

## **Statement in Response to Supreme Court Ruling re: Refugee and Muslim Bans**

Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President, Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ) and  
Rev. Dr. Ronald Degges, President, Disciples Home Missions

“Disciples are a faith movement committed to fulfilling our biblical call to show hospitality to the stranger and treat ‘the foreigner who resides with you...as the native born among you’ (Leviticus 19:34). Today’s Supreme Court decision only allows refugees with a ‘bona-fide relationship’ to the U.S. to enter. *Our scripture and faith values relate us closely and deeply with refugees and immigrants.* With more refugees in the world than ever before, *now more than ever* I remain steadfast that refugees should not be denied entrance based upon national or religious exclusion. Refugees should be welcomed generously in numbers of at least 75,000 this year and next. Our ministries re-affirm the robust security vetting processes for refugees that make the refugees we welcome the most securely examined of all entrants into the United States. Many are refugees whose communities we already have worked with internationally through Global Ministry partnerships to offer relief and care. As has been true throughout decades in the public-private partnership of refugee resettlement, many of our congregations stand ready to enthusiastically offer our hearts and hospitality to new refugee neighbors whom we recognize as some of the most vulnerable persons in the world; already violently forced to flee their homes and often separated from family members for many years. Indeed, our decades of welcoming have taught us how America is at our best when we reject exclusionary practices, help those in need, and build mercy and compassion adequate to overcome barriers and blocks,” stated **Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).**

“As partners who joined through Disciples Home Missions in interfaith Amicus briefs filed in opposition to the Executive Orders banning travel by nationals of a number of predominantly Muslim countries and banning and limiting other refugees to the U.S. during the current year, we are thankful in measure that the Supreme Court today held in place the opportunity for some refugees to continue to enter the United States,” **said Rev. Dr. Ronald J. Degges, Disciples Home Missions President.** “However, we are deeply disturbed by how the Supreme Court’s decision likewise allows for a four-month suspension of refugee resettlement, and continues to deny the opportunity for most refugees--who do not have already existing formal entity or close personal relationships--to be offered the security and welcome needed to stabilize their lives. We should not penalize refugees for the trauma that has broken apart their lives and linkages.”