

SAT-7 ENTERS A SEASON OF TRANSITION

SAT-7 is entering a new season in the coming months, with a transition in leadership scheduled to take place.



Rita Elmounayer (pictured left), SAT-7 Deputy CEO and Chief Channels Officer, has been appointed as CEO Designate, replacing founder Dr Terence Ascott as CEO. The transition of responsibility is likely to take place in 2019.

Rita has been with SAT-7 since the very beginning, and was the first presenter to appear on-screen in 1996, when SAT-7 broadcast a two-hour weekly Arabic programme. Twenty-two years on, Rita's passion and dedication for SAT-7's ministry is stronger than ever.

"SAT-7 is trying to make a difference in this turmoil, society, and culture that we're living in," she said. "God is always at work – we never know where and when the seed will grow. Our responsibility is to sow it."

Having invested over 40 years in the Middle East and building SAT-7 from the ground up, many are asking what Dr Ascott's plans are for the future.

"When most people retire, they pursue what they enjoy – this is what I enjoy doing! After the transition takes place, I will take on a new role, as Founder/President," he said. This new role will include supporting Rita and the leadership team with advice as needed, as well as promoting the organisation around the world.

"So, lots of change," Dr Ascott added, "but change full of promise for an exciting new season of organisational and ministry growth!" ■

SAT-7 News & Prayer articles are available in full at: www.sat7uk.org/pray

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PRAY

Tuesday 24 July

Pray for Dr Ascott, and thank God for his vision to start a Christian television channel in the Middle East over 22 years ago.

Wednesday 25 July

Praise God for SAT-7's growth – from humble beginnings in 1996, to broadcasting across five channels to millions of people.

Thursday 26 July

Pray for SAT-7's leadership in the coming year of transition, that they will remain faithful to God's leading.

Friday 27 July

Pray for God's presence and guidance for Rita in her new role.

Sat-Sun 28-29 July

SAT-7 is also saying farewell to Chief Operations Officer Andrew Hart and Chief Financial Officer Irén Frändå. Pray for them as they move on, and for the right people to fill their roles.

Monday 30 July

Pray for an exciting season of growth for SAT-7 amidst changing times.

Tuesday 31 July

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Thank God that He is unchanging through every season of our lives.

**MAKING GOD'S LOVE VISIBLE
ACROSS THE MIDDLE EAST
AND NORTH AFRICA
THROUGH CHRISTIAN TV**



NEWS AND PRAYER

June/July 2018

YOUNG IRANIAN ASYLUM SEEKER PRAYS FOR SAT-7

Live calls to SAT-7 children's shows are usually to answer quiz questions or to participate in games and contests. But David, a ten-year-old Iranian boy, called in to Persian kid's show *Golpand* to pray for SAT-7 and its staff.



David and his family are currently living in Turkey – the decision on their asylum claim is pending. Following Jesus while living in Iran became too dangerous, so they fled. But it has not deterred David's faith, or enthusiasm to learn more about Jesus.

"I love SAT-7 PARS. I watch it every day," David said. "But my favourite show is *Golpand*."

Golpand is a live interactive children's show, aiming to teach biblical principles in a fun and engaging way through drama and games. Wise beyond his years, David prayed over the phone for SAT-7 PARS with maturity and authority, live on air:

"I thank You, Lord, for them and their programmes and ask You to be with them. They are trying to help all Your children, so bless the network and touch the hearts of all who hear them. Dear Father, I pray that You protect us from anything that comes against us, protect us from any wrong thoughts and cancel any spell. I desire Your Holy Spirit. I submit to You the words of my mouth and praise You. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen."

After finishing his prayer, David sang a worship song and shared his dream of becoming a church minister.

Presenter Meysam Rafeniya was hugely encouraged to receive David's call. "This is why we do what we do," he said. "Programmes like *Golpand* are important because we have a chance to send a message about Jesus to children in Iran where it is hard to learn about Him." ■



PRAY

Friday 1 June

Thank God for the strength and maturity of David's faith.

Sat-Sun 2-3 June

Pray for David's family and ask that they will be given asylum in Turkey.

Monday 4 June

Thank God for kid's show *Golpand*, which teaches Iranian children about Jesus.

Tuesday 5 June

Pray that David's prayer touches the hearts of other Iranian children, and that they too will seek a relationship with Jesus.

Wednesday 6 June

Pray for Iranian Christians who are still in Iran, that they will be able to practise their faith safely.

Thursday 7 June

Pray for the estimated 200,000 Iranian Christians in diaspora, that they will find community, and teaching and resources in their own language.

Friday 8 June

"From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise" (Matthew 21:16). Thank God for children around the world who have put their faith in Him.

