

# 2014

## REFUGEE SUNDAY

KIT



### DEAR FRIEND IN CHRIST,

2014 marks a ministry milestone for Lutherans in the United States. It's the 75th anniversary of our work walking alongside migrants and refugees through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS).

LIRS is a ministry initially sparked by concern for European Lutherans displaced by WWII and sustained by God's call to love the sojourner. It's a ministry honed by decades of human care for people uprooted by war, persecution, violence, family separation, and human trafficking.

It's a ministry that gives each Christian the opportunity to welcome the stranger in Christ's name, and to walk alongside as they rebuild a life in America. As God's people and as members of a church founded by immigrants seeking religious freedom, we know the perils of the journey. We know what it takes to rebuild in a new land, and to become part of our adopted communities. Who better than we to walk alongside newcomers today, sharing Christ's love, ensuring strangers become neighbors and friends?

By the grace of God and with the partnership of LIRS, social ministries, congregations, and countless volunteers, Lutherans have walked alongside more than 500,000 newcomers through ministries of mercy, aid, support, education, and advocacy since 1939.

Sunday, June 22, 2014 is Refugee Sunday. Please join us in celebrating 75 years of walking alongside migrants and refugees—in your worship and in congregational activities (or choose another date if June 22nd doesn't work for you). Praise the Lord for lives saved, families reunited, and neighbors made. Support this ministry with your prayers and financial gifts.

Rev. Matthew Harrison  
President, The Lutheran Church  
Missouri Synod

Linda Hartke  
President & CEO, Lutheran  
Immigration & Refugee Service





## WORSHIP AND ACTIVITY GUIDE

(Download copies of this guide at [lirs.org/lcmskit](http://lirs.org/lcmskit))

**LEAD YOUR CONGREGATION**, school, or ministry group to connect with the hearts of migrants and refugees rebuilding their lives and reflect on God's call to welcome the sojourner. Whether the people you serve are new to the topic, have a history of newcomer ministry, or are newcomers themselves, you can create a meaningful experience using the ideas below, the poster on the other side of this guide, and the bulletin insert also in this kit. The Refugee Sunday video and additional resources can be found online at [lirs.org/lcmskit](http://lirs.org/lcmskit) including sermon notes by Rev. John Arthur Nunes, PhD., and sample announcements for newsletters and bulletins. Use the response envelope provided to send gifts and sign-ups for information back to LIRS.

### LEADER'S REFLECTION

**SPEND A FEW MOMENTS** alone thinking about how it feels to be a refugee...after being forced by conflict or persecution to flee from your home and living for years in a refugee camp, you arrive in the United States with little more than the clothes on your back. You're grieving for your homeland and loved ones lost. You feel like an outsider—invisible and unwelcome. You feel overwhelmed by all you need to learn to rebuild a life for your family.

Now imagine how it would feel to be recognized, loved, and valued by a community and a church as a person of dignity. To be seen not as a "refugee" but as a human being of value and worth in the eyes of God. To have someone walk alongside as a friend, and to be a friend. To belong.

Walking alongside for what LIRS calls "the long welcome," is the heart of ministry with migrants and refugees. It's inspired by God's call to love sojourners as ourselves (Lev. 19: 33-34), and strengthened by Christ's own example of extending mercy to people of other nations like the Canaanite girl (Matthew 15:21-28) and the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-30).

How is the spirit of welcome already seen in your congregation or group? What possibilities are there to deepen or start connections with migrants and refugees? Refugee Sunday, or a gathering about refugees when schedule suits, is a great way to celebrate what's already happening, learn more, and to prayerfully consider ways to make a difference.

### SUGGESTION FOR WORSHIP

- At least one Sunday prior, announce that June 22 is Refugee Sunday and share commemoration plans. Sample announcements available online.
- Include a petition in the prayers for migrants and refugees, and ministry through LIRS
- Sing "Lord of All Nations Grant Me Grace" LSB #845 or "Christ Our Human Likeness Sharing" LSB #847
- Include a refugee story or a reflection on God's heart for the sojourner in the sermon. See sermon notes by Rev. John Arthur Nunes
- Use the litany on the bulletin insert provided to contemplate how the body of Christ can walk alongside migrants and refugees; collect gifts and response cards for the work of LIRS

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

Feature the journey of refugees by showing the Refugee Sunday video, inviting a former refugee to speak, inviting a member of the congregation who has volunteered with refugees to speak, or by turning one of the stories in this kit into a skit.





## SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION (JUNIOR HIGH AGE THROUGH ADULT BIBLE CLASS)

**PREPARATION:** a week or more in advance, ask a participant(s) to review the facts and stories from the “Courageous Journeys” poster in this kit (download extra copies as needed) and be ready to teach friends one fact or tell one story during a “Did You Know?” time. Encourage them to create a visual to help. If your congregation or group is already involved with newcomers, or are newcomers themselves, highlight and celebrate those efforts as well. If you are a newcomer or your congregation/group includes newcomers, highlight a personal story and spend the most time on the 4th discussion point below about welcome and belonging.

### PEOPLE ON THE MOVE IN HISTORY

- Name as many “people on the move” in the Bible as possible, people who crossed a border for trade or protection, were trafficked across a border, or exiled to another country. Who was sold or captured into slavery? (Joseph, the slave girl of Naaman)
- Responses may also include Abraham (for trade), Joseph (trafficked) and later his brothers (during famine), the slave girl of Naaman (captured), Ruth (followed loved one), David (fleeing Saul), and the Holy Family (fleeing Herod), and others. List on a board or paper if desired.
- (Optional) Luther didn’t have to leave Germany, but he was persecuted. How did Frederick III help?

### PEOPLE ON THE MOVE TODAY

- Are you hearing stories in the news about people on the move today? What’s happening in Syria right now?
- Now think of people on the move in the history of your family. Anyone born in another country? Your parents? Grandparents? If group is comfortable sharing, list all the countries or nationalities represented in family journeys.
- What’s your own experience being “on the move”? What’s the hardest part of getting to know a new place? Who made you feel welcome? When did you feel like you belonged in the new place? How have you helped someone else feel welcomed?
- So from Scripture and our own lives we can see that being “on the move” is a pretty normal part of life and can be an important part of God’s plan. There are millions of people on the move today. Some move by choice, others are forced. Lutherans have been helping people forced to move, like refugees, for 75 years.

**“Did You Know?”** Have participants share facts and stories they prepared.

Optional: Play the “What Would You Take with You” refugee simulation game (15 minute or 2 hour version)

Optional: Invite a former refugee to speak or someone who works with refugees to speak

### WRAP UP

What did you learn about refugees in this discussion? What was the biggest surprise about refugees? How are people helping? How can your experience of being welcomed help you welcome others? What do you want to learn more about or consider doing?

Close with a prayer for refugees and everyone who helps them feel like they belong in the United States.

## MORE ONLINE!

- Video, sermon notes, Bible studies, discussion activities, communication tools, FAQs, and the “What Would You Take With You” simulation game. **Download extra copies of this guide and the “Courageous Journeys” poster.**
- Registration required. You can also sign up for updates.
- Contact LIRS with questions or to find a speaker: [outreach@lirs.org](mailto:outreach@lirs.org)

[LIRS.org/lcmskit](http://LIRS.org/lcmskit)

## FEEDBACK

LIRS would love to hear how it went. Please take a moment to let us know what worked and how we can help you get more involved.  
[outreach@lirs.org](mailto:outreach@lirs.org)



**Lutheran Immigration  
and Refugee Service**



## 2014 REFUGEE SUNDAY KIT

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*“I couldn’t have survived without a home, friends, and community to embrace me. Every refugee needs help on their journey—nobody can do it on their own.”*

—REBECCA



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## GIVE NOW TO ENSURE REFUGEES DON'T HAVE TO WALK ALONE.

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**CHALLENGE YOUR CONGREGATION,** school, or group to collectively raise at least \$750.00 through Refugee Sunday in support of our shared ministry through LIRS.

Your dollars will make a difference in the lives of refugees like Rebecca. After fleeing her home in Sudan and spending years in a refugee camp, Rebecca was placed by LIRS with a loving foster family in the U.S. Because she had people to walk beside her, people who understood what she needed to be safe and successful, she now holds a master's degree and has a job serving women and children in need. (More of her story can be found on the bulletin insert and the poster.)

