

August 30, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As 219 faith leaders and 88 faith organizations and faith groups across traditions dedicated to upholding the human rights, humanitarian protection, and the rights of refugees, asylees, asylum seekers, stateless people, and all others who have been forcibly displaced, we write to express our support for a robust humanitarian response from the United States and our commitment to welcome Afghans in need of refuge and to implore your administration to expand opportunities for Afghans to seek refuge in the United States.

After months of warnings to evacuate and protect Afghan lives during U.S. withdrawal, [faith leaders](#), [veterans](#), [advocates](#), and [experts](#) called for a timely, efficient, and secure Afghan evacuation. Tens of thousands of our Afghan allies are in imminent danger and [face retaliation and death by the Taliban](#). On August 15th, [Taliban forces](#) took control of Kabul, seeding panic throughout the city and country. We are met with unending accounts of the desperation of Afghans seeking to flee: crowds overflowing the [airfield](#), resulting in avoidable and tragic deaths; Afghans who worked alongside US forces scrambling to [delete](#) their digital history, and seeking resources for disguising their [biometric data](#) for fear of being discovered and targeted by the Taliban; [women](#) have already disappeared from the streets of Kabul, their safety and freedoms slipping away.

On August 16th, you [addressed](#) the public regarding the withdrawal, stating that you “won’t shrink from [your] share of the responsibility” for how the US engaged in Afghanistan and that “part of the answer is some of the Afghans did not want to leave earlier — still hopeful for their country.” Taking responsibility means ensuring that there continue to be robust protections for vulnerable populations in Afghanistan — including women, girls, LGBTQIA+ people, people with disabilities, and religious and minority groups — while providing clear pathways to protection for all Afghans seeking refuge from violence. Such pathways include, but are not limited to: ensuring safe pathways out of Afghanistan and evacuating Afghan allies to US territories (e.g., Guam) for processing (until all 18,000 SIV applicants and their loved ones have been evacuated); expanding US refugee resettlement numbers and capacity; working with UNHCR and the international humanitarian community to support emergency aid infrastructure; halting any and all deportations of Afghan nationals in accordance with [UNHCR recommendations](#); designating Afghanistan for Temporary Protected Status, and increasing US asylum processing.

If “human rights must be at the center of our foreign policy, not the periphery”, as you stated in the same [address](#) to the American people and to the world, the United States must stand behind its promises. Leaving behind Afghans could be a death sentence for many. It is morally reprehensible and an abandonment of our faith values. We cannot let this happen.

We are called by our sacred texts to love our neighbor, accompany the vulnerable, and welcome the sojourner. Our places of worship have historically played key roles in assisting refugees for rapid and effective integration into U.S. communities. Our places of worship and faith communities stand ready to welcome all Afghans in need of refuge.

Sincerely,

**Faith Organizations**

ADL (Anti-Defamation League)  
Adorers of the Blood of Christ, US Region  
Alliance of Baptists  
American Muslim Empowerment Network (AMEN)

Bridgeport United Church of Christ  
Casa del Migrante en Tijuana, Scalabrini International Migration Network (SIMN)  
Cathedral of Hope United Church of Christ  
Catholic Prison services  
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice  
Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy  
Church World Service  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes' Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Office  
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship  
Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul USA  
Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel  
Dominican Sisters - Grand Rapids  
Dominican Sisters of Hope  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Faith Action Network  
Faith Commons  
Faith in Texas  
Faithful America  
Faiths for Safe Water  
Fellowship Southwest  
First United Methodist Church of Fremont  
Franciscan Action Network  
Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Holy Union Sisters  
Hope Border Institute  
Hopewell Church of the Brethren  
IHM Sisters - Justice, Peace and Sustainability Office  
Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center  
Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America (IFCLA)  
Interfaith Communities for Dialogue (ICD)  
Interfaith Welcome Coalition - San Antonio  
International Ministries  
Jesuit Refugee Service/USA  
John Calvin Presbyterian Church  
JPIC Committee - Religious of Jesus & Mary, USA/Haiti Province  
Justice for Our Neighbors El Paso  
La Unión Del Pueblo Entero- LUPE  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
Market Square Presbyterian Church Peacemaking Committee  
National Council of Churches  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Religious Campaign Against Torture  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
NOVA Friends of Refugees  
NOVA Friends of Refugees  
One Journey  
Pax Christi Metro DC-Baltimore  
Pax Christi USA  
Peace Action Group of Plymouth Church Seattle, UCC  
Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Provincial Council for School Sisters of Notre Dame Central Pacific Province  
School Sisters of Notre Dame  
School Sisters of Notre Dame - Atlantic Midwest Province

