



Canadian Lutheran World Relief

CLWR World Refugee Sunday Congregational Resources for Service of the Word and Service with Holy Communion

Suggestions for Worship:

- consider using visual images of refugees, aid workers, and refugee camps as powerful if unsettling and uncomfortable reminders of the reality of many, many people in this world
- incorporate the work of artists, poets, musicians into various parts of the service found in websites such as [refugees – Art & Theology \(artandtheology.org\)](http://artandtheology.org) the aim of which is “revitalizing the Christian imagination”
- incorporate the stories of refugees found on the Canadian Lutheran World Relief website [Refugee Sponsorship | Canadian Lutheran World Relief \(clwr.org\)](http://clwr.org)
- invite refugees who have been resettled in the community via CLWR and a church-sponsored Refugee Sponsorship Committee to tell their story or a person who has served on a Refugee Sponsorship Committee to talk about what they have experienced in serving their neighbours in this way

Hymn Suggestions: Hymns in Evangelical Lutheran Worship and With One Voice related to Community in Christ, Justice and Peace, Time after Epiphany, Vocation and Ministry, Lament

Hail to the Lord’s Anointed	ELW #311
Arise, Your Light Has Come!	ELW #314; WOV #652
God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind	ELW #401
The Lord Now Sends Us Forth	ELW #538
To Be Your Presence	ELW #546
The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve	ELW #551; WOV #723
Now It Is Evening	ELW #572
Here I Am, Lord	OV #752
All Are Welcome	ELW #641
In Christ There Is No East or West	ELW #650
Bring Peace to Earth Again	ELW #700
Once We Sang and Danced	ELW #701
When Pain of the World Surrounds Us	ELW #706
Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love	ELW #708; WOV #765
Let Streams of Living Justice	ELW #710
Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service	ELW#712
O God of Every Nation	ELW #713
Christ, be Our Light	ELW #715
Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace	ELW #716

Let Justice Flow like Streams	ELW #717; WOV #763
Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life	ELW #719
We Are Called	ELW #720
When the Poor Ones	ELW #725
Light Dawns on a Weary World	ELW #726
The Church of Christ, in Every Age	ELW #729
This Is My Song	ELW #887
By the Babylonian Rivers	WOV #656

A Further Hymn Resource:

The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada has released ‘Singing Welcome: Hymns and Songs of Hospitality to Refugees and Immigrants’, a collection of 46 hymns and songs available for free download from The Hymn Society’s website www.thehymnsociety.org under the “Resources” section. The Hymn Society has promoted the creation of new hymns that respond to contemporary circumstances, inviting communities of faith to respond through song. The current concerns surrounding refugees and immigrants have stimulated many such songs, and this collection brings together works in a variety of musical styles which address this important matter.

‘Singing Welcome’ was made possible by the generosity of the publishers, authors and composers who have graciously granted permission for use of any of the hymns and songs in the collection at no royalty cost for a period of two months. Beyond two months of usage, users must obtain copyright permission in the usual manner (via a copyright licensing service, or through other means).

Confession and Forgiveness

L: In the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen**

L: Gracious and merciful God, you sent your Son Jesus into this world to teach us your way of justice and peace, to show us how to live with compassionate love. Hear us as we confess our sins, the things we have done and the things we have left undone in our thinking, speaking and acting. Let us hear your word of forgiveness yet again that we might be changed day by day into the image of love incarnate, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen**

Silence for personal reflection.

C: **Listen to our words and our innermost thoughts:
We confess that we haven't listened well to Jesus' commands to love you
and to love our neighbour as ourselves.
We confess the times we have listened to Jesus' words but failed to
respond to his command to love.
We confess our lack of understanding that you indeed know no partiality.
We confess our fear of change.
We confess our failure to build bridges and work together to challenge
racism, discrimination and prejudice and to stand up for our neighbours.
We confess our ignorance for which there is no excuse.
Forgive us, merciful God.
Open our hearts to the challenge of your Son's command to love.
Open our eyes to see the plight of refugees.
Open our ears to hear their cries for help.
Open our mouths to speak for those whose voices are not being heard.
Open our hands to make a difference in their lives.
Forgive us, gracious and merciful God so that we may love and serve you and
our neighbours as you have taught us to do through your Son, Jesus Christ
our Lord.**

L: Know this: God does not deal with us according to our sins nor seek retaliation for them. Be at peace. In steadfast love, God forgives you all your sins through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Prayer of the Day

L: God our creator, you call your people to love as you love without partiality, showing hospitality to the stranger, doing justice, speaking for those whose voices are not being heard and defending the rights of the poor and needy. We give thanks for the work of Canadian Lutheran World Relief on our behalf. Help us to show your love in all that we do and say. May we see the face of your Son in the faces of all whom we are called to love and serve through whom we pray, Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. Amen

Scripture Suggestions:

