

A Vision of Partnership between  
St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Nablus  
The Church of the Good Shepherd, Rafidia  
And  
Grace Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Virginia, USA

*Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. (1 John 4:11-13)*

*May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. (Rom. 15:5-7)*

God calls us to love one another. He also calls us to unity in Christ. We celebrate the fellowship we have with Christ and with one another through the Holy Spirit in a bond that spans time and space. In recognition of this bond, and in an effort to build relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ in what to each of us are far off lands, our two congregations desire to form a partnership of faith and friendship. Together, as members of the Body of Christ – the Church – we will work to spread and enhance strong faith in this troubled world.

We envision a partnership in which mission is shared, encouragement is exchanged, and mutual support abounds. We see dialogue as a key component: dialogue between pastors and priest, leaders of vestry and session, and the men, women, youth, and children of the churches.

And we see dialogue with God in and through prayer. Together we will lift our praises, confessions, thanksgiving, and supplications to our loving Father, both in times of joy and celebration and in times of grief and mourning.

As our partnership unfolds, we look forward to many ways of supporting and befriending each other, such as joint worship made possible by modern communication technology, electronic mail correspondence, the sharing of our holiday traditions, mutual projects, mission work in both societies, and visits back and forth.

We hope to develop, over time, a range of activities that strengthen the relationship between our congregations, including our pastors, committees, various groups in our churches, youth, and Sunday School.

To facilitate our partnership and shared ministry, we will form a liaison committee between our churches with three members from Nablus/Rafida and three members from Grace.

We look forward to faithful cooperation as we undertake this partnership in the love of God the Father, through Christ the Son, with the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Praise be to God.

Adopted by:

St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Nablus  
The Church of the Good Shepherd, Rafidia  
On (date)

Grace Presbyterian Church  
Springfield, Virginia  
On (date)