

Call to Action

Welcoming Refugees, Immigrants & All Newcomers

November 15, 2016



Welcome & Agenda

Introduction

Opening Prayer

Greatest Fear & Greatest Hope

Protecting the Refugee Resettlement Program

Threats to Immigrants' Rights and Taking Action

Story of Welcome & the Syrian Supper Club

Q&A and Wrap-up



Presenters



Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea
Director, Refugee &
Immigration Ministries
Christian Church (Disciples
of Christ)



Rev. Dr. Ronald Degges
President, Disciples
Home Missions



Noel Andersen
National Grassroots Coordinator
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Program, Church World Service



Bhuwan Pyakurel
Leader & Community
Organizer in Bhutanese
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Jen Smyers
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Kate McCaffrey,
Associate
Professor of
Anthropology at
Montclair State
University



Opening Prayer

“You shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor.” (Leviticus 19:16)



Refugees
Welcome

INTERFAITH
IMMIGRATION
COALITION

Fears of Loss, Hopes for Light

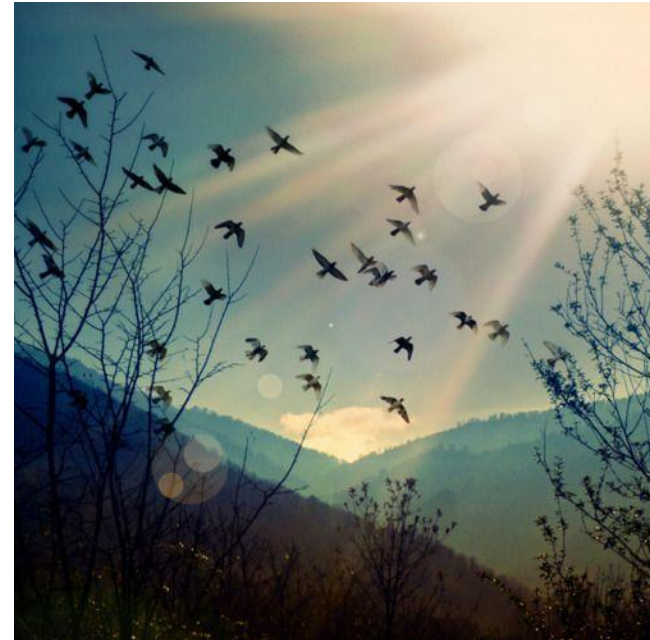
“Anthem” by Leonard Cohen

The birds they sang at the break of day
Start again I heard them say
Don't dwell on what has passed away
or what is yet to be.
Ah the wars they will be fought again
The holy dove--She will be caught again
bought and sold and bought again
the dove is never free.

Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in.

Ring the bells that still can ring ...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48AJBXs5dNc&sns=em>



- **What loss do you fear most?**
- **What light to build/bells to ring do you most hope for??**

Potential Threats to Refugee Resettlement & Refugee Rights

- Shutting down or temporarily pausing resettlement program
- Drastically reducing numbers of resettled refugees
- Not resettling refugees due to their religion, country of origin
- Burdensome requirements to hinder program
- Allowing communities to “veto” resettling refugees
- Cutting funding
- Mandating registration for refugees, Muslims
- Anti-refugee bills in U.S. Congress, state legislature, localities
- Hate crimes, abuse, discrimination, increased fear



Potential Threats to Immigrants' Rights

- Drastically increase deportations and raids in homes and places of employment
- Stop the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program
- Stop processing visas for certain individuals based on religion or nationality
- Force local police to serve as immigration enforcement officers
- Militarize U.S. borders, resulting in more deaths in the desert and more human rights abuses by border patrol officials
- Deny life-saving protection to refugees fleeing Central America and turn them back to situations of exploitation and violence



What can we do?

- Immediately make your voices heard to your local, state and national elected leaders: I SUPPORT REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT **1-866-940-2439 & www.usa.gov/elected-officials**
- Communicate that you will stand with immigrants and refugees through upcoming challenges
- Create spaces of healing and strategizing
- Educate communities about their rights
- Report hate crimes: www.splcenter.org/reportthate
- Respond in solidarity to hate: facebook.com/filmsforaction/videos/10154000910775983/
- Reach out to local, state and national policy makers NOW to let them know that refugee resettlement is a priority for you and your community, and that you're looking to them to defend it against attacks. Ask them to declare that your community is a welcoming community.



