

Church of the Brethren leadership shares concern for immigrant, migrant, refugee church members

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35, NRSVue).

“We have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. . . . Those who say, ‘I love God,’ and hate a brother or sister are liars, for those who do not love a brother or sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also” (1 John 4:16, 20-21, NRSVue).

The Church of the Brethren leadership expresses grave concern for those across the country who are of migrant, immigrant, or refugee status who may be under threat of deportation following recent presidential executive orders. These renewed threats of deportation are already affecting the lives of many in our denomination’s congregations.

Our concern is for all people—undocumented and documented—who are under threat. Our congregations and districts are urged to extend support to people in their communities who are living in fear for their own safety and that of family members and loved ones, as well as fear of possible losses that may include homes, jobs, livelihoods, and more.

God’s love is our greatest command, as Christians. “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another,” Jesus said. “Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another” (John 13:34, NRSVue). We believe this divine love is not delineated by political borders nor limited by national origin, ethnic identity, race, skin color, or other characteristics that often divide us.

God also calls us to welcome the stranger. Jesus said this most clearly: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35, NRSVue). The Church of the Brethren leadership urges congregations and districts to welcome strangers and neighbors in the same spirit that we welcome Christ in our midst.

As a denomination, we are striving to become a resource and referral space providing tangible information and support. We reaffirm our support for Atlantic Southeast District and its call for prayer and fasting (www.brethren.org/news/2025/jan-16-day-of-prayer-and-fasting); and for the work of the Intercultural Ministries staff and Intercultural Ministries Advisory Committee to share helpful resources (www.brethren.org/news/2025/help-members-know-their-rights). We also recommend use of ecumenical resources, local resources such as legal clinics, and immigration justice agencies that work on state and national levels.

Please join in prayer that all people may know God’s presence and be allowed to live in safety. May God hear our prayers for safety and well-being for all who call the United States home. May God move us to respond to those around us with humility, courage, and compassion.

The Mission and Ministry Board via email action on January 24, 2025, adopted this statement by unanimous consent.