



P.O. Box 16474 Washington, D.C. 20041-6474

Dear Friends at Hamilton Baptist Church,

Thank you for your generous support of Smyrna Ministries International on behalf of the persecuted church. We are grateful for your partnership in prayer and giving that enables us to help Christians persevere in the midst of oppression by Islam throughout the world. 2017 saw a number of areas where your support has made a real difference in the lives of other Christians. Your gifts enabled us to:

- **Help the families of Nigerians martyred by Boko Haram** to rebuild their lives, provide basic life necessities, and educate their children;
- **Provide relief for refugees fleeing ISIS** and other terrorist groups in Syria and four other Middle Eastern nations.
- **Aid families of pastors in Iran** who are imprisoned for proclaiming Christ;
- **Facilitate Gospel activities for kids** in west Africa and Asia Minor;
- **Underwrite the production of Christian media in Egypt** to shine the light of the Gospel amid the darkness of Islam throughout the Islamic world by satellite TV;
- **Develop new prayer tools for use by Christians** praying for the persecuted church.

We are excited about a new opportunity to assist persecuted Christians in Lebanon. A new partner ministry there serves Syrian refugee families. They have fled their homes because of ISIS and other Islamic terrorists. The refugees include Christians and Muslims.

Our new partner provides education for refugee children and boldly teaches about Jesus. The ministry converted four adjacent roadside-shops into schools, and 200 children are taught reading, writing, math and Jesus, all within a loving, safe environment.



Our Field Rep, Brian, and I visited refugee camps to better understand the ministry. We found that a nearby mosque had established an Islamic school soon after the Christian school began.

Some of the Muslim parents sent their children to the school at the mosque when it opened. After a short time, most of those children came back to the Christian school. Why? **The kids told their Christian teachers that if they didn't quote the Quran right or learn it fast enough, the teachers at the Islamic school would beat them with rubber hoses.**

In our partner's Christian school, the children are loved, cared for, and encouraged by their teachers. They recite Bible verses and sing songs of Christ daily, but they are not ridiculed or threatened. The kids respond to being taught with love rather than hate.

What a dramatic example of the difference between Islam and Christianity! Our partner ministry is **planting seeds of Christ's love in these children and exposing them to the truth.** For 2018, one of our goals will be to **build a financial support structure for this ministry.** Will you consider a special gift to help bring truth to these children of Syrian refugees?



We have many other exciting initiatives scheduled for 2018, too. We will **continue to enlarge our network of ministry partners** throughout the world who are on the front lines ministering to persecuted Christians and boldly sharing the freedom of Jesus with those who are in bondage to Islam. I am already exploring an opportunity to partner with a Christian Pakistani physician whose ministry would enable you, through your gifts and prayers, to help bring the Gospel into that very hostile country.

We will also **continue to expand our library of prayer materials** designed to enrich your prayer for the persecuted church. Smyrna's prayer tools use the language, promises, and heart of God to help form those prayers. Moreover, our approach rests on the fact that the church is not a static entity. Today's persecuting Muslim may be tomorrow's persecuted Christian. Smyrna's prayer tools recognize this reality and help you pray accordingly.

In all of these initiatives we look forward to what God has in store for 2018, and I invite you to continue participating with us through your prayers and contributions. **Please consider a generous donation to Smyrna before the end of 2017 to help launch next year's work.**

On behalf of the Persecuted Church, may God richly bless you, and Merry Christmas.

Bill Wilcox, Executive Director