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**USE THE RESPONSE ENVELOPE** in this kit for collected gifts and sign-up forms (see bulletin insert) or give online at [LIRS.org/lcmskit](http://LIRS.org/lcmskit).





# Courageous Journeys



**IT TAKES COURAGE TO REBUILD A LIFE IN A NEW COUNTRY.** Courage to keep moving when uprooted from everything held dear. Courage to overcome trauma and grief. Courage to learn a new culture, new systems, and new jobs. Courage to light the way for other migrants and refugees on the same journey for safety and freedom in a new land.

**WALKING ALONGSIDE = HELPING A FRIEND WHEN THE BURDEN IS HEAVY SO THAT THEY ONCE AGAIN CARRY THEIR OWN LOAD**

Throughout Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service's 75 years, Lutherans have walked alongside more than 500,000 courageous migrants and refugees as they rebuild their lives from survival to success. Empowered by the love we have received in Jesus Christ, we boldly reflect His love in practical ministries of mercy, aid, support, education, and advocacy.

## THE DIFFERENCE YOU CAN MAKE

Refugee families are more likely to thrive and become connected, contributing members of their communities when people from a local church walk alongside them as they rebuild their lives.

Whether the walking together is brief or life-long, you will be transformed when you follow God's call to love the sojourner. You can walk alongside as a donor, an advocate, or as a volunteer. Visit [lirs.org/act](http://lirs.org/act).

- Help refugees resettle
- Visit immigrants in detention
- Become a foster family for a refugee child

## MINI-HISTORY OF LUTHERAN RESPONSE TO MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

**1939:** Lutherans formed a ministry to resettle Lutherans displaced by WWII. We had various names over the decades and are best known as LIRS.

**1960:** LIRS starts helping refugees from any nation (almost 400,000 refugees so far)

**1978:** LIRS helps the U.S. Government start, the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program, to resettle children on their own in refugee camps. As of 2013, we've helped about 7000 refugee children.

**2002:** Legal services were desperately needed by asylum seeker and others in immigration detention so LIRS began providing help and working on alternatives to detention. More than 100,000 people helped.

**2005:** LIRS helps migrant children entering the U.S. alone, including victims of trafficking. We've helped almost 2000 children by reuniting with them with family or placing them specialized foster care.

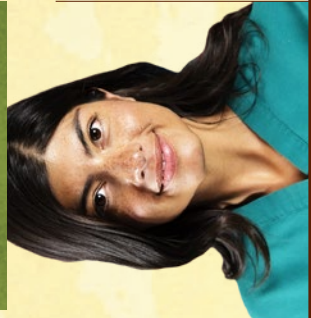
**2014:** Lutherans celebrate 75 years of ministry through LIRS



### MEET REBECCA

**REBECCA DENG WAS BORN IN SUDAN.** She lost her mother when she was very young and her father was killed in the 1980s. She and extended family fled to Kenya for refuge, and spent years in a refugee camp. By age 14, Rebecca was on her own in the camp. That's when LIRS got involved and placed her with a loving foster family in the U.S.

Because people walked beside her and understood what she needed to be safe and successful, she felt embraced and empowered. She thrived in school, her congregation, and community. Rebecca now holds a master's degree and is part of a ministry serving women and children. She's also a leading advocate on refugee issues. By the grace of God, her life transformed from survival to success.



### MEET DAIMY

**FLEEING PERSECUTION IN CUBA,** Daimy Buono, along with her husband and still breast-feeding baby, settled in Florida with the help of LIRS in 2004. With little money and plenty of worries, Daimy needed people to walk alongside her so she could improve her English, find work, and understand American culture.

Between LIRS, local Lutheran services, and church volunteers she and her family went from survival to success. Now an active participant in American civic life, Daimy is an author, president of a community service organization, a law student, and a faithful advocate for refugees. Her passion is helping other newcomers succeed in the U.S.



### MEET THAG

**WHEN PEOPLE IN BHUTAN RAISED** their voices for the establishment of democracy and human rights in early 1990s, the government responded with heinous actions designed to strip people of dignity and all they held dear. Thag and his family were among thousands of people who fled Bhutan, eventually finding refuge in Nepal. They spent 18 difficult years in that camp before resettling in South Dakota in 2007.

