

Immigration as a Moral Issue

By David Jepsen and Jan Locher, UU Society, Iowa City, Iowa, April 2012

Opening Words: “The New Colossus”

Not like the brazen giant of Greek frame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome, her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp” cries she
with silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore
Send these, the homeless, tempest-lost to me
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!” by Emma Lazarus 1883

Check-in

Focus: “Immigration as a Moral Issue” is the 2011-2014 Congregations Study Action Issue of the UUA .it is an invitation to congregations to take this topic of concern, confront it, reflect on it, learn from it, respond to it—each in its own way. It is not a statement but a question.

Migration of people—driven by economic, social, political and environmental factors—is taking place around the world. Millions are currently in transit, in refugee camps, in detention centers, or living and working in places without full legal status and without access to social services or protection of civil rights.

The dignity of all the world's peoples is core to Unitarian Universalist (UU) principles and values. Given the justice-oriented nature of UU faith, UUs are called to be leaders in the struggle for immigrant and refugee rights, and to view immigration not only as a legal issue but also moral issue. From the UUA website

Questions for discussion:

What makes immigration a difficult issue to discuss?

Tell about an experience you have had with an immigrant that affected you.

What are the myths and realities regarding immigration?

Using UU principals and values, what do you think it means to be just and humane in our response to immigrants in our community?

Likes and Wishes

Closing Words: Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world’s grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it. Rabbi Tarfon