School Sisters of Notre Dame, Central Pacific Province  
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)  
Sikh Coalition  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership  
Sisters of Charity, BVM  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team  
Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, PA  
Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, LA  
Sisters of St. Mary of Namur  
Sisters of the Humility of Mary  
Sisters of the immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon, MO  
Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton PA  
Sojourners  
Spring Hill United Church of Christ  
SSND Immigration Committee  
St Paul United Methodist Church in Fremont  
The Episcopal Church  
The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society  
U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph  
Unitarian Universalist Refugee & Immigrant Services & Education  
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice  
Westchester Jewish Coalition for Immigration  
Wisconsin Council of Churches  
Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice  
World Relief

### **Faith Leaders and People of Faith**

#### **Arizona**

Rev. Carol Reynolds Scottsdale Congregational United Church of Christ  
Rev. Kenneth Kennon, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Alice Stambaugh, Scottsdale Congregational United Church of Christ, United Church of Christ  
Margaret Grannis, Centering Prayer Group, Scottsdale Congregational  
Rev Elizabeth Enright  
Elder Salena Petersen Keesecker, Guadalupe Presbyterian Church, Guadalupe Presbyterian Church  
Bergen Priest Associate, Episcopal Church of St. Matthew

#### **California**

Minerva G. Carcaño, San Francisco Episcopal Area, The United Methodist Church  
Reverend Thomas Widlund, Woodland United Methodist, Church United Methodist  
Rev. Rick Sample, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Baptist  
Rev. Lita Sample, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Baptist  
Rev. Angel Kyodo Williams, Transformative Change, Buddhist  
Rev. Dr. Shijung Shim, United Methodist Church of Castro Valley United Methodist Church  
Rev. Johann M. Osias, St Paul United Methodist Church  
Dana VanderMey, Hope Community Church of Santa Barbara  
Sister Jocelyn Quijano, Presentation Sisters Union  
Rev. Dr. Linda L. Pickens-Jones, St. Mark's United Methodist Church  
Pastor Youngmi Jung, First United Methodist Church of Fremont United Methodist Church  
Rev. Marylee Sheffer, Napa Methodist Church  
Ms. Anita Cuttler, Saint Augustine by-the-Sea Episcopal Church  
Jo Marshall, First United Methodist Church  
Rev. Christine Morgan, Retired Hospice Chaplain, Interfaith  
Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn, Vista La Mesa Christian Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Sister Martha Larsen, Sisters of Mercy  
Rev. Dr. Myrna Tuttle, First Congregational Church of Santa Barbara, United Church of Christ  
Person of Faith, St. Paul United Methodist Church, United Methodist  
Dr. Catherine Regan, Sisters of Mercy  
Rose M Berger, Sojourners  
Bishop Sally Dyck, United Methodist Church  
Susan Dunaway- Tsujihara, Napa United Methodist  
Ellen Patterson, Napa Methodist Church Methodist

### **Colorado**

Rabbi Deborah Ruth Bronstein, Congregation Har HaShem, Reform Judaism

### **Connecticut**

Reverend Carla Dietz, Connecticut Conference of UCC  
Stanley Maticka, Immanuel Congregational Church, UCC  
Sister Maryann Mueller, CSSF, JPIC Coordinator, Felician Sister  
Michele Mudrick, First Church of Christ Glastonbury CT, UCC  
Sr. Elaine Betoncourt CSJ, Sisters of St. Joseph, Chambery/West Hartford  
Virginia Streppa, Covenant Church, Protestant

### **District of Columbia**

Rev. Kealani Willbanks, Foundry UMC  
Diane Randall, Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Sim J. Singh, Sikh Coalition  
Rev. T.C. Morrow, Public Witness and Ecumenical Connection Foundry UMC  
Faith Ottenhoff, John's Episcopal Church

### **Florida**

Rev. Dr. William Olewiler, Virginia Annual Conference, United Methodist Church

### **Georgia**

Rev. David W. Key, Sr. Founding Pastor Lake Oconee Community Church, Multi-denominational  
Dr. Belle McMaster, Monticello Presbyterian Church

### **Illinois**

Sister Dorothy Pagosa, Sisters of St Joseph Third Order of St Francis  
Sister Joyce Shanabarger, Franciscan Sisters  
Carol Devoss, CUCC, Congregational (UCC)  
Susan Armstrong, Broadway United Methodist Church  
Rev Ms Shirley Wooden, Westminster Presbyterian

### **Indiana**

The Very Reverend Gray Lesesne, Christ Church Cathedral

### **Kansas**

Tracy Baack, Journey Bible Church

### **Kentucky**

Mary Landrum, Wesley United Methodist Church, United Methodist

### **Louisiana**

George D Bond II, St George's Episcopal Church  
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Cahalan, Saint Jerome's Catholic Church

