



“And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.” Deuteronomy 10:19



Christians United for Afghanistan

Christian leaders and organisations across the country have issued a joint call to the Australian Government to do more to provide safety for refugees from Afghanistan.

The campaign has four asks:

1. Welcome Afghan Refugees: Declare an intake of an additional 20,000 refugees focused on those most at risk from the Taliban (just as they did for people fleeing Syria in 2015 and as the UK and Canada have announced).
2. Protect Afghans in Australia: Grant permanent protection to all people from Afghanistan in Australia on temporary protection visas or currently awaiting application outcomes.
3. Reunite Refugee Families: Make immediate arrangements to bring the families of refugees from Afghanistan to Australia.
4. Support through Humanitarian Aid: Provide additional emergency and long-term support through reputable NGOs and organisations working in the region.

AUSTRALIA MUST RESPOND GENEROUSLY AND COMPASSIONATELY TO THIS CRISIS. WE HAVE THE CAPACITY AS A NATION TO TAKE LEADERSHIP AND ACTION IN ORDER TO PROTECT LIVES AND BRING PEOPLE TO SAFETY. AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS, WE BELIEVE EACH PERSON IS PRECIOUS AND LOVED BY GOD.

REV. SHARON HOLLIS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

What You Can Do:

You can sign onto the campaign here: <https://www.unitedforafghanistan.com>

You can support an emergency appeal by UnitingWorld here:
<https://donate.unitingworld.org.au/afghanistan>

Pilgrim Circle of Friends is seeking donations to cover the service of a Dari interpreter and administration assistant for Australian Migration Options (Libby Hogarth, Pilgrim Church and Registered Migration Agent), who are assisting over 50 High Risk Afghan families with visa applications and also answering hundreds of emails from anxious relatives. Pilgrim Circle also supports newly arrived Afghan families with settlement: www.givenow.com.au/circle-of-friends
(Earmark the contribution to 'Circle 27 – Pilgrim Circle')

We welcome new refugees from Afghanistan – and we support those who have been here a long time, many without any government support and no pathway to permanent residence.

Refugees who arrived by boat to Australia have been placed on temporary visas that have denied them the ability to reunite with their families still overseas and get on with their life with any certainty. “Temporary protection” is part of the Australian Government’s current policy that people who came by boat and claimed asylum should not be given permanent protection.

There are currently almost 20,000 people living in the Australian community on these visas with more than 4000 others under review or still awaiting processing of their asylum claim. Refugees who are living on temporary visas are experiencing ongoing difficulties that cause distress and prevent them from starting a life together with their families. Most refugees on temporary visas have lived in the Australian community for eight years or more, supporting themselves, paying taxes and sending remittances back to their families overseas. Many have missed seeing their children grow up and many key events like family funerals and weddings. Living in a constant state of uncertainty exacerbates mental stress and significantly restricts the employment, study or business options for refugees.



What You Can Do:

Write polite and respectful letters to your local Federal Member of Parliament and to:

The Hon Scott Morrison MP

Prime Minister, PO Box 6022, House of Representatives Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600
www.pm.gov.au/contact-your-pm

The Hon Alex Hawke

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs PO Box 6022
House of Representatives Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600

Points to make in your letters:

- Families should not be kept apart by Government policy.
- For refugees on temporary visas there should be a clear and attainable pathway to permanent residency over time that includes access to family reunion.
- Providing access to permanent residency and family reunion would greatly alleviate the mental distress people are now enduring and would help maximise the contributions they will be able to make to Australia.



A new Synod Refugee Advocacy

Group-produced Video can be viewed in a service of worship in your congregation, as a part of Church Council meeting, and other gatherings.

You can view and download on the link,
<https://vimeo.com/605416093>

For further information
please contact

Paul Goh, Justice Officer

Email: pgoh@sa.uca.org.au