



**The Syria-Lebanon Partnership Network
of the Presbyterian Church (USA)**

Newsletter: February 9, 2017

Let us Mutually Encourage Each Other
New Video: The Human Tragedy in Syria
SLPN Planning Syria-Lebanon Trip in May 2017



Facing the Human Tragedy in Syria

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the PC(USA) Office of Public Witness, and the PC(USA) Mission Agency, working with producer David Barnhart, have sponsored the production of a video, *Facing the Human Tragedy in Syria*. [Click HERE to view it.](#)

The video features Dr. Mary Mikhael, communications director for our partner church, the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon. Two members of the SLPN Steering Committee, Billie Sutter and Walter Owensby, are also shown. Dr. Mikhael speaks eloquently of the six-year struggle of the people of Syria. She recognizes that the world may have grown weary of hearing about the Syrian conflict and about refugees, but that the humanitarian needs still loom large and we must be "disturbed enough" to respond.

The video is provided as "fair use" under US Copyright Law, which means we are free to use it "in the cause of understanding and discussion of environmental, political, religious, economic, Constitutional, democratic, scientific and societal issues affecting our lives and the world."

Please take 12 minutes of your time and view this important video, and then consider how you can distribute it further to your networks within your church and presbytery.

We continue to pray for our sisters and brothers in Syria and Lebanon, and in the whole of the Middle East. May God empower us to pray for, speak for, and act for peace.

Strengthen Your Advocacy Skills: Advocacy Training Weekend in Washington DC, April 21-24



Join Christian social justice advocates for Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington DC April 21-24. Every year this event draws about 1,000 people to join in a weekend of worship, workshops, lectures, and concrete actions addressing social justice and advocacy. The weekend culminates in a Congressional Lobby Day on Monday, April 24, when advocates will meet with their members of Congress and speak out for a more just society.

The weekend starts in the morning of Friday, April 21 with Compassion Peace and Justice Training Day at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC. This is a denominational event and is a great opportunity for Presbyterians to gain insights about what's happening in PC(USA) ministries we care about and to meet and strengthen ties with members and staff we may only know by name.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days begins in the evening on Friday, April 21 at the Doubletree Hotel Crystal City in Arlington VA. The weekend includes worship, prayer, advocacy training, and networking with other Christians as participants learn to advocate for change in public policy that more truly reflects the Beloved Community that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke about, where no one is free unless all are free.

You can choose to attend one or both of these events. [CLICK HERE](#) for information about the Advocacy Training, including registration information.

If you're thinking about attending the Advocacy Training, the SLPN would like to hear from you! Please contact Steering Committee member Walt Owensby at walter.owensby@iplabs.us. He's planning to be there and he'd like to coordinate workshop attendance with our Syria-Lebanon advocates.

“Mutually Encouraged by Each Other’s Faith”

Travel to Lebanon & Syria with Presbyterian World Mission and the Syria-Lebanon Partnership Network

May 22 - June 1, 2017

Accompany the Syria-Lebanon Partnership Network and PC(USA) Regional Liaison Rev. Elmarie Parker to Lebanon and Syria (conditions permitting) to share worship, fellowship, and a mutual time of learning with Presbyterian partners in both countries.

Registration forms will be ready within 2 weeks. Watch for another newsletter from us or check the SLPN website.

Please note that you should plan your travel to arrive in Beirut no later than the evening of May 23. The registration forms will have much more information and schedule and costs. We wanted to get the dates out to you as soon as we knew them.

We asked one of the US congregations why they donate to NESSL

The Presbyterian Women of a downtown Presbyterian church in the south lead the church each year in identifying an annual global mission project. After meeting Dr. Nuhad Tomeh, a Syrian-American Presbyterian minister, and former PC(USA) staff liaison to Syria and Lebanon, and hearing his descriptions of the horrific refugee situation in Syria and Lebanon, they began a study of the Presbyterian churches in Syria and Lebanon and the work of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL) and made a first gift to the Synod through the SLPN. Later, upon learning, through the SLPN, of the Synod's opening of the schools for refugee children, they designated their mission gift for 2016 to support the schools project. They remain actively interested in the work of the five schools for Syrian refugee children and look forward to hearing more about the schools.

See What God Has Been Doing

Dr. Mary Mikhael has sent an excellent update on relief work in Syria and the schooling ministry for refugee children which NESSL has undertaken in Lebanon. [CLICK HERE to read her report.](#)

The work of our partners in Christ in Syria and Lebanon is a living, ongoing testament to the Spirit of God. May we continue to support NESSL, its pastors, and members of the congregations through our prayers, financial support, and our gift of presence when we are able to travel there.