Sat-Sun 9-10 June

Cry out to the Lord to bring peace to Yemen and Syria, and for relief for the millions who are suffering as a result of the civil wars there.

Monday 11 June

Pray for children who are affected by conflict in the MENA, that they will know the "peace of God, which transcends all understanding" (Philippians 4:7).

Tuesday 12 June

Ask for the Lord's comfort for children who have lost loved ones in the region's wars, and pray that He will provide for all their needs.

Wednesday 13 June

Give thanks for the new programme *Family of Jesus*, and pray that it will help children to know their Heavenly Father.

Thursday 14 June

Pray that the Lord will give great wisdom and compassion to presenters Mina and Uncle Refaat as they interact with young viewers who are going through difficult experiences.

Friday 15 June

Pray for inspiration for *Family of Jesus* producer John Adly as he plans new episodes.

Sat-Sun 16-17 June

Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you (Hebrews 13:5). Reflect on this precious promise and give thanks for God's faithfulness to you.

BEING GOD'S FAMILY TO LONELY CHILDREN

Children affected by conflict in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) can feel miserably lonely and vulnerable. With *Family of Jesus*, a new live prayer and worship show, SAT-7 KIDS shows these and other isolated young people that with Christ, they never have to be alone.

Across the MENA, childhoods are in crisis. Conflicts in Yemen, Syria, and Iraq have left one in five in need of humanitarian help. In Syria alone, the war has displaced 2.6 million children, forcing many to become refugees. As the violence intensified in early 2018, 1,000 Syrian children were reportedly killed or injured (UNICEF).

With many families separated and parents dealing with their own trauma, children affected by these events may struggle to cope. Feelings of isolation can trouble children in peacetime, too, especially when they are part of a minority group. Children from Christian families who have no church to attend often feel isolated within their communities. And when financial pressure forces parents to work longer and longer hours, their children may be left feeling anxious and unsupported.

The new programme *Family of Jesus* shows lonely children that they can have a loving, intimate relationship with a Heavenly Father who will never leave them.

Through prayer, worship, and drama segments, the show also gives young Christian viewers the biblical knowledge they need to understand their true identity in Christ.



Planned topics include "God's healing love" and "Feeling safe in a frightening world". The show features guests who share their experience of a particular struggle in their lives and pray for viewers going through the same thing.



Family of Jesus also encourages children to play a positive role in their communities, to pray for their countries, and appreciate diversity.

"We believe that children's hearts are good soil for God's Word. *Family of Jesus* can help bring an enormous change in their lives and, in turn, lead to radical change in their communities," said producer John Adly.

A CALL FROM SYRIA

The colourful show is presented by a team of young worship leaders, who take live calls and messages from viewers. Dana, a young girl from Syria, called the programme to pray with the presenters. Her faith in the midst of such a dangerous and frightening situation was a great inspiration to *Family of Jesus* viewers. Dana said:

"We need your prayers for us. We are assured of God's faithfulness and protection. In the middle of this war, He's kept us safe. Thank God for His protection. 'Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me (Psalm 23:4).'"

Presenter Mina encouraged Dana – and the show's viewers at home – with 1 John 4:18: "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."

Co-presenter Uncle Refaat prayed for God's protection over Dana and the other children of Syria, and asked that God's love for them would "make all fear dissipate". ■

Monday 18 June

Praise God for young Syrian girl Dana's testimony of faith. Pray for her protection.

Tuesday 19 June

Many Christian children in the MENA are not part of a church community. Pray that the Lord will provide them with a Christian friend.

Wednesday 20 June

Today is World Refugee Day. Lift up those who have had to leave their homes and pray that they will be welcomed in their new countries.

Thursday 21 June

Pray especially for child refugees, who are particularly vulnerable and in need of counselling and support.

Friday 22 June

Viewer Naglaa from Egypt contacted us to share her thoughts on the show:

"I was impressed with the programme *Family of Jesus*. You present the word of God to kids in a beautiful and easy way with great love and passion... I jump and move with you during the songs! May God provide our churches with teachers like you. I'm a teacher in Sunday School and I pray to God to provide us with wisdom and guidance to glorify Him, and for Him to use all of you to show His kingdom to all kids and teenagers."

Join Naglaa in her prayer.

SAT-7 LAUNCHES RESOURCES FOR ARABIC AND FARSI SPEAKERS IN THE UK

SAT-7 UK has launched an online video portal featuring a wealth of Arabic and Farsi programme clips to help those who are working with people from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in their local communities.

The video clips are presented by Arab and Iranian theologians and answer some fundamental questions of the Christian faith, such as, “Who is Jesus?” “What is sin?” and “What is the Trinity?”

