



# A MENU of Welcoming Actions

## 1. Share a Meal

Consider hosting or organizing a Refugees Welcome dinner. See our toolkit at: [http://www.refugeesarewelcome.org/refugees-welcome-toolkit\\_final-8-5-16/](http://www.refugeesarewelcome.org/refugees-welcome-toolkit_final-8-5-16/). The act of communities inviting recently arrived immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to join them around the table holds immense meaning and offers a welcoming space to build relationships and learn from one another. This is also a great way to show hospitality and to urge policy makers to support refugee resettlement.

## 2. Invite Refugees to Speak at Congregational Services

One of the most important roles of an ally congregation is lifting up the voices of those most impacted by the issue at hand. Please consider inviting a refugee leader in your region to share their story during your congregation's weekly service or educational event. By lifting up the voices of refugee leaders themselves, we can help refugees gain a sense of their own power and ability to advocate for their communities.

## 3. Hold Multi-Faith Services or Vigils

Amid anti-Muslim rhetoric that isolates our Muslim neighbors, it is extremely important to lift up multi-faith collaboration and cooperation. Take the opportunity to publicly represent how people from many faiths can work together in unity to welcome refugees. See regularly updated refugee themed resources for holidays at: <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/2016/10/13/religious-holiday-resources/>

## 4. Meet with Your Policy Makers

It is more important than ever for all our nation's lawmakers to support the hospitality that communities across the country are demonstrating. Developing a relationship and educating your policy makers are necessary steps to ensure welcoming policies for refugees. When Congress and U.S. state legislators as well as state Senators and Representatives and local leaders support discriminatory policies that exclude certain refugees based on national origin or religion, they need to hear from their constituents that you are committed to welcome refugees. Urge your area's leaders to adopt welcoming resolutions that show your community's support for refugees and all newcomers. Check out our action alert below and see our latest refugee alerts for contact information and talking points: [www.refugeesarewelcome.org/get-involved](http://www.refugeesarewelcome.org/get-involved)

## 5. Share Stories of Welcome

Share your stories! Make sure refugees provide consent and feel comfortable with their pictures and/or stories being shared publicly. Tell us how your Refugees Welcome event went by emailing [info.refugeesarewelcome@gmail.com](mailto:info.refugeesarewelcome@gmail.com), and share your message of welcome with your local, state, and national policy makers! Write an Opinion Editorial about your event (we'll provide samples!), or invite a local media outlet to run a story. Put your Refugees Welcome events on the map at [www.refugeesarewelcome.org](http://www.refugeesarewelcome.org). Together, we can show the power of our communities that welcome and stand with refugees.

## 6. Discover Our Resources: Refugees Welcome Toolkit

Click here for resources on how to organize an event, contact policy makers, and share your stories of welcome: [http://www.refugeesarewelcome.org/refugees-welcome-toolkit\\_final-8-5-16/](http://www.refugeesarewelcome.org/refugees-welcome-toolkit_final-8-5-16/)

## 7. Sponsor a Newly Arriving Refugee Family!!

Relationships transform hearts! Help your congregation and community group encounter the personal stories of refugee families by serving as a Welcoming Team/Sponsor for a new family. Contact your faith representative, and also go here to find the resettlement offices nearest you:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/580e4274e58c624696efadc6/t/58406f886a496371af576a3f/1480617864269/Public+Affiliate+Directory+11-28-16.pdf>

## **TAKE ACTION TODAY: Tell Your Local, State, and National Leaders to Welcome Refugees**

**Background:** Right now, as we prepare for President-elect Donald Trump to take office in January, it is more important than ever for **all** of our elected officials to hear that their communities welcome refugees. Refugee resettlement saves lives, encourages other countries to keep their doors open to people needing protection, and promotes regional stability and global security. We cannot turn our backs on the refugees we have pledged to welcome. Nor can we discriminate against individuals based on where they're from or what religion they practice. Refugee resettlement must continue to be a cornerstone of U.S. global leadership.

More than 65 million people have been persecuted and forced from their homes and are seeking safety. As a nation, we must uphold our values of generosity, hospitality and compassion. Our actions must match gravity of this displacement crisis and live up to our welcoming legacy. Please spread the word and have everyone you know share this alert!

### **Call your Senators and Representatives: 1-866-940-2439 Tell Them Your Community Welcomes Refugees**

Please call the same number three times to be connected with your Representative and both of your Senators.

Here's a sample of what to say: *"I am a constituent from [CITY, STATE], and I urge you to welcome refugees and support the U.S. refugee resettlement program. Resettlement is a core American legacy that extends hospitality and offers a chance for refugees to rebuild their lives in safety and dignity. My community welcomes refugees and I urge you to reflect the best of our nation by supporting refugee resettlement in the United States."*

Feel free to share a personal story about the importance of refugees to you, your faith, your community, your business, etc. Let them know the specific ways that refugees benefit and are welcomed into your community, and why refugee protection is so important to you.

You can also tweet your policy makers: *".@SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE, my community stands #WithRefugees! Show that #AmericaWelcomes by supporting U.S. refugee resettlement! #RefugeesWelcome"*

### **Share This Message with Your State and Local Officials!**

Your state and local leaders need to hear the same message. Tell them that your community welcomes refugees. To find your governor, state legislators, mayor, and local officials, click here: <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>. To tweet your state and local officials, click to find the twitter handles for your [governor](#) and [state legislators](#).

It is more important than ever for **all** our nation's lawmakers to represent the hospitality that communities across the country are demonstrating. Take action today to stand with refugees.

For more tips on how to make your voice heard with Members of Congress, click here: <https://twitter.com/i/moments/798297193559904258>

Please spread the word and send this email to your networks! Follow [@RCUSA\\_DC](#) on Twitter and "like" [Refugee Council USA](#) on Facebook for up-to-date alerts.