



Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

*“Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said,
“The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”*
(Luke 10:36-37)

March 7, 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

One of the key tenets of our faith is to welcome the sojourner and show love and care for the vulnerable. The parable of the Good Samaritan speaks powerfully to us at a critical and challenging period in our nation’s rich history of welcoming refugees and affirming the human dignity of immigrants and asylum seekers.

Even at a time when the world is facing the greatest global refugee crisis since the end of World War II, we have witnessed a spike in hate crimes in recent months, and tremendous anxiety and fear within migrant and refugee communities across the country. These issues concern and sadly divide the country, communities and families and cause us to cry out for God’s wisdom and peace.

In the face of such uncertainties, we must, more than ever, boldly live into our Lutheran faith tradition and our shared legacy of courageous and compassionate welcome for those who are seeking refuge in our communities. For more than 70 years, Lutheran congregations have opened their hearts to those in need. Together, we have resettled and walked alongside more than 500,000 refugees as they rebuild their lives and are recognized as productive and contributing members in their adopted communities.

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) invites your congregation, your school, and your community to join us in celebrating the power of God’s love to transform the lives of those fleeing horrifying danger. By setting aside one Sunday this year to consider the courageous and often perilous journey made by millions of refugees, we can prepare our hearts to welcome each newcomer in Christ’s name.

Join us in celebrating Refugee Sunday and continuing this transformative journey of courage and renewal. Go to www.lirs.org/refugeesunday to find all the information, materials, and ideas you need to take the first step. Setting aside one Sunday this year for Refugee Sunday will provide your congregation with a powerful experience of how the grace of God turns journeys of loss and pain into new beginnings filled with peace and hope

Yours in faith,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Linda Hartke", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Linda Hartke
President and CEO