



United Nations
Office



WHEN CRISIS CALLS
ADVANCING JUST MIGRATION FOR ALL

2018 Intergenerational Spring Seminar Statement

When Crisis Calls: Advancing Just Migration for All

UUA.org/UNSpringSeminar

Whereas...

- 68 million refugees in the world right now is an immense statistic, yet each of these refugees is an individual human person
- People of color are disproportionately represented among refugees
- LGBTQ+ people are persecuted in 72 countries leading them to seek refuge in safer places
- Language and narratives used in the media to describe migrants and refugees disrespect and dehumanize displaced persons
- Dehumanizing situations force people from their homes and families to take desperate measures and risk their lives for any hope of safety
- Environmental destruction is a significant factor for people fleeing their home countries
- Government institutions and policies around the world are often oppressive and unfair to migrants and refugees
- Many internally displaced people and other displaced people are unable to receive aid from non-governmental organizations
- Much of our news about the global migration crisis comes from social media, pre-tailored to our own political and ethical biases, which can lead to lack of understanding of differing viewpoints
- Forced migration is a huge global issue that requires local efforts and solutions

And recognizing that...

- As people of faith, we Unitarian Universalists have a responsibility to uphold the inherent worth and dignity of all people, strive for justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, affirm global community with peace, liberty, and justice for all, and respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part
- Our privilege calls us to work in partnership with displaced persons to assist them to find what we all need: a safe home, enough to eat, good healthcare, and an education

We therefore resolve to...

- Stand in solidarity with refugees and all displaced persons
- Speak as a people of faith, making sure the help we offer is the help that is needed
- Resist false information and propaganda regarding refugees and migrants
- Use positive language to counter misleading popular narratives about displaced persons and teach others to do the same
- Hear and share their personal stories to put a face on the migration crisis
- Cultivate empathy to better understand the crisis and find ways to work actively to help all those affected, acknowledging that inaction is not an option.
- Take social action to inform new national and local policies and elect those who would put them in place
- Act from our values through initiatives like Side With Love and Love Resists
- Encourage sustained funding of the World Food Programme, the United Nations and its agencies, and other organizations who support refugees and migrants
- Educate our communities about the various reasons for migration, to understand that this is a humanitarian issue, not just a political concern
- Promote more school programs that address refugees and the global migration crisis
- Continue learning about these complex issues, sharing the statistical and empirical evidence of the true scope and scale of the migration crisis with lawmakers
- Use our social, economic, and political leverage to influence change, using our words and our bodies as our tools to show up for people who cannot represent themselves
- Demand that leaders be held accountable for their words and deeds towards refugees, immigrants, and humanitarian abuses
- Dismantle white supremacy in all its forms and resist totalitarianism in our communities
- Work actively to expand the definition of what makes a person a refugee by contacting legislators, and advocate support for the human rights of those not recognized as refugees to be included in the UN Global Compact for Migration, such as those who are displaced by climate change
- Form partnerships with refugee groups and hold community activities to support inclusion and welcome
- Reach out with love through social media to those whose opinions differ from ours
- Urge UU congregations to sponsor refugees, become sanctuary congregations, and encourage our cities, communities, and countries to do the same
- Work actively to raise awareness of the UU United Nations Office and its efforts as the Unitarian Universalist voice at the United Nations, encouraging congregations to become Blue Ribbon congregations.

*Affirmed by the participants of the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office
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