



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in Canada**
In Mission for Others

June 20, 2018 — World Refugee Day

The Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
pm@pm.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister:

On behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), I am writing to implore you to uphold the rights of refugees in Canada, in North America and around the world.

It is with horror and deep distress that we watch the Government of the United States separating families and criminally prosecuting all people who enter the U.S. without previous authorization. Those forced to flee their homes and seek refuge in other countries are vulnerable. Separating children from their parents puts the children at further risk and is cruel retribution for those forced to cross borders in order to seek asylum.

Under Canadian and International refugee law, an individual in search of protection may bypass borders in order to seek asylum. The 1951 UN Refugee Convention, along with Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, states that refugees attempting to enter Canada and gain protection must not be penalized in the process.

I urge you to use whatever influence you have to ask the U.S. Government to reverse these policies that deliberately violate human rights.

While the global refugee crisis can seem overwhelming, World Refugee Day reminds us that global citizens and leaders can address these urgent challenges together. We should at all times seek to respect human rights and treat people with dignity, provide fair and timely hearings for refugee claims, and work together in partnership to face the challenges of keeping all people safe.

In partnership with Canadian Lutheran World Relief, the ELCIC seeks to support refugees around the world and in Canada. As a church, we offer our prayers and encouragement to uphold the rights of refugees.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Susan C. Johnson
National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

cc: Hon. Andrew Scheer, Leader of the Official Opposition
Mr. Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the NDP
Hon. Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party
ELCIC National Church Council