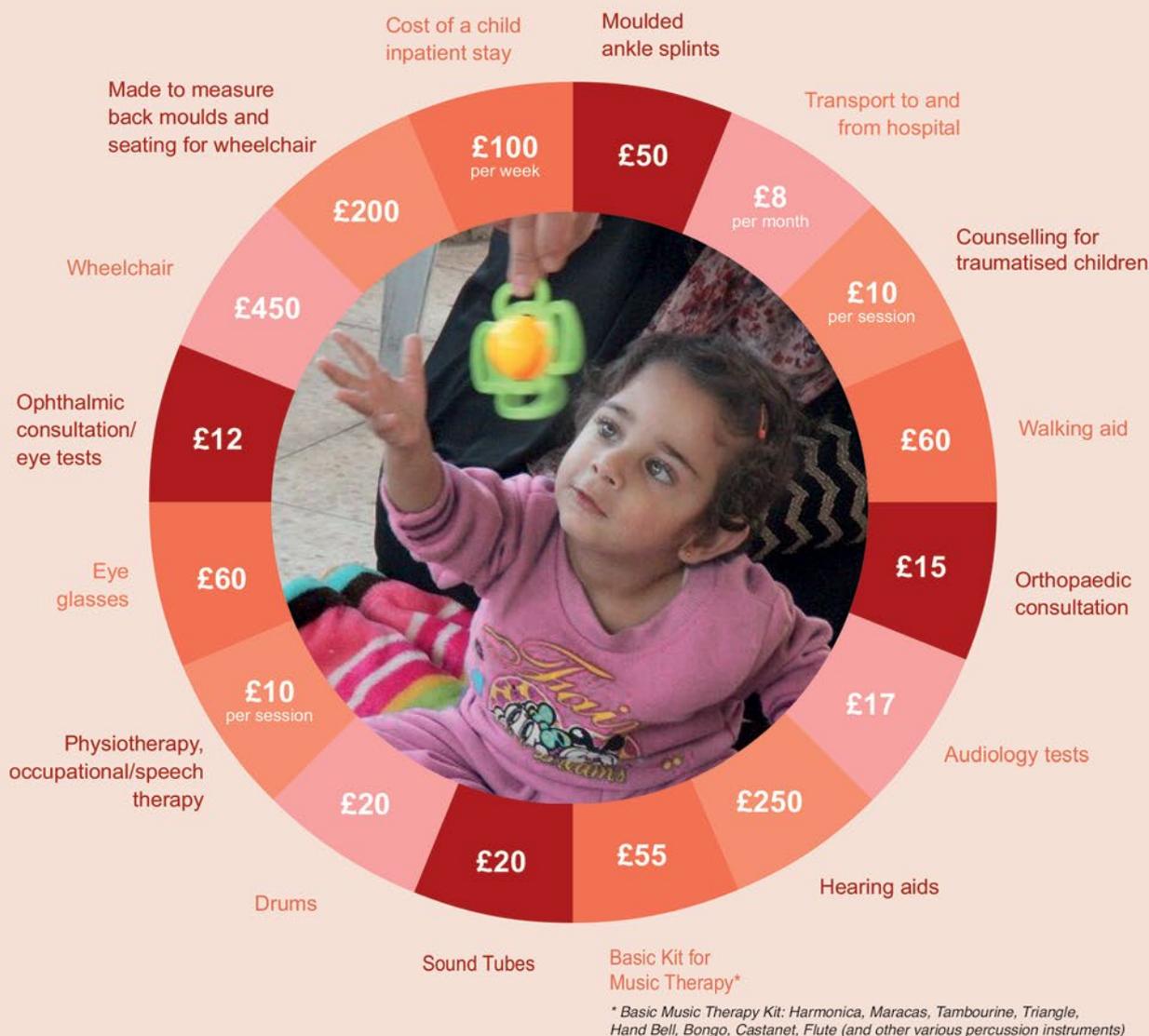


Alison and René at an event organised by Alison

In June, ABCD participated in the Methodists for World Mission conference at Swanwick, Derbyshire. I chaired the workshop and introduced the charity, ABCD's project manager and trustee Firas Sarhan following with our partnerships with the refugee camps at Nur Shams and Jalazone, where he was born. This advocacy was extremely fruitful, gaining not only new supporters and but also some practical help for our projects in both camps. We'll be at MWM again next year.

GIFT A SMILE THIS CHRISTMAS

WHAT YOUR GIFT COULD BUY FOR A CHILD LIKE AISHAH



I would really like to help a child like Aishah

Why not give an alternative gift this Christmas?

Instead of buying your loved ones a present, donate on their behalf to ABCD and help a child like Aishah. If you would like to donate on someone's behalf, we will send you an ABCD Christmas Card & Newsletter to give them.

giftaid it

If you are a tax payer and do not already Gift Aid your donations and wish to do so, please tick

I would like to make a regular donation to help with ongoing treatments such as those listed in the wheel above. I would therefore like to donate:

£ _____ per month to ABCD.

Please send me further details of how I can do this.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____

Please make cheques payable to ABCD.

Send donations and form to: **ABCD, c/o Dovecot House, Winchester Road, Andover, Hants SP11 7HN**

PTO FOR OUR 2017 CHRISTMAS CARD ORDER FORM

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIFT AND SUPPORT

UK Registered Charity number 1097623 Company number 04383155
Registered Office: Dovecot House, Winchester Road, Goodworth Clatford, Andover, Hants SP11 7HN

Christmas Cards 2017

Two design options available:

- Christmas Cards -
£5.00 per single pack of 10 cards
(one design) and envelopes
- You can save even more by paying only -
£16.00 for FOUR packs
or for each multiple of four packs



Mother & Child



Away in a Manger

- Our prices include all Postage and Packing - 2nd Class Delivery
- The message inside each card reads **'Peace'**

ABCD Christmas card 2017
160mm x 116mm
Not shown actual size

ABCD CHRISTMAS CARD 2017 ORDER FORM:

- Please send _____ pack(s) of ABCD 2017 Christmas Cards - 'MOTHER & CHILD'
- Please send _____ pack(s) of ABCD 2017 Christmas Cards - 'AWAY IN A MANGER'
- at **£5.00 per single pack / £16.00 for each multiple of four packs** (e.g. 8, 12 or 16 packs)

I enclose a cheque for £ _____ payable to ABCD.

If you are a Tax Payer and do not already Gift Aid your donations and wish to do so, please tick

Please complete your name and delivery address below. PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please send your order form to:

ABCD, c/o Dovecot House, Winchester Road, Goodworth Clatford, Hants, SP11 7HN.
Tel: 01264 369050. info@abcdbethlehem.org

PTO FOR OUR 2017 WHEEL APPEAL DETAILS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER

UK Registered Charity number 1097623 Company number 04383155