



June 20, 2025

“World Refugee Day is June 20. It is an international day to honor refugees around the globe, celebrate the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their homes to escape conflict or persecution, and lament the circumstances that led to their forced displacement and harrowing journeys to find refuge. World Refugee Day offers us an opportunity to build empathy and understanding for the plight of refugees, to recognize their resilience, to pray for displaced people and their homelands, and to take time to discern how God is calling us, as Christ followers, to provide compassionate care for refugees and other displaced people.”

World Refugee Day can be observed on the Sunday before or after June 20 June or on any Sunday in June. To help you incorporate refugee awareness into your worship, Church World Service developed a refugee awareness worship toolkit.

“There are millions of refugees around the world who need your help. Will you and/or your church join us in raising awareness about refugees and displaced people, and living out the biblical mandate to care for those seeking refuge?” <https://cwsglobal.org/cws-faith-leaders>

Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM) promotes observing World Refugee Day. See the June 13 *Newsline* Article. Contact them at www.brethren.org/bdm/ for more information. BDM refers to resources provided by Church World Service including some worship resources at <https://cwsglobal.org/cws-faith-leaders>

Ideas For Remembrance, Education, Prayer, & Worship

Always include refugees & all displaced people in your prayers. There are 123.2 million forcibly displaced people in the world. Of these, 49 million (which is 40% of them) are children. Remember the countries from which they flee as well. Also, remember the countries they flee to. Many of the countries that are hosting refugees are themselves in crisis. 73% of all refugees are hosted by low & middle-income countries.

The numbers are staggering & may be impossible to grasp for many. Help people see that the numbers have very human & individual faces. If there are refugees or former refugees in your community, welcome them.

- **Include them in worship.**

- Invite refugees or former refugees to share their gifts of storytelling, preaching, teaching, music, dance, art, food, etc. with your congregation

- **Share the stories of refugees** from the Brethren in Nigeria, South Sudan, & other places where Brethren are living with war & displacement. Share what they are doing to help refugees from the violence they face. (see www.brethren.org including Church of the Brethren *Newsline* for stories) Share refugee stories from Church World Service. <https://cwsglobal.org/cws-faith-leaders>. See The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) at www.unhcr.org for information on the world's refugees & their stories.
- **Help people learn** about the refugee & immigration situation in the world. (Resources include Church World Service at www.cws-global.org. UNHCR (The UN Refugee Agency) at www.unhcr.org. *Peace Advocate News* Special Issue April 2025 on Immigration issues available under peace resources on the Northern Ohio District Website: www.nohcob.org.)

Remember that God calls us to care for, welcome, & help all people in need. Study Bible passages about immigrants & refugees:

- Leviticus 19:33-34 (foreigners must be treated as native-born)
- Leviticus 24:22 (same law for foreigners & native born)
- Deuteronomy 10:18-19 (you are to love those who are foreigners)
- Deuteronomy 27:19 (cursed is anyone who withholds justice from the foreigner)
- Psalm 146:9 (The LORD watches over the foreigner)
- Matthew 25:31-46 (I was a stranger & you invited me in)
- Hebrews 13:1-2 (do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers)
- Romans 12:13 (practice hospitality)
- Psalm 46 (God is our refuge)

Church World Service is providing some worship resources at <https://cws-global.org/cws-faith-leaders>. Including calls to worship, confessions of faith & prayers from ecumenical sources.

You can collect a special offering to help people being forcefully displaced from their homes. See www.brethren.org & www.brethren.org/bdm/ for updates on Brethren efforts to help refugees & other displaced people.

“This year, World Refugee Day focuses on solidarity with refugees. Solidarity means honouring refugees not just with words but with actions. It means listening to them and making space for their stories. It means defending their right to seek safety and finding solutions to their plight, ending conflicts so they can return home in safety.

It means ensuring they have opportunities to thrive in the communities that have welcomed them and providing countries with the resources they need to include and support refugees.

But above all, solidarity means saying, clearly and courageously, that refugees are not alone and that we will not turn our backs.”

www.unhcr.org/events/world-refugee-day-2025