



St. George's (Baghdad) School of the Redeemer

2018—Construction and Furnishings Project

MISSION

The mission of Stand With Iraqi Christians (SWIC) is to support, through friendship and material aid, the right of Christians and their communities in Iraq to survive and thrive. In 2014, Father Christopher Bishop of St. Martin's Episcopal Church (Radnor, PA) became aware of the plight of Iraqi Christians of all denominations and launched a grass roots effort to support Iraqi Christians. His early insights are documented in the video "Where is Our Place?" available free on the SWIC Web site www.standwithiraqichristians.org. This mission of St. Martin's eventually grew into the non-profit Stand With Iraqi Christians, now a group under the IRS designation of The Episcopal Church.

CONTEXT

According to Archdeacon Bill Schwartz (Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf) Christian communities in Iraq and Syria have been worst-hit by 21st-century turmoil. Since 2011, millions of Christians fled their homes, fearing genocide at the hands of Islamic extremists. Throughout Iraq they regularly face discrimination for practicing their faith. Even with the so-called Islamic State (ISIS) pushed back militarily, there are thousands of Christians facing persecution as they try to rebuild their lives. SWIC is committed to walking with our fellow Christians as they move forward.



Education, small business development, and water wells are only a few of the ways we collaborate with Christian organizations. These projects help not only Christians but improve the quality of life for their Muslim neighbors, too.

DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK:

St. George's (Baghdad) runs the School of the Redeemer—a Christian nursery school and kindergarten. Students come from all segments of society:

- Muslims, both Shi'i and Sunni,
- Christians,
- Yezidis and other faiths,
- as well as both boys and girls.

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This ministry is truly inclusive. For the past two years parents have driven a call for expansion because parents of all faiths highly value the education their children receive. The school is properly registered with the Iraqi Ministry of Education and highly rated. In 2017 a building permit was obtained, and construction begun to expand the school to a new building that would serve children through 6th grade. Tragically the construction was stalled recently because of funding restrictions between Middle East countries. At the same time the Iraq government is looking for signs of progress and if the construction does not continue the school is in danger of not opening in the fall of 2018. In addition to construction expenses, the school will need furnishings, technology and supplies in order to be ready to educate children next fall.



STATEMENT OF NEED:

To date over \$250,000 has been raised. But to resume construction of the first floor, to have the building ready to accommodate children in grades 1-3 next fall, St. George's needs a minimum of \$30,000 more this spring. To complete the entire building and equip it for students the school needs over \$200,000 in additional funds.

Donations to SWIC will have an immediate, positive impact. An initial \$20,000 was raised by SWIC in just a month at the beginning of 2018, but more is needed immediately to keep the project going. All donations to SWIC are tax deductible.

Donations can be made on the SWIC Website: www.standwithiraqichristians.org

Funds will be used for:

- Construction materials such as walls, ceiling, flooring, windows, and doors
- Plumbing and electrical work
- Air conditioning units (due extreme temperature fluctuations in Baghdad)
- Desks and chairs
- Desktop computers and tablets
- Library
- Other furnishings and resources for community areas



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