

## **REFUGEE SUNDAY 2017**

### **A Litany of Celebration**

**Reader 1:** As members of Christ's body, we are drawn by the Spirit to embrace God's mission. We are sent outside the walls of the church and into our neighbourhood and the world to serve, each according to our gifts. As we do so, we bear witness in practical and meaningful ways and those we encounter enrich our lives.

**Reader #2:** *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. (Matthew 25: 35-40)*

**All:** Lord, as we venture forth into our neighbourhoods grant us humility and compassion. Grant us eyes to see your Image in the refugees and newcomers who we serve. Grant us ears to hear their stories. Grant us spirits that will be transformed through relationship with those we meet.

**Reader #1:** We give praise for God's goodness in sustaining refugees as they adjust to life in Canada. And we are witness to God's faithfulness and goodness in sustaining churches across Canada who have welcomed refugees into their communities. With gratitude, we celebrate the Spirit's work in transforming hearts.

**Reader #2:** *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. (Hebrews 12:2)*

**All:** We pray that as we continue to encounter the Spirit stirring our hearts and the hearts of others, we would be compelled to join the great cloud of witnesses, casting aside that which holds us back.

**Reader #2:** We recognize that on our own we do not have the strength to commit our lives to the acts of acceptance and hospitality that bring forth your Kingdom here on earth.

**Reader #1:** *God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. (Psalm 46:1 - 7)*

**All:** To you, Lord, we commit our efforts to welcome the stranger. We pray that you fill our hearts with joy and our minds with a vision of your Kingdom as we seek to take part in the work you are doing in your world.