

LOVE KNOWS NO BORDERS
A Moral Call for Migrant Justice
United Methodist Supplement

The General Board of Church and Society is joining in a national week of action, organized by the American Friends Service Committee from December 10-18, 2018, to stand in solidarity with the migrant caravan and all who seek refuge in the U.S.

Together, we are calling on the U.S. to end the detention and deportation of immigrants, respect the human right to migrate, and end the militarization of the border.

On Dec. 10, faith leaders from across the country will take part in a nonviolent direct action at the U.S.-Mexico border in San Diego, California. We invite you to organize a solidarity action or event in your community during our national week of action, from Dec. 10 (International Human Rights Day) to Dec. 18 (International Migrants Day).

Make sure to register your event at <https://migrantjustice.afsc.org>.

For all full set of resources, planning suggestions, and message, please download the [AFSC Caravan Solidarity Action Toolkit](#)

(<https://migrantjustice.afsc.org/sites/default/files/Caravan-Solidarity-Action-Toolkit-revNov28.pdf>)

Together with the AFSC and partners we affirm the following:

Our points of unity

We ask that you uphold these values as we join together across the country:

- Center the voices and leadership of migrants, border communities, and organizations in our actions and work.
- Uphold a commitment to nonviolence in direct actions at the border and with support actions.
- Adhere to core messages and demands offered in our toolkits and central documents.

Together, we demand:

- **The U.S. government respect the human right to migrate and seek asylum.**

People fleeing violence in Central America and elsewhere should be able to present themselves to immigration authorities to express their fears – not illegally turned away or criminalized for entering between ports of entry to seek refuge and asylum.

- **An end to border militarization.**

Deploying additional law enforcement, immigration enforcement agencies, or military personnel to the southern border – or giving additional spending authority to these agencies – endangers the rights of migrants and residents of border communities, wastes taxpayer dollars, and does nothing to make us safer. Listen to border communities; revitalize, not militarize their communities.

- **An immediate end to the immoral detention and deportation**, especially the holding of over 40,000 immigrants in inhumane detention indefinitely.

- **The defunding of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection.**

It is crucial we protect those seeking refuge and provide them with services and direct assistance.

United Methodist Resources

United Methodist Statements related to Migration:

- “Global Migration and the Quest for Justice” The 2016 Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church
(<https://www.umcjustice.org/who-we-are/social-principles-and-resolutions/global-migration-and-the-quest-for-justice-6028>)
- “Welcoming the Migrant to the U.S.’ The 2016 Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church
(<https://www.umcjustice.org/articles/welcoming-the-migrant-to-the-us-119>)
- “Immigration Fact and Faith Card”
(<https://www.umcjustice.org/documents/33>)

Quotes from United Methodist Statements Related to LOVE KNOWS NO BORDERS Demands:

An end to border militarization.

[“Welcoming the Migrant to the U.S.”](#) The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church:

“Since 9/11 the debate surrounding immigration has unfortunately been framed as an issue of national security. All of this emphasis on border security has not stemmed the flow of undocumented migration, even though the United States has poured billions of dollars into militarizing the border ... All nations have the right to secure their borders, but the primary concern for Christians should be the welfare of immigrants ... We call on United Methodist churches to ... oppose the building of a wall between the United States and Mexico, which the communities of both sides of the border are in opposition to.”

An immediate end to the immoral detention and deportation

[“Welcoming the Migrant to the U.S.”](#) The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church:

“The fear and anguish so many migrants in the United States live under are due to federal raids, indefinite detention, and deportations which tear apart families and create an atmosphere of panic ... We call upon all United Methodist churches to ... call the United States government to immediately cease all arrests, detainment, and deportations of undocumented immigrants, including children, solely based upon their immigration status until a fair and comprehensive immigration reform is passed.”

The defunding of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection.

[“The United Methodist Church and Peace”](#) The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church:

“National budgets are moral documents. They are a testament to national priorities. May it be that such budgets invest in life- giving and life-sustaining priorities, indeed, the things that make for peace.”

United Methodist Worship Resources

Global Migration Sunday Order of Worship, 2017

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/global-migration-sunday-order-of-worship>

Global Migration Sunday Order of Worship, 2018 (see additional attachment in email)

The Crowning of the Year, poem by Jack Amick, Director of Sustainable Development and Global Migration, UMCOR (see attached in email)

Interfaith Immigration Coalition Advent Devotional 2018

www.interfaithimmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/IIC-Advent-Devotional.pdf

Biblical and Theological Frame: Advent/Christmas & LOVE KNOWS NO BORDERS

Incarnation – God With Us

God, in the opening verses of Genesis, is depicted as a migrant (Genesis 1:1). God’s Spirit is on the move across the cosmic, chaotic depths calling creation into being. In the opening verses of the Gospel of John, God’s migrant Word moves into the world; taking on flesh and dwelling (literally “tabernacles”) among humanity in the person of Jesus. God’s migrant Word is incarnated in the migrant Jesus, whose life, from his birth to his death, is continual movement.

Freedom of movement is, therefore, one of God’s good gifts to creation and essential to the abundant life. This includes humanity’s freedom to migrate in order to survive and thrive. The Bible offers many accounts of how human migration is intimately linked to God’s seeking, saving, healing, and liberating work in and through creation.

God’s free gift of creation is predicated on God’s free gift of movement – flow, process, change. From the Earth’s orbit around the sun (“to everything a season” Ecclesiastes 3:1-8), to the flow of life giving nutrients and energy through watersheds (Isaiah 41:16-18), to the movement of living creatures throughout their life (Gen: 1:20, 30; Jeremiah 8:7); movement within and across ecosystems makes life possible on our planet.

Humans are no exception. Created in the image of God, humans share God’s migrant Spirit. Accounts of moving from one place to another in order to flee natural disaster (Noah and family; Genesis 6-9), political oppression and violence (Exodus 12:31-51 and Holy Family flight to Egypt

Matthew 2:13-23), poverty (Jacob and family to Egypt Genesis 46, Ruth and Naomi Ruth 1:16), or to pursue the abundant life or religious vocation (Abraham and Sarah Genesis 12:1, Jesus Luke 9:58 and throughout the Gospels, Paul Acts, more or less everywhere) are central to the biblical narrative.

The Bible presents migration as an on-going human phenomena, not as a crisis to be managed or a policy problem to be solved. God's seeking saving, healing, and liberating grace is at work in and through migration stories. God is on the move with migrants (Exodus 13:21), accompanying them on their journey and calling them to new life in new places. God with us, Emmanuel.

The Journeys of the Holy Family

In the Gospel of Luke, a Roman census requires a pregnant Mary and Joseph to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. When the couple arrive, there was no room available. The only shelter they hospitality they found was among the domestic animals. Jesus first bed was a feed trough.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Mary, Joseph, and Jesus, faced with Herod's murderous policy ordering the killing of all male children under the age of two, flee their homeland for Egypt in order to protect their young son.

Jesus, later in his life, equates the treatment of the migrant to treatment of himself and intimately connects that treatment to the promise of salvation and eternal life (Matthew 25:35-40). Perhaps, here, Jesus is remembering his own family's need to flee the threat of Herod's violent regime and the refuge they found in Egypt (Matthew 2:13-23)?