- Genesis 12:10** *Abram is an alien in Egypt*
- Genesis 18:1-8** *Abraham's hospitality to three strangers*
- Exodus 22: 21-24** *God is the protector of the alien, widow and orphan*
- Exodus 23: 9** *Justice for resident aliens*
- Leviticus 19: 9-10** *The law to 'love your neighbour' extends to the poor and the*
(see also Leviticus 23: 22) *alien*
- Leviticus 19: 33-34** *Aliens are to be treated as citizens*
(see also Leviticus 24:22)
- Deuteronomy 10: 17-19** *Love the orphan, widow and stranger impartially as God loves*
- Deuteronomy 26: 5-11** *Thanksgiving liturgy for God's deliverance*
- Deuteronomy 27:19** *God's disapproval of injustice expressed in a curse*
- Ruth 1: 1-10, 15-18** *Ruth chooses to follow Naomi*
- Psalms 61: 1-4** *Prayer for God's protection*
- Psalms 77:1-10** *Prayer for God's deliverance from trouble*
- Psalms 146:1- 10** *Praise for God's justice and help*

Proverbs 31: 8-9 *Counselling justice for the poor*

Isaiah 58: 6-11 *God desires justice for the oppressed and needy*

Micah 6: 8 *God requires justice, kindness and humility*
(see also **Zechariah 7: 8-10**)

Matthew 2: 13-15 *Mary, Joseph and Jesus flee to safety*

Note: A striking visual illustration of the flight into Egypt is “La Sagrada Familia” by Kelly Latimore a member of the Common Friars, a monastic order in the Episcopal Church. Latimore pictures the Holy Family as a present-day immigrant family, walking by moonlight, as they seek refuge. The image and commentary can be found at <https://www.christiancentury.org/article/art/refugees-la-sagrada-familia-kelly-latimore>

Matthew 8:20 *Jesus keeps moving on*
(see also **Luke 9:58**)

Matthew 22: 34-40 *The two great commandments*
(see also **Luke 10: 25- 28[29-37]; Mark 12: 28-34**)

Matthew 25: 31-40 *Jesu’ judgment is grounded in justice*

Note: Br. Robert Lentz’s icon, “Christ of Maryknoll” shows Christ looking out at the viewer from behind barbed wire fencing. The question for the viewer is whether we are looking at Christ imprisoned or Christ is looking at us imprisoned by our prejudice, racism and hard-heartedness. The icon can be found at [Christ of Maryknoll | Trinity Stores](#) together with a video of Br. Robert talking about the icon. The video can also be found on YouTube.

Luke 4:16-21 *Jesus reads from the prophet Isaiah*

Acts 10: 9-18, 24-29, 33-35 *Peter’s vision reveals that God knows no partiality*

Acts 18: 1-3 *Paul stays with refugees in Corinth from Italy*

Acts 27: 39 - 28: 2 *Paul and shipmates receive kindness in Malta*

Romans 13: 8-10 *Love fulfills the commandments*

Hebrew 13: 1-3 *Admonishment to love*

James 2: 8-13 *Caution against showing partiality*

Children's Time

Suggestions for resources appropriate for World Refugee Sunday:



Elephant in the Middle of the Room - A reading by Bishop

Telmor Sartison. “Elephant walks into this place of anger and upset, finds the only space available, right in the centre of the room, and sits there. At first his friends do not see him. They are so busy being upset, sitting as far away from one another as possible. But, you can’t have an elephant in the room for very long without noticing that he or she is there.” [Watch the video](#), a CLWR production.



Crocodile's Crossing: A Search for Home - written and illustrated by

Yoeri Slegers. Crocodile is tired, scared, and hopeful as he searches for his new home.

Everything will be better where I'm going! he thinks. But where is that?

“*Crocodile's Crossing: A Search for Home* introduces children to the complex topic of immigration. Featuring bright artwork packed with playful details, this thoughtful tale sensitively portrays the challenges faced by refugees and other newcomers. Available at bookstores or order online. There is also a video reading of the book on YouTube.

(Permission to use image and write-up is given by the Presbyterian Church (USA) Presbyterian Mission at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/august-14-2020/>)

“**Who is My Neighbour?**” is written by Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso; illustrated by Denise Turu; and published by Flyaway Books. In this retelling of Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan, we learn what happens when the various ‘blues’ neglect another blue but a yellow comes along to help. The book poses the question: Just how *do* we see our neighbours and ourselves? Available at bookstores or order online. There is also a video reading of the book on YouTube.

Petitions for the Prayers of Intercession

L: Let us pray for the world; all refugees seeking safety and peace; the work of Canadian Lutheran World Relief, resettlement teams and sponsoring communities; and our own needs, saying,

God who executes justice and loves the stranger,

C: Hear the prayers of your people.

L: Let us give thanks for God's steadfast love and mercy: you who have made all creation and called it good, receive our thanks and praise for your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who shows us in his living, dying and rising how to live and love as you have desired from the beginning.

God who executes justice and loves the stranger,

C: Hear the prayers of your people.

