



January 31, 2025

Dear colleagues,

I am writing with difficult news that I know you have been expecting. Due to the Trump administration's January 24 decision to suspend grant funding for refugee resettlement, we have made the painful decision to begin winding down Episcopal Migration Ministry (EMM) programs that are funded by federal grants on February 14. Today we informed 22 EMM employees that their service as a church center employee will end on that date. They are being offered a severance package that includes pay, access to health benefits, and outplacement services that I hope will help them find a new way to use the gifts, skills and passion that they have shared with EMM.

Under Sarah Shipman's leadership, EMM will retain a small team to manage the wind down of EMM's federal grant-sponsored programs. They have been selected based on program responsibilities and knowledge, performance, ability to communicate with affiliate and federal partners, and some consideration for seniority.

These departing employees have every reason to be angry, frustrated and frightened at this end of the work to which they have devoted their energy in recent years. I am also grieving the loss of this refugee resettlement ministry and the end of this season of our ministry. Please know, however, that an end of federal funding for Episcopal Migration Ministries does not mean an end to The Episcopal Church's commitment to stand with migrants and with our congregations who serve vulnerable immigrants and refugees. As Christians, our faith is shaped by the biblical story of people whom God led into foreign countries to escape oppression, and no change in political fortunes can dissuade us from answering God's call to welcome the stranger.

In these next few difficult weeks, please join me in praying for the refugee families we have served, for the families whose hope of starting a new life in the United States has come to an end, and for the EMM employees who are ending their service to The Episcopal Church. May God bless and keep them.

Faithfully,

+ Sean

Almighty and merciful God, whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own; look with mercy on those who today are fleeing from danger, homeless and hungry. Bless those who work to bring them relief; inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts; and guide the nations of the world towards that day when all will rejoice in your Kingdom of justice and of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[Church of England](https://www.episcopalchurch.org)