



Kurdistan

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For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

خودی هۆسا حمز ژ جیهانی کر، کو وی کوری خوی
نیکانه دایی، داکو همر کهسی باوهریی پی بینیت ژ ناڤ
نهچیت، بهلکو ژيانا ههروهر ههبيت
یوحنا ۳ : ۱۶

Pastoring a Church

I have never appreciated my former pastor, current pastor, nor my father as much as I have post planting a church. The sermon series, the posters, the planning that goes into campaigns, and the constant pull from the Holy Spirit to pray for and love the people only now, can I appreciate.

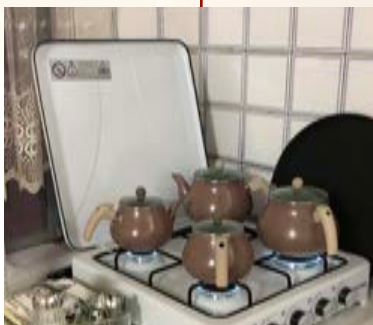
Never have I experienced more frustration with a group of people. Never have I experienced more joy and encouragement from a group of people.

Our church is small....our people are poor....but our people are faithful.

In a previous letter, I added some humorous photos showing the empty tithe box. It is no longer empty. While we have yet to broach the subject of giving people have begun to give. It would seem a small amount to most. Insignificant, really. To me, it was as if I had been given the world. The people are investing in the church. It's not much, but it is a start.

Please continue to pray for Duhok (Doo-hook) Baptist Church (DBC). God has just begun his work here and who knows what mighty works he is preparing to perform for his glory.

Your servants,
Matt & Apryl Haynes



Required pre- and post-church activity in the Middle East.....tea.



Who knows what you will find for sale in Kurdistan!

Plans for 2019

While we all would see our churches grow numerically that is not the top priority for DBC in 2019. The USA has been blessed with a "church" presence for several hundred years. Even the unchurched in the USA have had exposure to church life, activity and process. That is not true for Kurdish people from Muslim backgrounds. Their idea of what a church is has been shaped by everything but the Bible. Organizations, well-intentioned individuals as well as individuals and groups without good intentions have all played a part in defining what is "church" in Kurdistan.

Our goals for this year are to move from being a Bible study to an authentic, intentional, indigenous, independent Baptist church. That means there will be baptism, communion, and a church covenant.

We are excited to see what God will do in 2019 with this small work. It belongs to him. It was begun for his glory. It operates for his glory. His will is our only desire.



May God bless you in this new year. May we all accomplish that which would glorify God.



The Wife's perspective

Our First Christmas Together at Duhok Baptist Church

Time spent is somehow more precious when with believers. Matt and I don't have a lot in common with the little group of believers at Duhok Baptist Church. We come quite literally from different worlds, our cultures could not be more diverse, our thinking processes differ, and even the way we do practical, every day tasks looks vastly different and even strange due to our differing ideals and cultures. There are ways in which we will probably always be strange to them and them to us. Then enters Jesus. Jesus shifts everything, doesn't He? Two people that might otherwise never find themselves in the same room suddenly find themselves loving each other because of that one name - Jesus. What a precious thought and how much more precious to see it in action.

Every service we have together is a picture of how Jesus unifies even the most disparate, but our first Christmas service together will always be specially treasured by me. Some precious soul wrote a handful of Christmas songs in Behdini Kurdish so we enjoyed singing about the Savior's birth, heard a Christmas lesson from one of our men, and then a Christmas message by my husband. Afterward, we went to the kitchen where we shared Kurdish food together from our ladies and some cakes that I had prepared. There was a lot of laughter, joy and wishes for a Happy Christmas being passed around. We ended the night by giving some small gifts to the children and listening as they gathered and sang "Happy birthday to Jesus" in their precious little voices - I see a tradition in the making there.

My favorite part of the night was seeing people investing of themselves to make a special time and service. Coming to church to serve is a new concept here. In the past, the people coming to our services now were spread across a handful of Arabic-speaking churches. Though Arabs are in the vast minority here and Arabic is not widely spoken amongst the populace (many young Kurds don't speak it at all), these were the only churches Kurds had to attend. At many of these churches, people literally receive for attending (cash, charity, etc) so the idea of giving or serving is quite new. Our people have so little yet ladies brought food, men brought dishes to eat off of, the children served us by singing, and everyone helped set up and clean up. These may seem like small things, but they are huge victories in our brand new church body. The more we each take ownership, the more we become a little family in Christ.

SENDING CHURCH:
Maranatha Baptist Church of
Western Oaks
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2800 N. Divis
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Getting to be a part and witness the roots of service take hold in this new work is a privilege and something I'll always cherish.

Love in Christ,
Apryl Haynes

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