

“Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.”

1 John 3:2

My Host Named Lebanon

The Forum for Development, Culture, and Dialogue (FDCD) is engaged in a wide variety of activities in Lebanon, Syria, and the surrounding region. Through the fostering of interfaith dialogue, the FDCD serves to build bridges across historic sectarian divisions both within Lebanon and throughout the region. Through opportunities for dialogue, FDCD brings together youth, seminarians, and religious leaders utilizing common interests, both professional/academic and their visions for their shared future, in an effort to bridge historic sectarian divisions.

In light of the ongoing crisis in Syria, FDCD is engaged in organizing and providing humanitarian relief to internally displaced persons within Syria. In addition to its work in Syria, FDCD continues to work with partners in Lebanon to tend to the needs of refugees who have come to settle in Lebanon.

Although the Syrian refugees are the most visible, they are by no means the first non-Lebanese to call Lebanon “home.” Be it Armenians fleeing the atrocities and genocide of 1915, or Palestinians fleeing the Nakba in 1948, or Iraqis fleeing the instability and violence of the 2003 invasion, Lebanon has welcomed, though at times reluctantly, millions of the region’s displaced.

This mosaic of residents contributes both to the diversity of Lebanon’s domestic life, as well as the challenges of navigating a deeply sectarian society-- a society that places high value on hospitality, but maintains a degree of skepticism and hesitancy, the result of a tumultuous history.

Whether immigrating or emigrating, the integration of new with existing is often a process breeding contention and at times confrontation. Here, the struggle lies between the preservation of identity in the face of animosity and prejudice. It is at this intersection where many Lebanese and international organizations, including the Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue, view a need and opportunity to foster understanding and dialogue between all of those who call Lebanon home. It is precisely this welcoming spirit of solidarity and the bolstering of social cohesion that serves as a counter to those forces seeking to divide.

Andrew Long-Higgins serves as a Global Mission Intern with the Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue in Beirut, Lebanon. His appointment is supported by Week of Compassion, Our Church’s Wider Mission, Disciples Mission Fund and your special gifts.



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