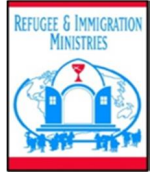




Disciples Home Missions and Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Response to Executive Orders against Refugees & Immigrants:
Refugee Bans and Accelerated ICE Raids
2/21/2017



As a faith movement born on the American frontier and founded on the principles that all are welcome at the Table of Christ, Disciples remain 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). We remember the characteristics of independence, initiative, and determination that have historically contributed to our American spirit, and we see such values reflected in the courage of immigrant and refugee individuals and families who are our neighbors and fellow church members.

In this time of strident rhetoric against immigrants and refugees, and in the face of multiple Executive Orders impacting immigrant and refugee communities by the Trump administration, we express compassion both for those within and outside of our faith family who are experiencing heightened fears of disruption and separation from their families, communities, and jobs because of recent pronouncements.

As anxieties of immigrants and refugees have increased, we re-pledge to stand in solidarity with sojourners among us, to seek to strengthen our partnerships for justice with the marginalized, and to continue to call upon our congregations to deepen their welcome for refugee and immigrant communities. We celebrate many ways our congregations are actively seeking to live out their solidarity through intentional acts of welcome, sanctuary, and the offering of protections.

We likewise call upon the White House and Congress to rescind the refugee and immigration Executive Orders, and instead to pursue compassionate immigration reforms that model our commitment to unity and recognition that all are created by and valuable in the eyes of God.

We urge the White House and Congress to remain committed to a robust program of refugee resettlement that will welcome at minimum the 75,000 refugees currently funded by the U.S. Congress to enter this fiscal year. We call upon the White House and Congress to recognize the demonstrated safety of the U.S. refugee vetting processes, and to resist a pause in the U.S. resettlement program which harms the ability for thousands of the world's most vulnerable persons to obtain needed protections. We urge the White House and Congress to not deny entrance to refugees based upon national or religious exclusions.

We decry the recent escalation of raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), which have detained immigrants outside churches and other sensitive locations, and which have indiscriminately arrested parents of citizen children, lay leaders, and even an individual with current Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. We believe that raids upon immigrants do not make our communities safer. Rather, we believe community safety is strongest when all community members—regardless of immigration status—feel safe to approach law enforcement without fear that they could be detained or deported because of such actions. We urge the White House and Congress to halt such practices that result in detentions and deportations of individuals who have not posed a risk to our society.

Further, we believe peace comes not by the multiplication of barriers and force, but by the furtherance of relationships, and a focus upon building bridges and partnerships rather than walls. We therefore urge resistance to force multiplication at the border. We call for discretion in immigration enforcement, and seek civil and human rights for border communities, including community engagement and accountability systems.

Our hearts are deeply saddened as well for the more than three quarters of a million youth and young adults who now face additional uncertainties under the new administration as DACA recipients. Within our Disciples congregations are talented DACA college students, church leaders, and community contributors who arrived as sojourners in our midst, have spent the majority of their lives in the U.S., have served God and neighbor in America for years, and have displayed cherished values of hard work, commitment to family, and the pursuit of education. We urge the White House and Congress to offer immigration reforms that reassure these so-called dreamers of a stable future, keep them united with their families, and enable them to fully utilize their God-granted gifts without fears of deportation.

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