



MINUTE FOR MISSION

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program

RESTORING STREETS IN SYRIA

In 2012, civil war broke out in Syria, where ISIL's presence continues to create violence and fear. More than 250,000 people have been killed, and 13.5 million others have had to leave their homes to seek safety in Lebanon, Europe, and the United States.

Thanks to our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) was able to respond to this refugee crisis soon after it began. Working with churches in the region, primarily the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, PDA helps Syrian refugee children in Lebanon continue their education and provides refugee families food, shelter, and heating oil. Across the denomination, PDA assists efforts by congregations to resettle Syrian refugees. Their welcoming hands bear witness to our biblical imperative to extend hospitality to the stranger and the foreigner.

But One Great Hour of Sharing gifts do more than help refugees build new lives in a new country—they enable PDA to assist displaced Syrians seeking to return to the country they love. Though the threat of ISIL remains and the civil war still rages, a number of Syrians are replanting their lives in their homeland. Some live in Homs, where more than 40 houses and apartments have been rebuilt through a partnership between PDA and the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon. This project allows families to begin the long process of building new lives.

PDA's director, Laurie Kraus, recently met with a displaced couple—an engineer and pediatrician—whose apartment was rebuilt. “Their block is dark at night. There is no one else in their building or on their street,” Kraus says. “The wife goes out at 3:00 in the morning to make house calls on children. They're living like pioneers at a frontier outpost, because they believe it's the only way to bring back their city.”

Our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing played a part in bringing hope to this family in Syria. With our contributions to this important offering, more homes will be rebuilt, and the streets of that dark city block will again be filled with light, with people living in peace. Our gifts support this continuing work and the many other essential ministries made possible by our support of One Great Hour of Sharing.

Please give generously.

Let us Pray: *God of restoration, you call us to support the world's most vulnerable. Help us provide assistance to those who have become refugees through violence and war, so your restoring love would be made known to all. Amen.*