Organizing to Protect Immigrant & Refugee Rights

- Come together and build a team with refugees, volunteers, staff, faith groups, other organizations, allies, etc. to strategize
 - Reach out to conservative groups and individuals who can demonstrate support for resettlement and urge policy makers on all levels to defend the program against attacks
 - Prepare your network to take prophetic actions, including civil disobedience, by reflecting on the need and strategic use of civil disobedience.

“If a law is unjust, a man is not only right to disobey it, he is obligated to do so.”— Thomas Jefferson



Resources

- Lift up Welcome for Refugees
 - Host a welcome dinner www.refugeesarewelcome.org
 - Invite a refugee to share their story during a worship service
 - Send us ways that your community is welcoming refugees
www.interfaithimmigration.org/2015/12/03/welcoming-refugees-state-by-state-resources/
- Know Your Rights
 - nationalimmigrationproject.org/tools.html
 - unitedwedream.org/thank-deportation-defense-card-handly-phone
- Sanctuary Movement
 - sanctuarynotdeportation.org
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals
 - unitedwedream.org
 - www.nilc.org/issues/daca



The Sanctuary Movement in a New Political Reality



Refugees
Welcome

INTERFAITH
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Sanctuary as part of our faith tradition

- You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.”

-Psalm 91:1-2

- ***As the faith community, we are called to accompany our community members, congregants and neighbors facing deportation.***



Sanctuary Movement

2014-2016

- Since the 1980's, the Sanctuary Movement has taken up the call to welcome the stranger by providing safe haven to immigrants and refugees in need. Since 2014, 13 churches in 9 cities have provided Sanctuary to 15 individuals seeking to remain in their communities. This new campaign has mobilized 400 congregations to stop deportations calls on all congregations to open their doors and provide refuge for immigrants who are singled out for deportation. Congregations also welcome anyone who has been victimized by discrimination or hate crimes into these sacred safe spaces to bring the community together around love, respect and dignity for all.



Hilda Wins Her Case



Shift in Strategy

- Open congregations doors to vulnerable communities being targeted by administration
- Work to protect Prosecutorial Discretion and Sensitive Locations so that we can still win cases- this remains a question about next administration.
- Defend DACA, push back against border wall or mandatory minimums for unlawful reentry
- Working with evangelicals on outreach to the administration



Expanding Sanctuary

- Faith communities are also supporting those willing to answer the call to provide sanctuary at schools, hospitals, college campuses, community centers and family homes. At this press conference faith leaders commit to work with partner immigrants rights organizations to create sacred space of sanctuary wherever it is needed.
- Working with partners like Cosecha Movement, Showing Up for Racial Justice and PICO



KYR & Protection Network Model

- The **purpose** of a Protection Network is a mutual aid support network whose members unite to support one another to have a family and community plan of action in case of a raid, detention and/or deportation.
 - *Power of Attorney Forms/Action Plan*
 - *Trainings*
 - *Pro-bono legal support*
 - *Rapid Response System*
 - *Visitations & Letter-writing*
 - *Defense Fund*
 - *Advocacy & Community Organizing*