### **Maine**

Rev. Steve. Garnaas-Holmes, New England United Methodist Conference

## **Maryland**

Fran Eskin-Royer, Executive Director, National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
Rev. Dr. Cheryl L. Tatham, North Chevy Chase Christian Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Sister Marie Lucey, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia  
Sister Ruth Harkins, The Catholic University of America  
Mary Liston Liepold ofs, Secular Franciscan  
Rev Patricia Roop Hollinger, Church of the Brethren/Quaker

## **Massachusetts**

William Ramsey, Charlemont Federated Church, United Church of Christ  
Sister Mary Lou Simcoe, Justice and Peace Promoter Holy Union Sisters  
Nancy Ross, Franklin Federated Church UCC/American Baptist Churches  
Dr. Brad Rothrock, Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Episcopal

## **Michigan**

Rev. Michael S. Mulberry, Pilgrim Congregational UCC, United Church of Christ  
Sister Joan Williams, Dominican Sisters~Grand Rapids  
The Rev. Susan Greenwood, First Congregational UCC Coloma, United Church of Christ  
Lys Blakeslee, Christ Church  
Rev. JP Sundararajan, Reformed Church in America  
Art Hanson

## **Minnesota**

Rev. T. Michael Rock, Robbinsdale Parkway United Church of Christ, United, Church of Christ  
Rev. Dan Adolphson, First Christian Church Minneapolis, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

## **Missouri**

Pastor Corrine Haulotte Reverend, Lutheran Campus Center, ELCA  
Emily Kuttenkuler, Asylum-Seeker Support Ministry Team, Kirkwood United Church of Christ UCC  
Susan D. Laughlin, Kirkwood, UCC  
Rev. Betsy Happel, Pastor, Kirkwood United Church of Christ, UCC  
Karen J Kaul, Congregation, Kirkwood United Church of Christ, UCC  
Vic Burton, Universal spirituality  
Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon

## **Montana**

Rev. Laura Folkwein, Associate Pastor, UCC Missoula, United Church of Christ/Christian

## **New Jersey**

Sister Mary Virginia Tomasiak, CSSF  
Sister Lynn Marie, CSSF, Felician Sisters of North America  
Dr. Rosalind Smith Edman, St. Charles Borromeo Parish  
Rev. Patricia Bruger, UM Retired Clergy  
Daniel Grossano, Youth and Family Ministry, Church of the Little Flower  
Sister Kathleen McDonnell, Sisters of Mercy

## **New York**

Rev. Dr. Donna Schaper, Orient Congregational Church  
Arlene Flaherty OP, Director, JPIC Dept. School Sisters of Notre Dame Atlantic Midwest Province  
Sarah Manasrah  
Sister Kathleen Kanet, RSHM, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary  
Sister Maureen Welch, Ursuline Sisters, Eastern province  
Br. Michael Potvin-Frost, OFH Brother Order of Franciscan Hermits  
Sister Ann Marie Pierce, IHM, Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
The Rev. Elizabeth G. Maxwell, Church of the Ascension, Episcopal

Kerry A. Giansante, Journey's End Refugee Services  
Arlene Kaukus, The Chapel at Crosspoint  
Bro. Terence Connolly CFC, Christian Brothers  
Sister Maureen Jessnik, Sister Life Minister, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas  
Rev. University United Methodist Church  
Sister Roberta Smith, Sisters of St. Francis  
JJ TenClay, Reformed Church in America  
Evangelical and Environmental Scientist Roosevelt-freeport church of christ

### **North Carolina**

Rev. Paula Clayton Dempsey, Alliance of Baptists  
Santiago Reales, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of NC  
Rev. Julie Wilson, Open Arms Community, United Methodist  
Suzanne Null, Unitarian Universalist  
Megan Wilson, Salem Presbyterian  
Dr K Michie Harriss Dew, New Creation Community Presbyterian  
Douglas Wingeier, Rev Dr, United Methodist Church  
The Rev Christine Payden-Travers, Episcopal

### **Ohio**

Sister Sheila Marie Tobbe, Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland

### **Oregon**

Rev. Tara L. Wilkins, Bridgeport United Church of Christ, United Church of Christ  
Taylor Nasim Stone, Imago Dei Community  
Bob Morse, South Mountain Friends Meeting

