

Mission Moment September 18, 2016  
United Church of Christ, Ames, Iowa  
Dr. George Belitsos

Good morning. This week is the UN's International Day of Peace. As we look around the globe we are witness to endless wars and 65 million refugees-the largest number of displaced persons since World War II. Daily we hear and read of the plight of refugees trying to escape several war-torn countries, but the largest of all humanitarian emergencies can be found in Syria.

Today the UCC Social Justice and Outreach Committee (SOJO) is calling on you to open your heart and your window of compassion for these refugees. Diane Birt, the UCC SOJO chair has formed the Ames Interfaith Refugee Alliance and our goal is to make Ames home to several refugee families from the Middle East.

Today, we are calling on you to join and support our effort to resettle these desperate and hurting families and to turn their peril into promise and their fear into freedom.

Since this week is the International Day of Peace, there is no better moment than right now to take action. After church today and until 3 p.m. consider joining us at Ada Hayden for the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual International Peace Walk. Each participant gets a passport and there are 12 booths with a wide variety of cultures from around the globe waiting to greet you. As you walk, your passport will be stamped as you interact and learn about different countries. The entire community of Ames is welcome to join in the celebration of diversity and peace building.