Continued war and instability across the MENA region has seen thousands of men, women and children, crying out for peace and for a home as they’ve been displaced across Europe. As refugee families have come to the UK, the Church’s tradition of working together to offer welcome and care has continued.

SAT-7 UK has been working with partners to define which of our resources could be most helpful to refugees and to Arabic and Farsi-speaking communities and ministries. One of them is Liverpool Cathedral, which has a ministry to Iranian people who live in the city.

Revd Mohammad Eghtedarian, Curate for Liverpool Cathedral and Sepas, said, “SAT-7 could be a great resource for local churches across the UK. In my experience, many churches are dealing with people from the Middle East who are hungry for the Good News of Christ. As language is a big barrier to communicate to such people, SAT-7 programmes are excellent resources to fill the gap.”

We have also produced an Arabic language resource, *Bedtime Stories*, as a welcome gift to Arabic-speaking refugee families. Our hope is that these resources will equip organisations and individuals working with people from the Arab and Persian world, particularly those who are seeking to understand more about the Christian faith.

To access the video portals and to sign up to hear about new resources, visit www.sat7uk.org/community. ■



PRAY

Sat-Sun 23-24 June

Pray for Middle Eastern refugees and asylum seekers in the UK, that they will find welcome and community.

Monday 25 June

Pray for the many UK churches, organisations and individuals working with refugees, that God will bless and strengthen their ministries.

Tuesday 26 June

Thank God for SAT-7’s new resources, and pray they will be impactful among Arabic and Farsi speakers.

Wednesday 27 June

Thank God for the Arab and Iranian theologians, Bible teachers and leaders who share their spiritual wisdom through SAT-7 programmes.

Thursday 28 June

Lift up to the Lord SAT-7 UK’s network of dedicated ambassadors, volunteers and partners across the country.

Friday 29 June

Pray for more opportunities for SAT-7 to serve the UK Church.

Saturday 30 June

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:40). Thank God for His heart for the marginalised, and pray we would be inspired to care for the “least of these” in our own communities.

FAST-PACED SHOW WIDENS YOUNG PEOPLE’S HORIZONS

Youth talking to youth: this is the theme of *iNews*, an engaging show created by Cairo production house Icon Media for educational channel SAT-7 ACADEMY.

Over 100 episodes have been filmed so far, and each episode is only seven minutes long – because, laughed show’s director Fadi Taher, “kids won’t sit for longer!” The programme introduces a topic for debate, then goes on to the streets to get young people’s opinions.

“The aim is to give kids information and a platform to share their opinions,” Taher said. “They speak freely and we get all sorts of views. Kids surprise you: you never know what they will say!”



The show recognises that many of the teenagers and children watching have limited horizons, due to poverty, limited education opportunities or displacement by war. But *iNews* aims to expand those horizons and motivate and inspire viewers.

In one episode, a 17-year-old Egyptian girl told her story of winning a national science competition where she specialised in the subject of neurology. She was selected to represent her country in an international competition in the USA, and told how she overcame self-doubts to reach this goal.

“I always thought that scientists were better than me, but my parents told me that we are all the same and I can be a scientist too,” she said.

In another show, young engineers at a high school demonstrated the robots they had made and discussed their goals of becoming engineers. Further episodes were filmed in a Syrian refugee camp in Lebanon.

“We show real stories,” said Taher, “kids who are going through struggles, but they still have hope and good achievements that can inspire other young people.” ■



PRAY

Sunday 1 July

Since starting, *iNews* has built a strong Facebook following of around 50,000. Give thanks for this, and pray that the show will be a regular inspiration to viewers.

Monday 2 July

iNews is intentionally short and fast-moving in order to make it ideal for watching on social media. Ask that young viewers will share the programme with their friends.

Tuesday 3 July

Pray that *iNews* viewers will be keen to discover more SAT-7 shows!

Wednesday 4 July

Almost 65 per cent of the Middle East is aged under 30. Pray for SAT-7 ACADEMY as it aims to educate and equip this precious generation.

Thursday 5 July

Pray for young viewers who have been displaced by war, that they will be given hope for the future.

Friday 6 July

There is a great need to develop more youth shows. Please pray that SAT-7 will have the creativity, inspiration and financial resources to be able to do this.

Sat-Sun 7-8 July

Thank God for the positive role models being shown on *iNews*, and pray these short episodes will have a lasting impact in young people’s lives.

POPULAR SHOW ANSWERS NEW BELIEVERS' QUESTIONS

People are coming to faith in Iran in larger numbers than ever before. But sadly, a lack of teaching, combined with the isolation that many new Iranian believers face, causes many to fall away. Popular SAT-7 PARS show *Question Mark* seeks to support new believers in these critical early stages of their Christian journey.

