



MATTHEW 25

*“I was hungry...I was thirsty...***I was a stranger***...I needed clothes...
I was sick...I was in prison, and you came. Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of
the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”*
(Matthew 25 NRSV)

For I was a stranger and you welcomed me...

FACTS

- Immigrants and their U.S. born children number approximately 85.7 million people, or 26% of the U.S. population according to the 2020 Current Population Survey (CPS), a slight decline from 2019.
- In 2019, the top five U.S. states by number of immigrants were California (10.6 million), Texas (5 million), Florida (4.5 million), New York (4.4 million), and New Jersey (2.1 million). †
- As of 2018, 10.3% of Franklin County, OH residents (136k people) were born outside of the United States, which is lower than the national average of 13.7%. In 2017, the percentage of foreign-born citizens in Franklin County, OH was 9.77%, meaning that the rate has been increasing. (Franklin County, OH, Data U.S.)
- Columbus is home to more than 155,000 residents who were born in nations including Bhutan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, India, and Mexico, among others. According to the 2018-2019 Global Report from the Columbus Council on World Affairs, roughly 8% of the City's total population is foreign born.
- Definition of terms:
 - **Refugee** – a person who has been forced to flee his or her home because of war, violence, or persecution, often without warning.
 - **Asylum seeker** – someone seeking international protection from dangers in his or her home country, but who claim for refugee status has not yet been determined.
 - **Immigrant** – someone who makes a conscious decision to leave his or her home and move to a foreign country with the intention of settling there.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS AROUND THE TABLE

How would you feel if you had to leave your home quickly because of war, hunger or a natural disaster? What would you miss most?

Do you know anyone in your community who has been displaced from their home?

What do you imagine the greatest challenge displaced people encounter in coming to a new place?

WAYS TO PRAY

Thank God that you have not had to leave your home because of war, hunger, or natural disaster.

Ask God to help refugees be able to recover from their circumstances.

Pray for organizations and people who work to help refugees.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Research and share your family's immigration story with a younger or another member of your family.
2. Explore your library's collection that tell immigration stories. Choose one and read it.
3. Purchase a children's book written in a language other than English and donate it to a neighborhood library.
4. When safety protocols allow, tour the Riverview International Center. (Steve Ryan is a great source of information.)
5. Buy a Welcome Neighbor Sign from CRIS and display it in your yard.
<https://www.crisohio.org/buy-a-sign/>
6. Re-read Matthew 25: 31-40. How does this passage connect for you with the issue of being a stranger or displaced? Does it change how you view the facts above, your prayers, or actions? If so, how?

Please interact with the links below to engage more with the topics of immigration and refugeeism and learn more about resources dedicated to helping

Local Information

Overbrook has supported these organization's efforts in the past.

- CommunityRefugee and Immigration Services <https://www.crisohio.org> (a video can be found at the bottom of the home page)
- Riverview International Center <https://www.riverviewinternationalcenter.org>

Ohio Information

Profile of foreign-born population in Ohio

<https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/profile-foreign-born-population-columbus.pdf>

Services provided refugees through Ohio Jobs and Family Services

<https://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/RefugeeResettlement.stm>

National Information

The UN refugee agency <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/us-resettlement-partners.html>

U.S. Department of State <https://www.state.gov/refugee-admissions/reception-and-placement/>

National Church Information

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance <https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/refugee-ministry/>

PCUSA policy position on immigration <https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration/policy-immigration/>