

REFUGEE RESPONSE

BE NOT AFRAID



“This is what the Lord Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’”
- Zechariah 7:9-10

Pray. Pray for peace so that people will not be forced from their homes. Pray that God’s people will provide shelter, water, food, and medical care for refugees and displaced people. Pray that the most vulnerable will find safety. Pray for countries hosting refugees, especially since many of them cannot house and care for so many at once. Pray for the people in agencies and organizations who are working tirelessly to provide aid. Pray that politicians and church leaders will work productively together to provide material aid, craft policies, and shape infrastructure to help refugees and displaced persons.

Give. There are many large organizations doing good work that you’ve heard about, including World Vision, International Red Cross, Oxfam, & Doctors Without Borders.

Public Radio International compiled a list of lesser known charitable organizations that are doing good work:

<http://www.pri.org/stories/2015-09-03/5-groups-doing-important-work-help-refugees-you-may-not-have-heard>

There are other ways to give – your time, your creativity, your voice, your attention. Your own home church may be involved in assistance efforts. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is working with ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) and the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL) to provide relief. PDA is also working to help Syrians find a welcome home in the USA. See:

[\(https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/syria/\)](https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/syria/).

In Los Angeles, you might help the Interfaith Refugee and Immigration Service or the International Rescue Committee:

<http://www.rescue.org/resettling-refugees-us>

Listen. Learn. See.

“The universe is made up of stories, not atoms.”
– Muriel Rukeyser

Read about Dania Amroosh, Mouneer Kalthoum, and other refugees in the *Washington Post* stories:
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/syrian-refugees/story/refuge/>

A Dutch photographer shares a world of stories in photos:
<http://theweek.com/captured/571100/humans-syria>

Here is a blog started by a Westmont graduate, Danielle Willard, in an effort to place refugees in a historical context:
<https://historicizingrefugees.wordpress.com>

How some poets have responded:
<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/sep/16/poets-speak-out-for-refugees->

Speak. Speak up with friends and family when they express fear or even bigoted ideas regarding refugees. Ask what your local church is doing or can do to welcome strangers, to enact gospel virtues of hospitality. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper (or the *Horizon*). Here is a link to urge Congress to make #RefugeesWelcome (sponsored by International Rescue Committee): <http://cqrcengage.com/theirc/app/write-a-letter?0&engagementId=148493>. Please also go to the Prayer Chapel – pray, converse, write a message on the chairs installed there through finals week.



“Home” by Warsan Shire

no one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark
you only run for the border when you see the whole city running as well
your neighbors running faster than you
breath bloody in their throats
the boy you went to school with who kissed you dizzy behind the old tin factory is holding a
gun bigger than his body
you only leave home when home won't let you stay.
no one leaves home unless home chases you
fire under feet
hot blood in your belly
it's not something you ever thought of doing until the blade burnt threats into your neck
and even then you carried the anthem under your breath
only tearing up your passport in an airport toilet
sobbing as each mouthful of paper made it clear that you wouldn't be going back.
you have to understand,
that no one puts their children in a boat
unless the water is safer than the land
no one burns their palms under trains beneath carriages
no one spends days and nights in the stomach of a truck
feeding on newspaper unless the miles travelled
mean something more than journey.
no one crawls under fences
no one wants to be beaten
pitied
no one chooses refugee camps or strip searches where your
body is left aching
or prison,
because prison is safer than a city of fire
and one prison guard in the night
is better than a truckload of men who look like your father
no one could take it - no one could stomach it - no one skin would be tough enough...
(read the rest online at <http://seekershub.org/blog/2015/09/home-warsan-shire/>)



For I was hungry and
you gave me
something to eat, I
was thirsty and you
gave me something to
drink, I was a stranger
and you invited me in.

Matthew 25:35