Curriculum for Use with “The Episcopal Church Welcomes Refugees” Webinar

This curriculum is designed for use with ages 6th grade through adult. You can use it in an adult or youth education forum or a special education and awareness night.

Consider watching the webinar in its entirety before you present it to a group. Due to the density of the content, you might want to stop the webinar at the indicated time stamps to foster conversation along the way. You can also watch the webinar through to the end and tailor the questions to the particular interests of your congregation or the individuals gathered.

Be mindful that refugee resettlement conversations can feel personal and may impact individuals directly, causing unexpected and powerful emotions. Consider beforehand how you want to address any pastoral concerns that may arise as well as how you will redirect strong reactions that may dominate a discussion.

Also note that the webinar aired in early February. Federal policies are changing rapidly and may be slightly different at the time you view the webinar. Please take a moment to check the current status of resettlement policy on the Episcopal Public Policy Network website, http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/RefugeeAdvocacy.

Journey to the Cross (Beginning of video to 13:52)
Lampedusa is a tiny island closer to North Africa than the rest of Italy, but it is playing an outsized role in the current migrant crisis. In the webinar, you see images of the Lampedusa cross, made from wreckage from a migrant boat, which represents the stories of 21.3 million men, women, and children robbed of their safety and dignity, forced to become refugees.

• What passages from Scripture, prayers, reflections, or poems come to mind as you reflect on the refugee crisis and our call to respond?

The Role of The Episcopal Church in Refugee Resettlement (13:52 to 17:51)
The Episcopal Church has been welcoming refugees to the United States for more than 70 years. That work continues today through the work of Episcopal Migration Ministries and a network of 30 local agencies.

• Were you aware of The Episcopal Church’s history of welcoming refugees? Have you heard of Episcopal Migration Ministries?
• Why is the Episcopal Church called to respond to the refugee crisis? Where do you find support for this belief in Scripture?

The Refugee Crisis (17:51 to 29:38)
We are facing the largest displacement crisis since World War II. More than 63 million men, women, and children are displaced worldwide. The United States has responded both through financial support for countries receiving asylum seekers and by welcoming refugees to our country.
Refugee resettlement, especially the vetting process, has received intense scrutiny recently. What did you know before this webinar? Has some of the information you previously heard proven to be false or misleading?

- Are refugees resettled to your community via Episcopal Migration Ministries or another national agency?
- Do you know anyone who has arrived in the United States through the resettlement process?

**Policy Update and How You Can Be Involved**

On January 27, an Executive Order was issued that paused refugee resettlement for 120 days and suspended entry of people from 7 countries for 90 days, places an indefinite ban on resettlement from Syria, and lowers refugee admission in FY17 to 50,000. While the fate of this particular Executive Order remains in the hands of the courts, we are called to continue our engagement in the public arena. This kind of work takes us beyond the traditional avenues of Christian charity to the work of justice – changing the systems that necessitate charity.

- How did you feel when the Executive Order was released? What has been your response?
- How can you participate in the 2x4 Fight for Refugees Campaign? Do you know who influential policymakers are in your state and community?
- What can you commit to doing as part of the 2x4 Fight for Refugees Campaign?
- What can your congregation commit to doing as part of the campaign?
- Are there other organizations, congregations, or local businesses you can partner with in sponsoring an event or outreach project?
- Are you a member of the Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN)?

**Closing Prayer**

_God our Creator: We ask for your loving presence and for your peace to be with refugees in our local communities and around the world. Be with all who are in fear. Be with those whose lives and livelihoods are under threat, and whose religious freedoms are being compromised. Be with us as we strive to enact your will in our welcome and support of refugees. Be with those in positions of leadership, that their decisions may bend toward peace and not division, and that they might realize the power they hold to do justice. Give us all strength and courage. Equip and empower us to be witnesses to your love – as advocates and as servants, as ministers of welcome and bearers of hope, especially for those seeking refuge. In your Holy name we pray. Amen._
Additional Resources

From the Webinar

• Webinar video: http://www.slideshare.net/EMMRefugees/the-episcopal-church-welcomes-refugees
• Webinar PowerPoint slides: http://www.slideshare.net/EMMRefugees/the-episcopal-church-welcomes-refugees
• Episcopal Migration Ministries
• Website: http://www.episcopalmigrationministries.com/
• Alerts: http://bit.ly/2kuAQso
• Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/EMMRefugees
• Twitter: https://twitter.com/EMMRefugees
• Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/emmrefugees/

Episcopal Public Policy Network

• Website: http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/
• Join EPPN: http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/app/register?1&m=29629
• Refugee Update sign-up: http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/RefugeeAdvocacy
• 2x4 Fight for Refugees Campaign: http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/RefugeeAdvocacy

Take Action

• Toolkit on Rapid Response Prayer Vigils and Press Conferences: http://files.constantcontact.com/14dca6bf401/0860073d-aea7-4258-85df-9fc9c3e15c73.pdf
• Share why you support refugees: https://dfms.formstack.com/forms/support_refugees
• Sign-On Letters: Join Interfaith Immigration Coalition in their work to raise support for refugees. Interfaith Immigration Coalition has refugee support sign-on letters for business leaders, educators, law enforcement officials, health care providers, and faith leaders. Feel most welcome to share your voice by signing on to the appropriate letter(s), and share with friends and colleagues.
  o Bit.ly/Business4Refugees
  o Bit.ly/Educators4Refugees
  o Bit.ly/LawEnforcement4Refugees
  o bit.ly/Health4Refugees
  o bit.ly/FaithLeaders4Refugees
• Connect with the Interfaith Immigration Coalition: http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/
• Learn more about the Muslim faith: http://lirs.org/myneighborismuslim/
• Countering anti-refugee and anti-Muslim backlash: http://www.welcomingrefugees.org/neighbors-together-toolkit

If you have additional questions, contact Allison Duvall, aduvall@episcopalchurch.org.