

Dear Honorable Rep [Insert your Member of Congress's name] or Honorable Sen. [Insert your Senator's name]:

At this moment, our world is facing the worst crisis of people forcibly displaced from their homes in global history. -There are over 65 million displaced persons worldwide, and of those, 22 million are refugees – women, men and children who have been forced to cross an international border to find safety and refuge and cannot go home.

As Christians and members of the United Church of Christ, we are called by the Gospel to offer welcome and care for the stranger, the immigrant and the refugee, just as we would offer it to Christ<sup>1</sup>. In light of this Gospel call and the forced displacement of our brothers and sisters around the world, we have been deeply disappointed in the Presidential determination to offer resettlement to only 45,000 refugees this year. This historically low admissions goal will likely not even be met - as only 15,000 refugees have been resettled as of June 2018 and the fiscal year ends September 30, 2018.

Not only is the U.S. Refugee Resettlement program a reliable, effective and long-standing tool for providing care and welcome for refugee families, but it is strongly supported by a nationwide network of churches, including the United Church of Christ. Furthermore, the Administration's imposition of multiple bans on refugee admissions has blocked thousands of refugees who have already been cleared for resettlement from entering our country, effectively placing them in a torturous state of uncertainty, unsure when they will find the stability and welcome to begin rebuilding their lives. These bans coupled with the lack of commitment by the Administration to the U.S. Resettlement Program have led to this dismally low number of admissions in 2018.

The United Church of Christ upholds as a core value the "love of neighbor." We are called by our faith to welcome the sojourner, just as the saints before us have welcomed those in the Bible who were forced to flee to safety, including the infant Jesus and his earthly parents Mary and Joseph, shortly after his birth<sup>2</sup>. Through the work of UCC Refugee Ministries and our partner Church World Service, hundreds of UCC congregations have lived out that call – helping to resettle refugees and welcoming them to their new communities.

We call on Congress to ensure that the United States preserves the work of refugee resettlement by urging the Administration to meet the goal of admitting 45,000 refugees in 2018, and increasing admissions to 75,000 refugees for 2019. We additionally ask that you take steps through the appropriations process to ensure adequate funding for these actions.

Our congregations stand ready to offer welcome and support to those fleeing violence and fear. Please do your part to make sure that the United States continues to be a global leader in providing safety and welcome for those who need it most.

Yours in faith,

[Insert your congregation's name or the name of anyone in your congregation who would like to sign this letter]

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<sup>1</sup> Holy Bible. Book of Matthew, Chapter 25, Verses 31-46.

<sup>2</sup> Holy Bible. Book of Matthew, Chapter 2, Verses 13-18.