



# Call to prayer

*for the people of Syria  
and the Synod of Syria  
and Lebanon*

Presbyterian World Mission asks for prayer for members of the Presbyterian Synod of Syria and Lebanon and all Syrians who continue to suffer from the violence of civil war.

As the armed conflict in Syria spreads and intensifies, more and more Christian communities are becoming targets of rebel attacks. In recent letters to World Mission, Syrian churches have reported several kidnappings of Christians, including the director of the Syrian Bible Society and several clergy members. It is now common practice for rebels to seize Christian property as they move their troops through the country, and many churches have been destroyed by heavy bombing and mortar attacks.

In the city of Homs alone, five churches have been completely destroyed with six more sustaining heavy damage. Last week the Presbyterian Church in Aleppo lost two-thirds of its building due to a bomb attack. As a local pastor states, "Losing a church building has significant impact on a congregation. But when your historical church is intentionally destroyed... this sends a very clear message to Christians in the Middle East."

Local Christians emphasize that the official Syrian Army has not destroyed any churches. Rather, rebel groups and Jihadist fighters who make up the so called Syrian Free Army are responsible for the attacks on Christians and churches. What started as a non-violent movement for basic rights in March of 2011 has

since spiraled into a civil war after being hijacked by armed groups, including some radical Islamists.

The Presbyterian Synod of Syria and Lebanon has been addressing the humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons by providing food, medical supplies, shelter and pastoral care.

Presbyterian World Mission, in solidarity with our partner churches in Syria and Lebanon, urge all Presbyterians to pray for an end to the fighting and advocate for a peaceful solution. Please pray that God will instill a feeling of hope in the lives of those who have lost so much.

*To support the ministries of the Synod of Syria and Lebanon, visit*

*[www.presbyterianmission.org/give/E340202/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/give/E340202/).*

*If you would like to give to other NGOs involved in the relief effort, give to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance at [www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/specialofferings/one-great-hour-sharing-offering/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/specialofferings/one-great-hour-sharing-offering/).*

*For updates on the ongoing crisis, visit [www.pcusa.org/crisis-syria](http://www.pcusa.org/crisis-syria).*