

CONGREGATIONS

Journey For Justice

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CWS ASH WEDNESDAY ECUMENICAL DECLARATION

THE NEXT STEPS: You've taken a meaningful step by signing the CWS Ash Wednesday Ecumenical Declaration. You said "yes" to compassion and justice. Now you're invited to go deeper: to embody your commitment through action, reflection, and solidarity with refugees.

Join the Journey for Justice Challenge.

- Walk in faith.
- Fundraise with purpose.
- Stand in solidarity.

The Journey for Justice Challenge:

The CWS Journey for Justice Challenge is a one-month solidarity experience where congregants commit to walking/running 43.7 miles in recognition of the 43.7 million refugees worldwide.* Participants will invite friends, family, and their communities to sponsor their journey, with all proceeds going directly to support CWS's programs that serve refugees globally and in the U.S. This is a powerful, personal way for faith communities to live out the Gospel's call to welcome the stranger (Matthew 25:35) and show that we are truly greater as one.

Why Take the Journey for Justice Challenge?

- Provide congregants with a deeper understanding of refugee realities
- Your congregation can make your faith visible through action
- Expand mission engagement beyond the pews and into the broader community
- Raise funds beyond the collection plate to help people in need

Why 43.7 Miles?

There are 43.7 million refugees around the world—each with a story of loss, resilience, and hope.

- Walking 43.7 miles over a month (just over 1 mile a day) symbolizes the long, often dangerous journeys refugees take to seek safety and rebuild their lives.
- Your steps can raise awareness, spark compassion, and generate \$4,370 in critical funds to support refugees along their journey.



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HOW IT WORKS - JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE

1. Choose When to Take the Challenge

Congregations commit to one month of walking. We recommend May 20 – June 20 (World Refugee Day).

2. Create a Fundraising Page (insert hyperlink)

The Congregation Lead will create their own page as well as one for their Church team when prompted (that the other participants from the congregation will then join - include the city/state when naming your Church team), set fundraising goals (we recommend \$4,370 for the Church team), and each participant from the congregation will share the challenge with friends, family, and their congregation.

3. Get Sponsored

Participants will ask their networks to sponsor their sacrifice by donating to CWS.

Sample asks:

\$20 = a month of food assistance for one refugee outside U.S.

\$43 = a gardening project for one refugee family

\$75 = legal aid for asylum seekers

\$300 = a month of food assistance for a refugee family in the U.S.



HOW IT WORKS - JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE

4. Live in Solidarity

Participants commit to their challenge for one full month, engaging in prayer, reflection, and advocacy while they do so.

- CWS will provide weekly devotionals related to refugees, tying the experience to Scripture and also “Action Alerts” for contacting members of congress to advocate for just and compassionate policies.
- Participants can post updates and reflections on social media using #JourneyForJustice to spread awareness.
- Church Leaders can host a Kick-off gathering at the beginning of the month with a reflection/ “refugee simulation” to encourage more participants from the congregation.
- Leaders within the congregation can host “Walk with the Pastor” or “Small group Walks” during the month for added fellowship and engagement
- Church leaders can host a group reflection session at the end of the month, allowing participants to share their experiences.

5. End the challenge & Celebrate Refugee Sunday

At the end of the month congregations can hold a Refugee Sunday celebration to conclude the challenge:

- Share testimonies from participants.
- Take a special offering for CWS (to add to the amount fundraised).
- Pray for refugees.



WHY TAKE THE CHALLENGE?

WHY?

- Engages All Ages
- Creates Deeper Understanding – Participants walk in solidarity and reflect on the realities of displacement.
- Strengthens Community Engagement – Congregants work together while raising awareness and inviting others to join. It also enhances congregational visibility.
- Drives Real Impact – Every dollar raised provides critical aid and advocacy

How CWS Supports Your Congregation's Team

- Fundraising support with customized online fundraising platform, suggested social media posts, email templates, and sample asks.
- A worship service using the Displaced Toolkit with devotionals, discussion prompts, and prayers.
- Event planning support for Refugee Sunday reflections.

Together, we can live in solidarity, raise awareness, and extend welcome to refugees in crisis.



THE CWS JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE CHALLENGE

If Walking isn't your congregation's thing or you only have one week, you might consider one of these other ideas:

Swim the Refugee Journey: Swim 4.37 miles over the course of one week to reflect the long and difficult journeys that many refugees take in search of safety.

The Refugee Ration Challenge: For one week - Eat only a basic ration diet similar to what refugees receive in camps (e.g., rice, lentils, flour, oil, canned meat and beans).

The Flee With Only What You Carry Challenge: Live out of a single backpack for one week, limiting clothing, toiletries, and personal items to what would fit if you had to flee suddenly.

The Sleeping on the Floor Challenge: Give up your bed and sleep on the floor for a week, recognizing the conditions many refugees endure in shelters and camps.

Psalm 82:3

*Give justice to the weak and the orphan;
maintain the right of the lowly and the
destitute.*

Isaiah 1:17

*learn to do good;
seek justice;
rescue the oppressed;
defend the orphan;
plead for the widow.*

Matthew 5:7

*Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy.*

Hebrews 13:2

*Do not neglect to show hospitality to
strangers, for by doing that some have
entertained angels without knowing it.*