The 90-minute live show is entirely dedicated to answering Farsi-speaking viewers' questions about Christianity, to help them grow to maturity and feel less alone in their faith.

"Immediately after someone has accepted Jesus there is no place for them to go," said Moe Pooladfar, the show's producer. "At the beginning, when you read the Bible as a new or seeking believer, you come across a lot of things that don't necessarily make sense. That's where *Question Mark* comes in."

Moe explained that it is easy for Christians in the West to take reliable spiritual teaching for granted. "We forget, even I do, that this person in a remote village in Iran has no clue, because there is so much censorship," he explained. "There is not even a Bible available, there is no teaching at school or in their families, so there is no clue at all about Christianity."

To counter this lack of teaching, *Question Mark* answers theological questions on topics such as the Trinity, life after death, sharing the Good News, the Holy Spirit, and reading the Bible. Sally, the show's presenter, and a guest host, usually an Iranian pastor or Bible teacher, start the show with a brief, unscripted chat on the chosen topic. The remaining hour is dedicated entirely to answering viewers' questions, which come in through social media, text and Telegram, as well as phone calls which are answered live on air.

Moe explained that sometimes the simple questions are the most important to address. "Some of our Bible teachers have PhDs and doctorates, so they like to answer the bigger and deeper questions," Moe said. "But most viewers actually have very simple questions. It's important to answer them because this is where they are spiritually at the moment."



While most of those contacting the show are new believers, questions also come in from people of other faiths. According to Sally, "Some of them text us and say, 'Who is Jesus? Jesus was a prophet, so why do you call him God? What is Christianity?' At the end some of them even say, 'If I want to change my religion, what should I do?'"

"I get excited when I see these questions coming in," said Moe. "They are actually watching and reading the Bible. They are trying to understand – that's amazing."

The show has built up a culture of interaction, and viewers often call in to respond to each other's questions. "It's good because it's not just us talking, there is a conversation and interaction happening," Sally said. "We encourage people to give their comments, as well as testimonies, which can be very powerful."

Because of this relationship of trust and dialogue with their viewers, Sally and the team can make sure they are responding to people's specific spiritual needs.

"They really count on this kind of programme – they even send us messages asking for more hours!" Sally said. "They say, 'We don't have any church to go to, we don't have any believers around us, this is the only way we can get fed with the Holy Book and answer our questions. This is the only source we can trust.'"

It is messages like these, along with testimonies from viewers, which give Sally and Moe the encouragement they need to keep going in their work for SAT-7.

"Sometimes we feel like we just sit and talk, and we don't know how much it's working," Sally said. "But when you see the result and fruit, then you see that God is working. It's a great blessing for us too." ■

Monday 16 July
Thank God for the easy access we have in this country to Bibles, reliable teaching, and fellowship with other believers. Pray that we wouldn't take this for granted.

Tuesday 17 July
Pray for those in Iran who would love to own a Bible, that they will find safe access to the Word.

Wednesday 18 July
Pray that isolated believers in Iran will discover SAT-7 and feel less alone in their faith.

Thursday 19 July
When questions come in that are too tricky or sensitive to answer on air, they are passed on to the Audience Relations team to answer off-air. Pray that these interactions would be fruitful and give people the answers they need.

Friday 20 July
Thank God for the culture of trust that has built up between *Question Mark's* team and its audience. Ask that these relationships will continue to deepen.

Sat-Sun 21-22 July
Pray that shows like *Question Mark* bring greater theological understanding and counter false teaching – and that the Iranian Church will flourish as a result.

Monday 23 July
Praise God for the people who are coming to faith through watching the show!

Monday 9 July
"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find" (Matthew 7:7). Thank God for *Question Mark* viewers' openness and inquisitiveness to know more about Him.

Tuesday 10 July
Thank God for those who get in touch with the show to find out about Jesus for the very first time.

Wednesday 11 July
"I thank the Lord for all of you and for your network. I'm very grateful for the programme *Question Mark*, which is excellent! I got the answer to my question... I understand now that I was the one doubting, whereas God simply answers our invitation and enters our lives." Farah, Iran

Thank God that Farah, and many like her, have had their faith strengthened through watching the show.

Thursday 12 July
Pray that God will be with Moe Pooladfar, the show's producer, and inspire him in his day-to-day work.

Friday 13 July
Pray for Sally and the show's guest hosts, that they will answer viewers' questions with truth, wisdom and love.

Sat-Sun 14-15 July
Pray that Moe, Sally and the entire team will continue to be encouraged that their work is making a difference in people's lives.