The Iraq Partnership Network supports the Iraqi churches with prayer, and also by strengthening partner relationships, providing interpretive resources for US churches, advocating for peace and justice, assisting refugees, and sharing financial gifts.

**Partner Relationships** -- Partnership requires periodic contacts and meetings to consult and plan for the best use of resources. IPN members and national staff stay in touch by frequent communications and visits to promote the mission of Christ.

**Peacemaking, Advocacy, and Education** -- Advocates for the Iraqi churches write articles for various publications and letters to editors, and regularly petition government officials on behalf of the Iraqi Christians.

**Refugee Assistance** -- Up to four million Iraqis, or approximately one-sixth of Iraq's estimated twenty-five million population, are either internally displaced or refugees living in another country. Several of the Iraqi Protestant churches receive direct assistance from the IPN through designated gifts.

**Financial Aid for Congregations** -- Iraqi churches have long been self-sufficient. As a result of the American occupation and the related and ongoing violence, the churches need funds to meet requests for food, clothing, shelter, medicine, and other necessities.

**IPN Membership**
Members of the Iraq Partnership Network, together with US and Iraqi churches, volunteer their talents and resources to strengthen the continuing witness to Christ in Iraq.

To participate in this vital mission opportunity contact one of the IPN Coordinators or denominational offices.

**IPN Coordinators**
Rev. Elmarie Parker, reveparker@comcast.net (PC/USA)
Vi Block, rlbloc@orangecitycomm.net (RCA)
Chuck Gosselink, chuck@gosselink.us (UCC)

**Partners with**
Presbyterian Church USA
Office for the Middle East
Presbyterian Peace Making Program
Presbyterian Extra Commitment Fund Opportunities
Gifts can be mailed to Presbyterian Church USA,
Individual Remittance Processing, P.O. Box 643700,
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Please include the name
and ECO number in the memo line. For online giving
go to the following sites:
Iraq Partnership Network #E052049
http://www.presbyterianmission.org/give/E052049
Peace Fund for Solidarity with the Churches of Iraq
http://www.presbyterianmission.org/give/E051722

Reformed Church in America
Middle East Office
Gifts for Iraq can be designated to Reformed Church
World Services/Iraq, and mailed to RCA, P.O. Box 19381
Newark, NJ 07195-1938.

United Church of Christ
Global Ministries, Middle East and Europe Office
Send gifts for Iraq to UCC Wider Church Ministries and
note “Iraq Humanitarian Appeal” in the memo line. Mail
to Wider Church Ministries, United Church of Christ,
700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115-1100.
Online at http://www.ucc.org/100kforpeace.

**Visit the IPN web page at**
www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/global/iraq

Children from the National Evangelical Church, Baghdad, celebrate Palm Sunday

The Iraq Partnership Network honors the mission history of previous centuries and, with ecumenical cooperation, stands in solidarity and prayer with the national churches of Iraq. The network coordinates its activities with denominational Middle East offices.
Historically, Christianity in Iraq dates from the apostolic era and comprises some of the oldest organized churches in the world. Christians from Mesopotamia were pioneers in spreading the gospel to Arabia, Persia, India and China.

Reformed and Anglican missionaries from the US and Britain first went to Iraq in the early 1800s. After World War I, the Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ formed the United Mission in Iraq. The United Mission worked actively in evangelism, education, and health care until 1958, when secondary education became the major mission focus. In 1969, the Iraqi government nationalized the schools in Baghdad and Basra and the Americans had to leave the country.

Iraq Presbyterian Churches

In the years before and since the 2003 American military operations, the Iraqi people have endured terrible suffering and hardship. As a result of the pressures of war, as well as their minority status, Iraqi Christians face many unique and difficult challenges.

Through the centuries, Iraq has had a rich and varied Christian heritage, including traditions such as the Greek, Syrian, and Armenian Orthodox and Catholic churches. They now make up less than two percent of Iraq’s majority Muslim population.

Iraqi Protestants of the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition face many challenges due to their minority status within the Christian minority. There are strong pressures and anxiety from sectarian tensions, lack of funds, and the appeal to join other established traditions or well-funded new para-church organizations. Protestants may now number less than 5,000, after many have fled Iraq.

To meet this challenge, the IPN is involved in seeking resources to nurture the Iraqi churches and the communities that they serve. We work with our Iraqi partners to secure competent trained pastoral and lay leadership, as well as invest in schools. These are long-standing priorities for the five congregations.

National Evangelical Church of Mosul

The oldest of the Protestant churches in Iraq began in the 1840s. However, because of violence including the kidnapping and assassination of a leading elder, many Christians fled this city. Now only a few families meet in homes for lay-led worship and fellowship.

National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Kirkuk

A long-time Iraqi pastor leads this congregation of 150 families. They maintain regular worship, youth and church school activities, a women’s prison ministry, a FM radio station that broadcasts Christian testimonials daily in 4 languages, and a day care and kindergarten with over 360 children. The church plans to develop a primary school with the help of a grant from the 2010 PW Birthday Offering.

National Protestant Evangelical Church of Baghdad and the Assyrian Protestant Church merged in 2003. The Assyrian building remains closed. Many members of both congregations became internally displaced or refugees, leaving only about 100 church families in Baghdad. An Iraqi pastor, installed in 2012, now leads the congregation. They also have Bible study, youth and women’s groups, a Child Development Center enrolling 60 children, and work continues on a Senior Center.

National Evangelical Church of Basra

After a decade of faithful lay leadership by an elder, their new full-time pastor arrived in January 2013. This congregation of about 15 families worships and studies in a residential area south of the main city. Their growing kindergarten serves about 200 families, and they are expanding their FM radio ministry.

Assyrian Protestant Church of Irbil

Since 2003, significant numbers of Protestant Evangelical Presbyterian Christians have become displaced persons in northern Iraq and other countries. Many Christians are coming together in this Kurdish city where they can safely worship.