

**Grounded in faith.
Working for justice.**



January 26, 2017

**The Church Council of Greater Seattle Pledges Support for Immigrants and Refugees
in the Face of Renewed Border Wall and Anti-Immigrant Measures**

The Church Council of Greater Seattle decries the announcement of efforts by the new presidential administration to extend a “border wall,” ramp up enforcement, curtail applications for asylum and halt the granting of refugee status. These actions will lead to greater separation of families and loved ones, divide communities, sow hate and place people fleeing rampant violence and persecution at risk of immense suffering and death. Such measures, coupled with the regime of raids, detention and deportation, further the dehumanization, violence and racism that migrating populations face. Immigrants and refugees seeking to rebuild their lives, including many families with children, pose no “threat” to our country. Faith communities pledge to welcome them as our neighbors and as full, contributing members of our community life.

Hard-working, faith-filled and family-oriented immigrants and refugees have been a significant part of the economic backbone of our country. Police forces around the United States have found that building relationships with local immigrant communities based on respect and tolerance are the best recipe for the security of the whole community. Community protection or “sanctuary ordinances” are means by which immigrants feel safe going to local authorities or city officials if a crime has been committed. We applaud Seattle and King County for their sanctuary ordinances, which enhance democracy and strengthen our social fabric, remove fear and alleviate suffering.

We are particularly appalled by the actions of the Trump Administration that have the effect of targeting of Muslims based on religion, although couched in bans for people of particular nationalities. We denounce the scapegoating of immigrants and refugees, Muslims and other religions, people of color and other communities placed at risk. We will stand together with these communities, lift up their stories, provide hospitality and call for their basic human rights, all actions which are not only legal, but moral obligations within our faith traditions.

Our acting as neighbor with and offering solidarity to Muslims and all religious groups are an exercise of religious faith. While sanctuary ordinances and practices are consistent with the law as provided by the Constitution, we also uphold and affirm a higher, spiritual law, which says that the civil rights and human dignity of all God’s people must be honored. We pledge circles of protection that say you are welcome. Our houses of worship require no documents and are open to all!