



Dear Disciples Friends,

July 31, 2015

ACTION ALERT: CALL & E-MAIL TODAY TO END FAMILY DETENTION!

Since returning from General Assembly a week ago, much has happened related to immigrant detention! **So many of you have been advocating for MONTHS to END FAMILY DETENTION** of the mothers and children who came to the U.S. last year fleeing violence in Central America, but were sadly placed in family detention centers in Dilley and Karnes City, Texas, and in Berks, Pennsylvania after arrival. Throughout the past year, Disciples have done so much to support these refugee families:

- Disciples Women, youth, and churches have sent Bibles and “Angel to Angel” cards of care to detained women and kids.
- NAPAD staff member Lynnette Li worked on the border to welcome new arrivals at bus stations.
- Hispanic leaders gathered along the border near San Diego to pray and sing for the women and children to be welcomed and treated with mercy.
- Week of Compassion reached out to assist with spiritual and emergency needs.
- Disciples prayed in the rain and in the ditch outside the largest detention center in Dilley, Texas last April to support the women suffering inside.
- Some churches have offered funds to provide much needed legal services to the children and moms.
- And, our office has met with White House staff, with legislators, and with human rights organizations constantly to ask that the detention centers be closed, and that the children be treated with compassion.

Then, just last Friday, Judge Dolly Gee of California issued her long-awaited ruling on family detention; stating that the U.S. use of family detention centers is a violation of the previous “Flores Settlement” from 1997. The judge called for the parents and children to be released from today’s family centers in Dilley, Karnes, and Berks (unless they can be shown to be a flight risk or threat to national security). **And importantly, the judge gave the Obama administration until only this coming Monday (August 3rd) to respond to her ruling.**

Earlier this week, Dr. Sharon Watkins made a statement to URGE THE ADMINISTRATION TO NOT APPEAL THE JUDGE’S RULING, AND TO CLOSE THE DETENTION CENTERS NOW! Here’s a quote from her message:

“I applaud the July 24, 2015 ruling by Federal Judge Dolly Gee, joining the chorus denouncing family detention, reaffirming that migrant children must be released to foster care or relatives and placed in the least restrictive environment possible. Her ruling echoes the prophet Isaiah’s call to ‘correct oppression’ (Is. 1:17) and enables our nation to better ‘speak out in defense of the poor’ (Prov. 31:8-9). Family detention exacerbates the trauma families have already experienced, profits prison companies, isolates legitimate asylum seekers from services, and constrains hope that liberty might ever be found. Judge Gee’s order instructs the administration to develop a plan to release the mothers and children ‘without unnecessary delay.’ **I strongly urge the administration not to appeal Judge Gee’s decision.**”

NOW, with such a short timeline, WON'T YOU JOIN YOUR VOICE WITH OTHER DISCIPLES TO SUPPORT THE FAMILIES BY DOING THESE TWO THINGS TODAY??:

- 1. Call the White House at 202-456-1111.**

Feel free to use this sample script:

My name is _____ and I'm calling to encourage the Obama Administration to comply with Judge Gee's Flores decision and to close the Dilley, Karnes and Berks family detention centers. There is simply no humane way to incarcerate families. The revival of family detention is a failed policy, and an appalling stain on the United States' human rights record. I urge the Administration to allow this decision to stand, release women and children immediately, and close all family detention centers once and for all.

- 2. Send an email to Attorney General Lynch, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, and President Obama, White House, together with many of our faith partners. Go to: <http://capwiz.com/pcusa/issues/alert/?alertid=67355626> to SIGN ON!!**



Thanks for your willingness to help IN THIS CRUCIAL HOUR, when YOUR VOICE can take ending family detention to the FINISH LINE!

**Blessings,
Sharon**

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