

**Meetings in York on 6th Feb 2012**

**Canon Andrew White**

The Vicar of Baghdad is in York  
6th February 2012

**Workers' Lunch: Drop in Session**

12:30pm to 1:15pm

St Michael le Belfrey Church, YO1 7HH  
Bring a packed lunch, drinks provided

**Church Leaders: Drop in Session**

1:30pm to 2:40pm

St Michael le Belfrey Church, YO1 7HH  
Bring a packed lunch, drinks provided

**Open Meeting**

7:30pm to 9:00pm (coffee from 7pm)  
Archbishop Holgate's School, Hull Road,  
York, YO10 5ZA

Contact 422322 / [admin@yorkelim.com](mailto:admin@yorkelim.com)  
for further information

Registered charity no. 1077012.

**o.v.y OneVoiceYork**  
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#### **About Canon Andrew White**

Andrew is married with two sons. His family currently live in the southeast of England. At the age of 33, about six weeks after he became a canon, Andrew was investigated for poor vision and balance problems. He was hospitalised, and a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis was given to him on the same day his second son was born.

#### **About his ministry**

Canon Andrew White has an extraordinary ministry of reconciliation and conflict mediation in the Middle East. Having worked for many years in Israel and Palestine, including negotiating the end of the Bethlehem siege in 2002, Canon White now works almost exclusively in Iraq, earning him the nickname the Vicar of Baghdad.

#### **Vicar of Baghdad**

In Iraq, White lives in Baghdad and serves as the vicar of St George's Church just outside the Green Zone. He formerly lived in the Green Zone. He has been dubbed "Vicar of Baghdad", because his church is the only remaining Anglican church in Iraq. His people (the congregation of St George's) refer to him as their "Aboona" (Father). Here, he has continued the reconciliation that he promoted during his time as Director of International Ministry at Coventry Cathedral. The Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East was established in 2005 as part of his reconciliation work in Iraq and the Middle East as a whole.

His main aim has been to try to maintain communication between Shia and Sunni leaders, and to "gain trust of key

religious leaders on both sides in various conflict areas".

He sees his role as trying to mediate and re-establish the dialogue between conflicting groups.

White was aware of the fear that the Iraqi people had of Saddam Hussein's regime, and supported the invasion of Iraq, but not the aftermath.

White's lay pastor was kidnapped in April 2007; however, he managed to raise the \$40,000 ransom necessary to secure the pastor's release and soon returned to Iraq where he stays most of the time.

On 11 July 2007, White arrived in Britain after having fled Iraq following warnings of threats to his life, but returned later on. He is no stranger to danger, having been "hijacked, kidnapped, locked up in rooms with bits of finger and toe and things." He has "been held at gunpoint, been attacked – the usual thing"! Many of his staff have been kidnapped or killed, with up to 11 killings of staff in a single year.

#### **The Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East (FRRME)**

Andrew is the president of FRRME who specialise in forging reconciliation by engaging religious leaders in dialogue, helping them use their influence to promote peace.

"There is no place in the world that has the profile of the Middle East – constantly in the news and constantly the scene of war. Yet amidst the tragedy of the region there are few places that have such wonderful people. I love the people of this region and so do we as an organisation.

This includes all peoples of the region:

Muslims, Christians and Jews. In the midst of conflict we seek political, diplomatic and religious solutions."

