



**2 November - 'Christians in the Middle East: A Different Perspective'
17:00 - 18:30 – Committee Room 3**

This APPG, in conjunction with Christians in Parliament, held a briefing session on 'Christians in the Middle East: A Different Perspective'. Speaking at this event was Revd Canon Andy Thompson (Chaplain of St Andrew's Church, Abu Dhabi), Gerard Russell (former UN and British diplomat with extensive experience in the Middle East) and Baroness Berridge (Co-Chair of this APPG).

Reverend Canon Andrew (Andy) Thompson has lived in the Middle East and the Gulf for much of his life and joined St Andrew's Church in Abu Dhabi in June 2010. He is the longest serving Anglican clergyman in the Gulf having previously lived and worked in Bahrain and Kuwait. He was ordained in 2000 and holds degrees in Behavioural Sciences and Islamic Studies. Andy was awarded the MBE in Her Majesty the Queen's 2011 Honours List for his contribution to inter-faith relations and his work in Kuwait. He was made an Honorary Canon of Bahrain Cathedral in August 2011. He has written a number of books including *Jesus of Arabia* and *Christianity in the UAE*.

Gerard Russell is a former United Nations and British diplomat. During his time with the British Foreign Service, which took him to Cairo, Jerusalem, Baghdad, Jeddah and Kabul, he was described as 'the foremost expert on the Islamic world in his generation'. In 2009, he moved to the Carr Centre for Human Rights Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. He is author of *Heirs to Forgotten Kingdoms: Journeys into the Disappearing Religions of the Middle East*.

This event was public and was attended by members of the public, parliamentary staff and the following parliamentarians:

Lord Evans of Weardale, Tom Tugendhat MP, Lady Luce, Lady Nicholton, Stephen Timms MP, Lord Anderson of Swansea, Lord Harries, The Rt Hon. Lord Bates, Lord Curry, Lord Selkirk, Baroness Uddin, The Rt Hon. Alistair MP, Lord Harries.