L: Let us pray for the world: the harmony of all creation, heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, the dry land and all that lives upon it, is disrupted. You, who keeps faith with your creation forever, move us to recognize your benevolent care for all you have made and work to nurture and restore its goodness.

God who executes justice and loves the stranger,

C: Hear the prayers of your people.

L: Let us pray all refugees seeking safety and peace: how can we stand by when there are brothers and sisters who are

- unaccompanied minors crossing borders,
- caught in war and held captive in the fighting,
- facing hatred and intolerance,
- fleeing for their lives with many dying to reach safety,
- not always having a say in which country they will be resettled,
- waiting and waiting for the bureaucratic process to be completed,
- here at the end of a long journey and starting new lives,
- viewed with suspicion, and, who are
- strangers in strange lands.

Move us to follow your commands, Lord God, and welcome the stranger, care for those who have come with nothing but the clothes on their backs and heartaches and memories, and be neighbour to all your children.

God who executes justice and loves the stranger,

C: Hear the prayers of your people.

L: Let us pray for Canadian Lutheran World Relief, resettlement teams, sponsoring communities of faith who go above and beyond the written contractual requirements to welcome and embrace refugees, and all who have given so generously to support this work: we give you thanks for Canadian Lutheran World

Relief and all who have participated over the past 75 years in giving committed and unfaltering assistance to those seeking refuge in Canada. Move us to continue the work that has begun in loving service and to meet the ever-increasing needs of this world's people.

God who executes justice and loves the stranger,

C: Hear the prayers of your people.

L: Let us pray for ourselves: regard the needs of your people, gracious God, and be with the sick, comfort the grieving, and accompany all who struggle in body, mind or spirit especially those whom we name before you today..... Give us our daily bread and help us to do your will.

God who executes justice and loves the stranger,

C: Hear the prayers of your people.

L: Let us give thanks for the lives of those who have died: keep us in your loving grace now and when we join with them in the light of your eternal presence.

God who executes justice and loves the stranger,

C: Hear the prayers of your people.

L: All these petitions we bring before you, asking that we may be faithful people who do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with you, through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord.

C: Amen

Blessing

L: Out of our faith, may we be warm-hearted and loving;
Out of our abundance, may we be generous;
Out of our humanity, may we be bearers of justice and peace in our world.

And may God our Creator bless us with steadfast love and mercy,
Christ Jesus show us how to love with compassion,
and the Holy Spirit work in us and accompany us always.

C: Amen

Dismissal

L: Go out into the world now. Show no partiality. Love as we have been loved.

C: Thanks be to God!

For those congregations celebrating Holy Communion, you may wish to use the Thanksgiving at the Table, VIII, IX, X, ELW p. 67–69 or the following prepared for World Refugee Sunday:

Great Thanksgiving

P: In the beginning, God created the universe and everything in it, in great and steadfast love calling all that had been made ‘good’.

C: **Yet the harmony of creation was marred by our disobedience.**

P: God did not give up on creation, in great and steadfast love forbearing anger and offering mercy.

C: **Yet we continued to seek our own ends and go our own ways, not listening to the words of the prophets calling us back to God’s way.**

P: God did not give up on creation, in great and steadfast love sending Jesus to show us how to live in the merciful love with which God first loved us.

C: **Yet we refused to abide in this merciful love, condemning the One who came to a cruel death and ignominious end.**

P: God did not give up on creation, raising Jesus from the dead, in great and steadfast love mercifully offering us new and abundant life.

C: **Confronted with such persistent, merciful love, we throw ourselves on God’s grace, acknowledging our inability to save ourselves from ourselves.**

P: We remember that in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

P: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes:

C: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P: Remembering all that you have done for us in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of your Son, we pray that your Holy Spirit would rouse and inspire us to work for justice and peace for all your people so that everyone may know the abundant life you desire for all humanity.

To you, gracious God, we give our praise and thanksgiving, through Christ our Lord, by the power of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: **Amen**

Additional Resources:

The following are additional resources from various communities of faith. Please give credit to the writer or publisher as indicated when using their work.

Prayer of Saint Francis

[Franciscan and Other Common Prayers \(fspa.org\)](http://fspa.org)

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, Anglican Church of Canada: PWRDF and Canadian Foodgrains Bank, "Welcoming the Stranger"

[World-Refugee-Day-worship-resource.pdf \(pwrdf.org\)](http://pwrdf.org)

Prayer for Refugees by Rabbi Marla J. Feldman, Executive Director, Women of Reform Judaism

[Prayer for Refugees — Marla Feldman, USA | Worship Words](http://www.womenofreformjudaism.org)

United Church of Canada

[Prayer for Asylum-Seekers | The United Church of Canada \(united-church.ca\)](http://united-church.ca)

World Renew: Living Justice, Loving Mercy, Serving Chris:

[Resources: Refugee Sunday - World Renew](http://worldrenew.org)

The Methodist Church (UK): Singing the Faith

[Readings and resources \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)