

Spotlight on CBM

*Canadian Baptist Ministries
MENA Team Leaders*

**Elie & Mireille
Haddad**



In 2005, Elie Haddad and his wife Mireille joined Canadian Baptist Ministries as field staff, serving as team leaders of the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region. For almost two decades now, Elie also has served in the position of president of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS) in Beirut, Lebanon. At the end of the 2024–2025 academic year, Elie will pass on this responsibility to a younger servant-leader. With thankfulness, acknowledging how Elie has expanded and shaped the ministry of ABTS in many wonderful ways, the search committee of the ABTS Board of Trustees is prayerfully seeking God’s chosen successor.

While Elie and Mireille will continue to invest in theological education in the region and support ABTS, they will take on an expanded role as team leaders under CBM. Elie will be able to invest more time and energy into the new partners that the CBM Middle East North Africa team have developed with the Baptist community in Egypt and in Sudan. CBM is also supporting projects in Morocco, Syria, and other countries in the region. John Chan, CBM’s director of international partnerships, recognizes that Elie has been “instrumental in solidifying our partnership with ABTS and the Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development (THIMAR-LSESD), particularly in leading and



years as church leaders can now receive training without having to leave their present ministries. Programs are offered at the level of a Certificate of Ministry and a highly academic study track, the Master of Theology. ABTS is working with two other seminaries in the region to begin a doctoral studies program. The seminary is also developing an Arabic digital library as well as a physical research centre on the ABTS campus.

Elie shares how the Holy Spirit has strengthened and given a clear vision to the ministry partners despite the growing volatility in the MENA region. Each crisis has created new opportunities to share the gospel and provide a message of hope. Some ABTS graduates displaced by the war in Khartoum, Sudan, started new ministries and expanded their outreach. Presently,

shaping ABTS to train church leaders in the MENA region.” Through working alongside and resourcing local churches, CBM and its partners have brought about growth and development of an effective ministry.

Referring to the growth of ABTS, unanticipated changes due to the pandemic increased the level of online studies and led to their hybrid education format. The staff quickly learned that the key to surviving and even prospering is to be resilient and adaptable. Enrolment at ABTS has doubled in the last two

more than 75,000 people have been displaced from the south of Lebanon by cross-border airstrikes. Some of these families have been reached by local churches with the provision of food, mattresses, and blankets. Pray for the churches assisted by THIMAR and ABTS to maintain a faithful and bold witness amid difficult conditions.

One leadership lesson that Elie articulates in the December 2023 ABTS newsletter is that “God is not impressed by our achievements and accomplishments. Instead, God wants our faithfulness.... It should be merely faithfulness to what God wants us to do right now.” Elie asks for prayer for THIMAR-LSESD; in celebrating their anniversary of 25 years of God’s faithfulness, they have chosen a name expansion, under which various ministry organizations function. Thimar is an Arabic word meaning fruits. As Christian believers, working together to sow and bear fruits of faith, Colossians 1:10 directs their thoughts: “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”



Photo courtesy of CBM

by Ruth Anna Dana

Sources: *cbmin.org*; *CBM staff updates from the Haddads and Evangeline Hammond*; *January 2024 CBM Prayerline*; *YouTube, “Introducing THIMAR: Our Journey of Bearing Fruit for God’s Glory”*; and the *ABTS newsletter*.