

# PRESS RELEASE

---

## WELCOMING THE STRANGER: AN INTERFAITH STATEMENT ON IMMIGRANTS

This is a season when we wonder about the possibilities. We reimagine a world where all people are seen, loved, and valued for their dignity and worth as children of God. This vision is not merely aspirational — it is woven into the very fabric of our sacred stories.

We remember that Jesus was born into a Roman imperial occupation and almost immediately became a refugee, fleeing with his family to Egypt to escape political violence against his people. We remember that the Prophet Muhammad and his followers fled persecution in Mecca, seeking refuge in Medina — a migration so foundational that it marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar. We remember Abraham at the oaks of Mamre, welcoming three strangers with radical hospitality, never knowing he was welcoming the divine. Across our traditions, the sacred shows up in the vulnerable, the displaced, the ones seeking refuge.

As people of faith, we cannot remain silent when policies threaten the safety and dignity of our immigrant neighbors. We stand in solidarity with those who seek refuge, those who labor to build better lives, and those who contribute to the fabric of our communities. Our sacred texts do not call us to fear the stranger — they call us to welcome, to protect, to love.

May we embody this hospitality and honor these immigrant and refugee stories by extending compassion, dignity, and justice to all who seek safety and belonging among us.

Signed,

The Rev. Dana Allen Walsh, South Church in Andover, UCC

Rabbi David Wilfond, Temple Emanuel

The Rev. Katrina Wuensch, West Parish Church of Andover, UCC

The Rev. Lee Bluemel, North Parish of North Andover, Unitarian Universalist

The Rev. Jeanette Leisk, Faith Lutheran

Rabbi Howard Mandell, Congregation Beth Israel

The Rev. Lyndon A. Myers, Andover Baptist Church

Sam Kim, Intercultural Mission Church

The Rev. Renee Manning, West Parish of Andover, UCC

The Reverend Michael J. Hodges, The Parish of Christ Church

Rabbi Karen Landy, Havurat Shalom Andover

The Rev. Genevieve Hosterman, South Church in Andover, UCC