• Webinar being recorded
• Mute
• Live tweeting
  • #ShareTheJourney
  • #Episcopal
  • #ChildrenOnTheRun, #UAC
• Use question function to submit questions; introduce yourself. Submit throughout webinar; we will answer at the end. If needed, follow-up post-webinar.
• Technical issues? Use chat function to contact Lacy Broemel, or email Lacy at lbroemel@episcopalchurch.org
CENTRAL AMERICAN MIGRANTS: An Episcopal Response
Introductions
Early June to present: Inquiries from across the Church: information, donations, volunteer opportunities, advocacy.

June: Call within the church, call from ORR for shelter.

July 8: Unaccompanied Children and Families at the Border coordination call.

August: Resources for the Church.
  - Today’s webinar
  - Backgrounder
  - How You Can Help
  - August 17 bulletin insert
  - August Recess Toolkit
• Urge the United States Congress to reform the Refugee Act of 1980 in order to modernize the nation’s refugee program, including modernizations such as but not limited to meeting the urgent needs of a diverse refugee population through specialized and extended case management, culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health services…and other innovative policies that create sustainable integration pathways for refugees (GC 12)

• Urge the US government to extend the protection of asylum to vulnerable peoples, especially women fleeing mutilation or cultural practices that deny their full humanity. (EC 2/04)

• Reaffirm the historic commitment of the Episcopal Church to the protection of refugees and asylum seeker. (2/04)

• Reaffirm the call for the US to offer safe haven to Central Americans seeking temporary refuge in our nation from civil strife in their home countries. (GC 85)
CENTRAL AMERICAN MIGRANTS: An Episcopal Response

Background: Who are unaccompanied children?

• Unaccompanied children are under 18 and arrive from noncontiguous countries with no parent or legal guardian

• This population used to be much smaller, 6,000-8,000 a year, previously under DHS care but since 2002 under the Office of Refugee Resettlement

• Majority were boys ages 14-17 and more children were fleeing Mexico

![Image of central american migrants]

At least 80,000 children are expected to arrive in the United States this year, fleeing violence in their home countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.
Why are children fleeing?

Pervasive violence, whether it be gangs, transnational organized crime, or vigilante death squads, operate with near total impunity because of government corruption and complicity, and the breakdown of institutions in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Gangs target children, forcing children to “join or die”

Governments are unable to protect them

Long-standing factors are still present, including the lack of educational and economic opportunity, the negative push of family breakdown in their home countries, or the positive draw of family unity with family members living in the United States.
What happens to children when they reach the U.S.?

These children have made dangerous journeys without parents or guardians to protect them, riding on the tops of trains and often falling victim to human traffickers and violence along the way.

Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act 2008 (TVPRA) guarantees special protections under law for these children.

Transfer to ORR custody within 72 hours, where the needs and best interests of the child are assessed and given a court date.

Children are reunited with family in the U.S., returned to their country of origin, or it is determined that they qualify for immigration status as an asylum seeker, victim of human trafficking or other serious crime, or other humanitarian relief programs.

With arrivals this high, system is overloaded, shelters do not have enough space, courts cannot hear cases for months or even years, funding is running out.

Children are being pushed through the system quickly to save costs, the majority do not have access to lawyers.

Political backlash has led to calls to repeal the piece of the TVPRA that protects these children when they need that protection the most, enabling the government to deport them more quickly.
Are they refugees?

- Some are and others qualify for other forms of relief under immigration law as victims of trafficking or abused, abandoned, and neglected children.
- Seeking asylum - claiming fear of persecution and return at the U.S. border - is a right protected by U.S. and international law.

What about the families?

- About 55,000 family units, mostly women and children, have crossed the southern border this summer.
- Push factors of violence and impunity have forced them to flee for their lives.
- Many have been released at bus stations with no food, water or resources. Others have been detained at hastily created family detention centers, a dangerous return to a policy the Obama Administration had abandoned due to documented abuses.

Are our immigration policies a magnet?

- Men, women, and children are fleeing these 3 countries in every direction - UNHCR has documented a 712% rise in asylum claims in Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica and Belize since 2008.
- Nicaragua is the poorest nation in Central America but we are not seeing them leave their homes.
What does EMM do?

• Affiliate network in 30 communities, 26 dioceses
• Provide services to help refugee families become self-sufficient
• Partner with community organizations and congregations
• Work closely with Justice and Advocacy Ministries to call Church's attention to the needs of vulnerable migrant populations, to speak out with and alongside our immigrant brothers and sisters
CENTRAL AMERICAN MIGRANTS: An Episcopal Response
Episcopal Migration Ministries

EPISCOPAL MIGRATION MINISTRIES
NURTURING COMMUNITIES OF WELCOME
• **Donate**

  • **Episcopal Migration Ministries:** Checks should be made payable to “DFMS,” with “Child Migrant Response” on the memo line, and mailed to: Episcopal Migration Ministries, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017.