### **Pennsylvania**

Sister Joyce Bell, Sisters of IHM  
Betsy Wiest, Sisters of St. Joseph of NW PA  
Donna Marie Korba, Office of JPIC, Sisters of IHM  
Sister Mary Ann Adams, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Ann Marie McDonnell, Sisters of IHM  
Sister Ann Rosalia, Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Mindy Welding Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sr. Danat Brysch, Felician Sisters  
Katherine Kearney, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sr. John Michele Southwick, Campus Minister, Marywood University  
Sister Fran Fasolka, IHM Congregation Sisters of IHM  
Margaret Gannon  
Rev. Paul Hagedorn, Tabernacle Lutheran Church  
Sister Mary Elaine Anderson, Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
The Rev. Sandra L. Strauss, Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Rev. James A. Cavallero, St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
Rev. Susan L. Worrell, Hope Christian Counseling  
Bonita L Reed, Saint James Episcopal  
Rev. James D. Bell, International Ministries  
Mrs. Rachel Mateti, Plains Mennonite Church  
Sr. Mary Ann Buckley, Society of the Holy Child Jesus  
The Rev. Faith J. D'Urbano, Diocese of Bethlehem  
Glenn Simmons Pastor, Millbrook Chase  
Deacon Linda Maule, Deacon, Light of Christ  
The Rev Jennifer McKenna, Market Square Presbyterian  
Maria, OSF  
Rev. Thomas E. McKee, St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
Chris Koellhoffer, Sisters of IHM

**Rhode Island**

Sister Noelle J Cooper, Cluny Sisters USA/Canada, Srs. Of St. Joseph of Cluny  
Sister Mary, Sisters of Mercy  
Sister Genevieve-Marie Vigil, Provincial of the United States and Canada, Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny

**South Carolina**

DorothyAnn Rowland, OFS, Secular Franciscan Order

**Tennessee**

Robert Fingerman, B'nai Zion

**Texas**

Rabbi Nancy Kasten, Faith Commons  
The Rev. Erin J. Walter, Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry  
Jim Flannery, United Methodist Church  
Sister Rosemarie Goins, Felician Franciscan Sisters  
Rev. Phil Dieke, White Rock United Methodist Church  
Pastor Cirilo Bernal, The House of Love and Justice  
Emily Morrow Loachamin, FBC  
Karen Morrow, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship  
Rev. Lisa Garvin, Southern Methodist University  
Cing, Lighthouse Myanmar Ministries  
Dr. Fessenden, Catholic Charities Dallas  
Lisa Stone, Beth Israel  
Rev. Dr. Edward Kern, Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA)

**Vermont**

Rev. D. Mark Blank, Second Congregational Church, UCC  
The Venerable Catherine Cooke Archdeacon, Cathedral Church of St. Paul- Episcopal

**Virginia**

Ann Speicher, Mt. Olivet UMC  
The Rev. Daniel Vélez-Rivera, Saint Gabriel's Episcopal Church  
Rev. Tim Bobbitt, First Christian Church of Alexandria  
Rev. Dr. Leah G. Davis, Ravensworth Baptist Church  
Paramjit Sachdeva, Sikh Foundation of Virginia  
Katherine Wood, Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Casey Wait, John Calvin Presbyterian Church  
Kenn Speicher, Board of Church & Society, United Methodist Church, Virginia Conference  
Elder Marie A. Monsen, John Calvin Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Sarah S Scherschligt, Peace Lutheran Church  
Molly Keen Wilmarth, The Falls Church Episcopal  
Wendy Chan, St. George's Episcopal Church of Arlington  
Katlyn B, New City Fellowship

**Washington**

Jordan Smith, Bellingham First Christian Church (DOC)  
Rev. Catharine M. Cline, United Church in University Place  
Will Rutt, Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center  
Sister Aneelah Afzali, Muslim Association of Puget Sound  
Roya Jalili, MAPS  
Ms. Jennifer MacDonald, Assumption Church  
Nancy Jacobs, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church  
Rev. Allison Mattocks, Congregation Minister, Longview UMC  
Val Keller, St. Benedict Parish

Dr. Margaret Diddams  
Elise DeGooyer, Faith Action Network  
Rev. Liz Kearny, Presbyterian Church

**Wisconsin**

Rabbi Bonnie Margulis, Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice  
Rev. Kerri Parker, Wisconsin Council of Churches  
Dr. Peter Bakken, Justice and Witness - Wisconsin Council of Churches  
Rev. Rebecca Voss, First United Methodist Church of Wausau  
Rev. Brad Brookins, Immanuel United Church of Christ  
Rev. Sonja Ingebritsen, Community of Hope UCC  
Reta Haring, Lake Edge UCC  
Jan Gregorcich, School Sister of Notre Dame  
Mr Thomas J Littelmann, Gesu Parish  
Frederick R. Trost, Wisconsin Conference of the UCC