



Central States Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Dear Congregation Leaders,

I am asking for your help in impacting a growing national dilemma: the influx into the United States of refugees fleeing massive upheaval in their own countries. The fact that there is such a human wave is not news; what *is* news is the discovery that *you and your congregation can offer a Christian response to it.*

On Sunday afternoon, Aug. 21, we will hear about the refugee experience – including from refugees themselves, those who have fled terrifying turmoil in their homeland in order to build a better life for themselves and their families in the United States. We will gather from 3-5 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 21, at Atonement Lutheran Church, 9948 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park, KS, to listen, to learn, and to hear how we – if we choose – can be the welcoming hands of Christ to those seeking refuge and a hopeful future.

I am asking you as a church leader for three things:

decide to dedicate that time on the afternoon of the 21st to an issue that is life-changing;

recruit one, two, or three others in your congregation to accompany you;

and come to Atonement with an open mind and the intention to learn.



We will hear from: the Rev. Dr. Stephen Bouman, Executive Director of Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission for the ELCA; Dr. Sofia Khan, founder of KC for Refugees; Abdul Bakar, a refugee worker with the Della Lamb Center and himself a Somali refugee; and two new refugee arrivals who will share their experience. We will also have a chance to interact and have conversation with the speakers.

In Luke 10, Jesus acknowledges that God's greatest command is to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." The afternoon of Aug. 21 is offered as an opportunity to make "neighbor love" real and concrete in the here and now.

I hope to see you there! If you have questions or concerns, please contact me.


--- Bp. Roger

God's work. Our hands.