



Jesus Was a Migrant

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December 18 is recognized as International Migrants Day by the United Nations. As it occurs during Advent, it is a perfect time to remember that Jesus himself was a migrant. In fact, the Bible is full of migration stories. Moses, Ruth, and the disciples were all migrants at one point or another. The whole of human history is a story of migration. Migration in search of food, land, water. Migration away from violence, destruction, famine.

Today, our human migration story is one of closed borders and fear. People are leaving their homes because they are afraid, and countries are closing their borders because they are afraid.

Our government is forcibly returning people who claim asylum to “safe third countries” (that aren’t very safe) that those migrants have journeyed through to get to the United States. Our government is jailing persons who have come here claiming asylum until their claims are processed. Our government is continuing to separate children from their parents, sometimes deporting parents without their children or deporting children without their parents. Our government is raiding businesses and rounding up everyone who doesn’t have legal work authorization, and sometimes those that do.

Our government is targeting people who are trying to get legal documentation through U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Our government is cutting the numbers of work visas it offers each year. Our government is making it more difficult for family members and spouses of U.S. residents and citizens to join their family member in the U.S. Our government is cutting the number of refugees that will be resettled to only 18,000 in fiscal year 2020, down from 85,000 in fiscal year 2016.

Our government is doing all of this through administrative rule-making, not through legislative means. Most of these rules are being challenged in the court system. Congress hasn’t passed immigration legislation since 1996, and there have been no major changes to immigration laws since 1990. A lot has changed in the past 30 years, and our immigration system has not kept up.

We must live out Jesus' command to love our neighbors, including our migrant neighbors, not only on International Migrants Day but every day. Tell your congressional representatives to support the DREAM Act and humane immigration policies. Support a Global Ministries partner working with migrants around the world. Become an [Immigrant Welcoming Congregation](#).

Find worship and educational resources and more information from [Global Ministries](#), [Justice and Witness Ministries](#), and the [Interfaith Immigration Coalition](#).

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