

## Advent for Afghans Talking Points

- The Episcopal Church has been involved with refugee ministry for 45 years, and with the broader issues of immigration since its founding alongside this country. Welcoming the stranger is a core element of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Church will not step back from it.
- We are committed to embracing the command of Jesus, and his definition of neighbor. We recognize that there is little to fear from those who have themselves fled violence for fear of their lives. We respect and value the dignity of every human being.
- The Episcopal Church's role in the refugee resettlement process is to welcome refugees, provide for their immediate needs, including employment and case management, and to walk alongside them in their journey to integration.
- Across the country, communities and congregations are welcoming Afghan individuals and families with open arms and everyone benefits when neighbors take care of each other.
- The U.S. must be a welcoming nation, as it has been many times in its history when there was an urgent need for humanitarian protection stemming from conflicts or disasters in other nations.
- The U.S., in particular, has a moral responsibility to receive Afghans who are seeking refuge from Taliban military advances. This is an emergency situation and we need to protect as many Afghans as possible.
- We live in complex times, and it is everyone's responsibility – the media, society, politicians, and regular people – to make sure that our democracy reflects our value of welcoming people of all origins, backgrounds, and faiths. We are all in this together. Right now, we can demonstrate moral courage by providing refuge to people from Afghanistan who are fleeing violence and death.
- We owe it to ourselves to offer refugees protection from violence and the opportunity to raise their families in safety. Many of our grandparents came to the United States to escape persecution and were offered the opportunity to become Americans. We must keep this legacy alive for today's refugees and create the kind of welcoming nation in which we want to live.
- This is work that is neither easy nor simple; it is not without controversy or struggle. It is, however, a choice of hope over fear.