

# Challenges facing the Church *in the Middle East and at home*

Photographs courtesy of Open Doors



“A caring fellowship” is the Presbyterian Church in Ireland’s theme for 2015-16, when we are encouraged to “welcome the strangers, learn from one another valuing the gifts of each individual while offering prayer and pastoral support to all in need.”



## Speakers



**Rev Farouk Hammo**  
SENIOR PASTOR BAGHDAD  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH, IRAQ



**Rev Uel Marrs**  
GLOBAL MISSION  
SECRETARY,  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH IN IRELAND



**Dr Edith Shillue**  
NICRAS INFORMATION  
OFFICER

Morning conference | *Faith in the Furnace*  
Afternoon conference | *The Refugee Experience*

**Assembly Buildings, Belfast**  
**Tuesday 17th November 2015,**  
**9.30am – 4.30pm**

The Arab Spring, the rise of ISIS, the conflict in Syria have all brought great changes in the Middle East.

In a place where Christians are in a minority and being put under increased pressure, how are the local churches coping? What can we in Ireland do to stand with our brothers and sisters in Christ there? What can we learn from them, especially as we prepare to welcome refugees here? And what are the practicalities of getting involved with refugees who arrive here?

*“...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.*

1 Corinthians 12: 25-26



## Faith in the Furnace

*Challenges facing the Church in the Middle East*

We will hear from Rev Farouk Hammo, Senior Pastor, Baghdad Presbyterian Church, Iraq, whose congregational membership has dropped dramatically due to the violence and persecution of Christians in Iraq over the past ten years. Despite the dangers inside the ‘Fiery Furnace,’ Rev Farouk plays an important role in caring for the many displaced Christian families driven by IS from Mosul and the surrounding Christian villages.

In the morning, we will also have an opportunity to hear from Rev Uel Marrs, having recently returned from a visit to Lebanon, where he saw how the local church is responding to the crisis, and how refugees fleeing conflict are turning to Christ having ‘come through the furnace’.

*‘Faith in the Furnace’ is being run in conjunction with Open Doors.*



## The Refugee Experience

*Challenges facing the Church at home*

In the afternoon, we will hear from Dr Edith Shillue, who works for the Northern Ireland Community of Refugees and Asylum Seekers (NICRAS), who will give an explanation of the asylum and refugee system and processes in the UK, and talk about the experiences of those in the system. Following this, there will be a discussion session on how churches can best help and support new refugees who arrive here.

Edith works in an advisory capacity to the International Meeting Point, 133a Lisburn Road, Belfast.



*The two conference sessions are open to anyone with a desire to hear more about these issues, and will include table group discussions, praise and worship, food and fellowship.*

## Timetable

### Morning Conference – Assembly Hall

- 9.30am Registration
- 10.00am Faith in the Furnace  
– *Challenges facing the Church in the Middle East*
- 1.00pm Lunch

### Afternoon Conference – Assembly Hall

- 1.45pm Registration
- 2.00pm The Refugee Experience  
– *Challenges facing the Church at home*
- 4.30pm Finish

## Booking

Places are limited and advance booking is essential. Participants are welcome to attend either the morning or afternoon sessions or both. Please contact the Mission Department by telephone or email to book your place:

**Tel:** +44 (0)28 9032 2284

**Email:** [global@presbyterianireland.org](mailto:global@presbyterianireland.org)

**Web:** [www.presbyterianireland.org](http://www.presbyterianireland.org)

**The closing date for bookings is Friday, 10th November 2015.**