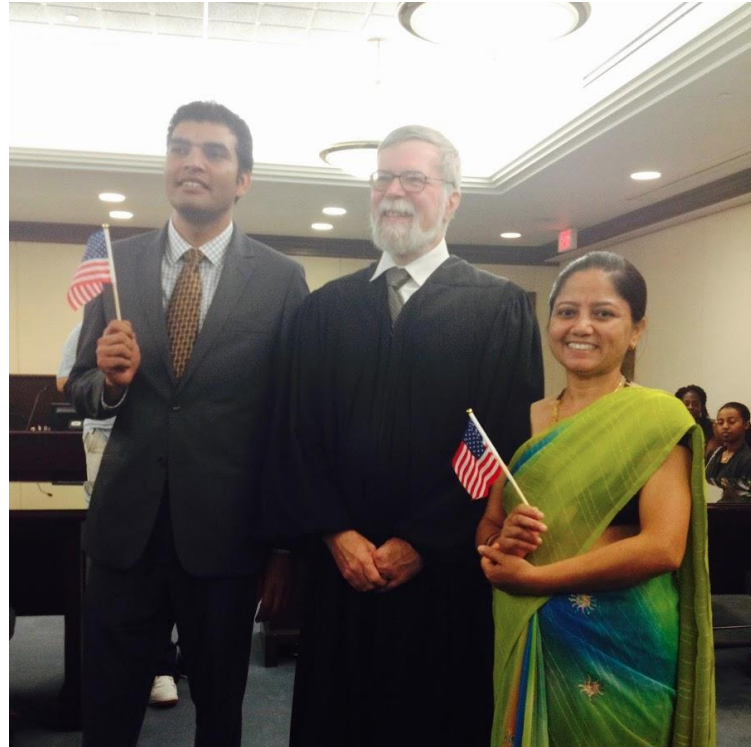


Legal Questions

- Everyone always wants to know - are we breaking the law?
Law is a lot like scripture - its up to your interpretation.
- If its transparent and ICE knows about it, then no one is being concealed, so is it harboring?
- Field experience: No congregation has been prosecuted
- Legal Toolkit-<http://lynnhopkinsgroup.com/Toolkit1.pdf>

Bhuwan Pyakurel

Leader in the Bhutanese community and organizer in the refugee community to help with community organizing efforts of Columbus, Ohio.



Refugee Leaders Mobilize Community to Vote in Ohio 2016 Election



Faith Communities Welcome



“Syrian Supper Club” in
Montclair, N.J.



See story aired by CNN at:

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/10/18/us/syrian-refugees-new-jersey-camerota/index.html>



*Building
relationships,
resisting
rhetoric,
growing hope,
living faith*



Faith Community Resources

FY2016 Reception and Placement Program Affiliate Sites

December, 2015



Source: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, US Department of State



Faith Community Resources

Refugee Resettlement Offices Around US:

<http://www.wrapsnet.org/Portals/1/affiliate%20directory%20posting/Public%20Affiliate%20Directory%2010-24-16.pdf?ver=2016-10-25-134412-217>

Refugees Welcome Resources: www.refugeesarewelcome.org

Refugee Council USA Updated Congressional Toolkit:

<http://www.rcusa.org/blog/updated-2016-rcusa-local-congressional-visit-toolkit-focus-on-november-december-actions>

Know Your Rights: nationalimmigrationproject.org/tools.html & unitedwedream.org/thank-deportation-defense-card-handphone

Sanctuary Movement: sanctuarynotdeportation.org

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals: unitedwedream.org & www.nilc.org/issues/daca

Faith Community Resettlement Support:

Contact your denominational representatives, and local offices!



IIC Contacts By Organization

African American Ministers in Action: Leslie Malachi,
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American Baptist Home Mission Societies of the American Baptist Churches, USA: Brenda Halliburton, brenda.halliburton@abhms.org

American Friends Service Committee: Kathryn Johnson,
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American Jewish Committee: Richard Foltin, foltinr@ajc.org

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United Church of Christ: Jason Carson Wilson, wilsonj@ucc.org

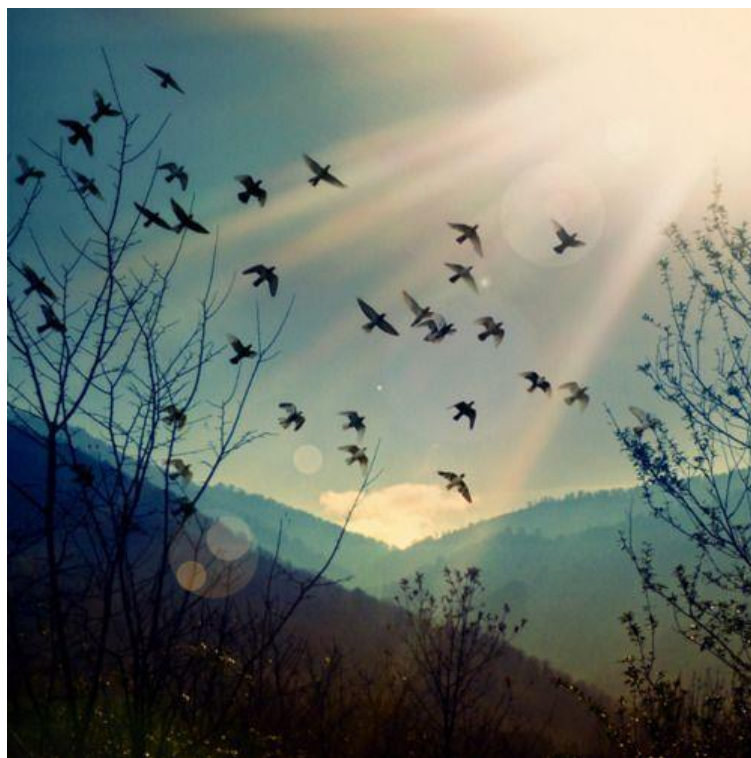
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Questions?



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