

A Statement on the separation of families from the Interfaith Action Committee of the Lehigh Conference of Churches

We the undersigned members of the committee, coming from many of the world's major religions, while relieved at the Administration's decision to rescind the policy of separating children from their parents at the U.S. border are now concerned with how speedily the 2500+/- children already here will be reunited with their parents. On a purely humanitarian level this needs to happen as expeditiously as possible.

We are also very concerned with how speedily the families will receive a fair hearing. Rumors of "indefinite" detention are unsettling on the humanitarian level and make no sense fiscally. Warehousing them will be a burden on the US taxpayer, better to grant them work visas and let them become productive contributors to our society or send them back. The only ones that benefit from a prolonged detention are the owners of those facilities. Many of these people are fleeing horrible conditions and granting asylum would be the noble thing to do.

As people of faith we would remind the Administration that all of the major world religions share in common a version of the "Golden Rule" - "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." All of the religions also teach and many demand hospitality to strangers and protection of the innocent.

Leviticus 19:33-34 ESV

"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."

Taoism. Tract of the Quiet Way Relieve people in distress as speedily as you must release a fish from a dry rill [lest he die]. Deliver people from danger as quickly as you must free a sparrow from a tight noose. Be compassionate to orphans and relieve widows. Respect the old and help the poor.

Qur'an 2:177

"True piety does not consist in turning your faces towards the east or the west - but truly pious is he who believes in God, and the Last Day; and the angels, and revelation, and the prophets; and spends his substance – however much he himself may cherish - it - upon his near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and the beggars, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage; and is constant in prayer, and renders the purifying dues; and [truly pious are] they who keep their promises whenever they promise, and are patient in misfortune and hardship and in time of peril: it is they that have proved themselves true, and it is they, they who are conscious of God."

Jeremiah 22:3 ESV

Thus says the Lord: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place.

Hebrews 13:2 ESV

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares

Baha'i-Selected Writings of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha", Page 445

O ye beloved of the Lord! In this sacred Dispensation, conflict and contention are in no wise permitted. Every aggressor deprives himself of God's grace. It is incumbent upon everyone to show the utmost love, rectitude of conduct, straight forwardness and sincere kindness unto all the peoples and kindreds of the

world, be they friends or strangers. So intense must be the spirit of love and loving kindness, that the stranger may find himself a friend, the enemy a true brother, no difference whatsoever existing between them. For universality is of God and all limitations earthly. ...

Sikh- (Sri Guru Granth Sahib)

There are five prayers and five times of day for prayer; the five have five names. Let the first be truthfulness, the second honest living, and the third charity in the Name of God. Let the fourth be good will to all, and the fifth the praise of the Lord. (p.141) The God-conscious being shows kindness to all. (p.272)

We ask those that share our concerns to contact their elected officials and express their concerns.

Sincerely,

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