The third course of the Interreligious Understanding Program at PTS, “Contemporary Islamic Traditions,” will be taught in Tulsa in six sessions beginning January 31, 2013, by Dr. Imad S. Enchassi, Imam of the Islamic Society of Greater Oklahoma City and Chair of Islamic Studies at Oklahoma City University.

As a child, Enchassi was exposed to the horrors of hatred and violence when, in 1982, he witnessed the massacres of Palestinians by Christian militia in the refugee camps at Sabra and Shatila in Beirut, Lebanon. This experience inspired him to create strategies for resisting the influences of hate and extremism around the world.

Enchassi has an impressive background, with multiple degrees earned in the U.S. and four degrees in Islamic Studies from schools in Lebanon. Active in community service and human rights activities, Enchassi is committed to education and interfaith dialogue. He writes: “I believe that education is the remedy for all ills. I believe that education is the lamp that illuminates the way for a better and happier life. I believe that the purpose of education is to humanize all aspects of our existence. I believe that true education will empower us to eliminate the concept of the ‘other’ and harmonize us into one true ‘human family.’”
The course, “Contemporary Islamic Traditions,” will introduce participants to important classical and modern expressions of Islam through a survey history of the religion from its founding in the 6th century C.E. to the development of the Islamist movement in the 20th century. During the course, participants in the course will:

- consider the Judeo-Christian roots of Islam;
- examine popular misconceptions about Islam;
- outline the history of Islam in the U.S., including among African Americans;
- consider the 9/11 tragedy and its impact on the Muslim community;
- review a number of contemporary educational films on Islam;
- discuss Islamophobia and how to combat it;
- visit a local mosque and socialize with local Muslims.

Classes will be held on six consecutive Thursday evenings, beginning January 31, 2013, from 6:15—9:00 p.m. Classes will meet on the campus of Phillips Theological Seminary, 901 N. Mingo Road, Tulsa, OK 74116.

www.ptstulsa.edu/interreligious