  • **Diocese of West Texas:** Checks should be made out to “Episcopal Diocese of West Texas,” with “Emergency Relief” on the memo line, and mailed to: Episcopal Diocese of West Texas, P.O. Box 6885, San Antonio, TX 78209.
CENTRAL AMERICAN MIGRANTS: An Episcopal Response
How You Can Help

• Act
  • Mapping the Church’s Response
  • Immigration Services
  • Foster Care
    • United States Conference of Catholic Bishops [http://www.usccb.org/]: migratingchildren@usccb.org; (202) 541-3081
    • Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service [www.lirs.org/fostercare]: fosterparentinfo@lirs.org; (410) 230-2757

Phoenix, AZ	Worcester, MA
San Jose, CA	Grand Rapids, MI
Fullerton, CA	Lansing, MI
Washington, DC	Jackson, MS
Denver, CO	Rochester, NY
Colorado Springs, CO	Syracuse, NY
Miami Springs, FL	Fargo, ND
Newton, MA	Philadelphia, PA

Houston, TX
Fort Worth, TX
Salt Lake City, UT
Richmond, VA
Seattle, WA
Tacoma, WA
• **Post-Release Services**
  • Refugee Services of Texas, Houston: [http://www.rstx.org/houston.html](http://www.rstx.org/houston.html)

• **El Salvador: Foundation Cristosal**
  • [http://cristosal.org/](http://cristosal.org/)

• **Honduras: El Hogar Projects**
  • [https://vimeo.com/96458847](https://vimeo.com/96458847)
Central American Migrants: An Episcopal Response
How You Can Help

• **Raise our voices**

• Changes to the TVPRA will mean that children will not have a meaningful opportunity to have their story heard, and will face deportation to unsafe situations

• We cannot enforce our way out of this crisis- rolling back protections for vulnerable people will do nothing to address the violence that compels them to flee

• The U.S. must show leadership by finding ways to reduce the violence these children face in their home countries, build child welfare protections on transit countries and provide our system with the resources it needs to serve these children and all refugees

• The right to seek safety and asylum is guaranteed under U.S. and international law- and the world is watching our response

• **Why August**

• In August legislators are home in their states and districts until the 2\textsuperscript{nd} week in September

• What they hear in August will influence how they vote
Central American Migrants: An Episcopal Response

How You Can Help

• Stay up to date by following us on Twitter: @TheEPPN, @EMMRefugees
• #refugees; #ShareTheJourney

Raise Your Voice in Support of Refugees and Vulnerable Immigrant Children

More than 6.5 million people have been displaced within Syria, and more than 2.7 million have crossed international borders as refugees. Of that refugee population, more than 1.4 million are children.

Monday, June 2, President Obama called the unprecedented arrival of tens of thousands of unaccompanied immigrant children, fleeing violence and poverty at home, an “urgent humanitarian crisis.”

The conflict in Sudan and South Sudan has killed thousands and forced more than 1.5 million people to flee their homes to escape the violence, making many of these survivors of the country’s civil war refugees twice over.

Refugees and displaced people across the world need your prayers and your voice. Each new conflict and crisis brings its own unique challenges and opportunities to offer protection and hope. Having endured incredible hardship and unimaginable horrors in their home countries, refugees often spend years exiled in host countries once they flee, awaiting the opportunity to rebuild their lives. Once they are resettled, refugees become engaged and productive community members, contributing economically, socially, and spiritually to our communities.

The Episcopal Church, through Episcopal Migration Ministries, is a leader in this work of welcome, as one of the 9 “voluntary agencies” that partners with the federal government to welcome refugees to their new communities and walk with them as they build new lives for themselves and their families.

Find your elected officials

Enter a name, address or zip code to find your officials or candidates.

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Join this network of active Episcopalians to receive weekly action alert emails on relevant policy & advocacy opportunities.

Follow us on Twitter

http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/action
Q & A
Episcopal Response to Unaccompanied Children at Our Border

Leaders in The Episcopal Church have spoken out, calling us to respond to the unaccompanied immigrant children at our border with compassion. We have compiled op-eds, statements, and other pieces issued by Episcopal bishops, clergy, and dioceses on this issue. We will continue to update this site as we receive developments. These resources are for your use and distribution, and please email us at eppn@episcopalchurch.org if we have omitted any resources or information.

Resources

Resources by Diocese:

Diocese of Arizona:

"Ten Ways to Respond to the Border Crisis"

"Migrant Women & Children Situation in Southern Arizona"

"Immigration Crisis Update"

Diocese of Arkansas:

"Children Fleeing Oppression, Death Should Be Welcomed By Christians"

Diocese of Atlanta:

"Children at border inspire Atlantans to support Texas church's ministry"

Diocese of California:

www.advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/UACresponse
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Learn More; Stay in Touch

- EMM Website: www.episcopalmigrationministries.org
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/episcopalmigrationministries
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/EMMRefugees

- Episcopal Public Policy Network Website: www.advocacy.episcopalchurch.org
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheEPPN
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/TheEPPN
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