

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



For Immediate Release

Media Contact:

Emily Schappacher

(216) 736-2177 (office)

(216) 571-8967 (mobile)

schappachere@ucc.org

United Church of Christ calls for prayers for Central American refugees and their advocates

UCC urges members, congregations to dedicate moment of prayer and silent witness during church services on Sunday, July 20.

CLEVELAND (July 18, 2014) – As part of an Interfaith Weekend of Compassion and Prayer for Unaccompanied Children, the United Church of Christ is urging members and congregations to take a moment during church services this Sunday, July 20, to pray for and stand in silent witness with thousands of young refugees fleeing violence and conflict in Central America and the people and communities throughout the country working to help them.

“As more and more women and children from Central America continue to flee their homelands and seek refuge in the United States, the United Church of Christ and other faith communities throughout the country have acted with compassion and respect, supporting these refugees in their desperate time of need,” said the Rev. Linda Jaramillo, a national officer of the UCC and executive minister for the UCC’s Justice and Witness Ministries. “We encourage our members and congregations to take a few minutes to hold these individuals and their advocates in their hearts and prayers as we work to address this on-going crisis and embrace these people who so clearly need our help.”

During church services on Sunday, July 20, the UCC is asking for prayers of support for:

- The United Church of Christ national headquarters, [which has issued a special appeal to raise funds to assist these refugee women and children](#), a response to UCC congregations seeking ways to help.
- The UCC-affiliated Bethany Children’s Home in Womelsdorf, Penn., which has so far helped more than 60 unaccompanied minors through its Helping Hands program, and plans to help hundreds more in the coming months.

- Yuma United Church of Christ in Yuma, Ariz., which provides food, clothing, water, diapers and other supplies to women and children left by U.S. Border Patrol in public parking lots to fend for themselves.
- The Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ, which is serving as a donation collection center and working to distribute supplies to its local congregations.
- The Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ that is supporting the work of the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium, which has so far collected and distributed tens of thousands of items to young refugees.
- United Church of the Valley United Church of Christ in Murrieta, Calif., whose members brought a peaceful presence to the city's angry protests, and continue to advocate for these children by working with their congressional representatives.

[The Interfaith Weekend of Compassion and Prayer for Unaccompanied Migrant Children](#) will take place July 18-20. Organized by the United Methodist California-Pacific Conference, the event calls for people of faith to engage in prayer and action to protect young refugees, inject compassion into the national conversation, and to send a message to these children that they are not forgotten.

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About the United Church of Christ:

The United Church of Christ, headquartered in Cleveland, is a mainline Protestant denomination with nearly 1 million members and more than 5,100 congregations nationwide. The UCC is a church of many firsts, including the first mainline denomination to ordain a woman, the first to ordain an openly-gay man, and the first predominantly white denomination to ordain an African American.

The UCC's motto ("That they may all be one") and tagline (God is still speaking,) supports the church's long-standing commitment to social justice issues and its extravagant welcome to all, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey.