

Statement of Intent

The tremendous need of refugees and displaced people in the Middle East requires a bold and compassionate response. The civil war in Syria, compounded by the aggression of ISIL affecting people of Syria and Iraq, has produced a refugee crisis.

Among the estimated 3.2 million Syrian refugees who have fled the country are more than 500,000 Christians, almost one-third of all Syrian Christians. In Iraq it is believed that, since August 2014, 120,000 Christians have fled their homes due to the advances of ISIL, and are among the estimated 1.8 million displaced people. The Christian population in Iraq, among the oldest in the world, has decreased from 1.5 million to 450,000. The majority of refugees are Muslim, both Sunni and Shia. Others include Yezidis, Kakais and Shabaks.

Throughout Scripture God commands us to love our neighbour and care for the vulnerable, the needy and oppressed (Matt. 25:34-40). Among these are the stranger, the alien, and the sojourner. Leviticus 24:22 states: "When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall do him no wrong.... You shall love him as yourself." As followers of Jesus, we know that Jesus and his parents were refugees in Egypt, fleeing the wrath of King Herod.

As church leaders in Canada, we feel compelled to respond to this significant need and work to settle refugees in Canada. We commit to recruiting congregations across Canada who will sponsor refugee families from Iraq and Syria, welcome and befriend them, provide new homes for them and help them integrate into Canadian society where they can live in freedom.

Signatories:

Wes Mills	Apostolic Church of Pentecost Canada
Bill Fietje	Associated Gospel Churches
Doug Sider	Brethren in Christ
Sam Chaise	Canadian Baptist Ministries
Tim McCoy	Canadian Baptist of Ontario and Quebec
Jeremy Bell	Canadian Baptists of Western Canada
Willy Reimer	Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches
Darren Roorda	Christian Reformed Churches North America
Peter Reid	Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches
Phil Delsaut	Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada
Gary Moore	Grace Communion International Canada
Willard Metzger	Mennonite Church Canada
David Wells	Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
David Hearn	The Christian and Missionary Alliance
David Rowley	Union d'Églises Baptistes Francophones au Canada
Gord Martin	Vision Ministries Canada