Thag describes life in his small, peaceful town as one in which he can live freely and pursue his full potential. He's grateful to LIRS for walking alongside him and his commitment to standing with LIRS and other former refugees to advocate on refugee issues.

## THE FACTS

There are approximately **30 MILLION DISPLACED PEOPLE** in the world\* (forced to leave their home by conflict)

**ABOUT 10.4 MILLION\* ARE REFUGEES** (they crossed an international border for safety and are recognized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)

About half of those refugees spend at least **5 YEARS** in a REFUGEE CAMP

Many refugees are children with no parents or adults to accompany them (LIRS has special services just for them)

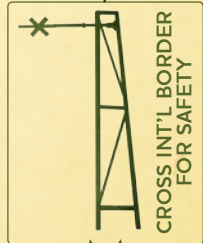
Refugees represent many cultures and religions, including persecuted Christians.

The U.S. is a country of refuge, resettling **ABOUT 70,000 REFUGEES EACH YEAR\*\*** (the President decides number)

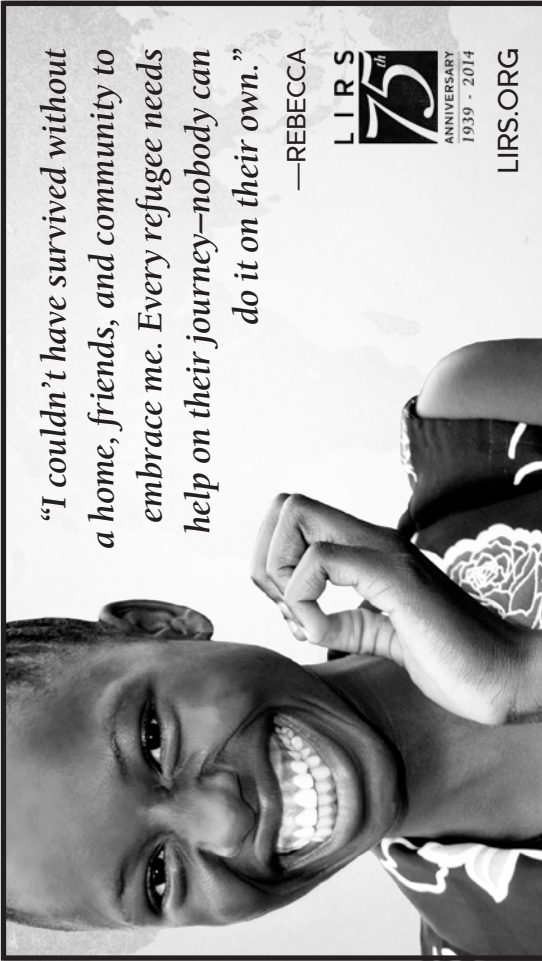
**LIRS HELPS ABOUT 10,000 RESETTLING REFUGEES EACH YEAR** with service partners across the country

\*UNHCR.org \*\*WhiteHouse.gov

THE JOURNEY







*"I couldn't have survived without  
a home, friends, and community to  
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LIRS.ORG

**R**ebecca was born in Sudan. She lost her mother when she was very young and later her father was killed in the civil war of the 1980's. She and extended family had to flee to Kenya for refuge. She moved for safety several times and spent years in a refugee camp. Eventually Rebecca was on her own in the camp. That's when Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) got involved. LIRS placed her with a loving foster family in the U.S. when she was 14.

Because she had people to walk beside her, people who understood what she needed to be safe and successful, she felt embraced and empowered. She thrived in school, her congregation, and her community. Rebecca now holds a master's degree and is part of a ministry serving women and children in need. She's also a leading advocate on refugee issues. By the grace of God, not only was her life transformed from survival to success, she's now a blessing to others.

Through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Lutherans have walked with more than 500,000 migrants and refugees like Rebecca since 1939. We praise the Lord for 75 years of ministry, the gifts migrants and refugees bring to this country, for congregations that provide help for the journey. May the Lord continue to bless us all in the ministry of welcome.

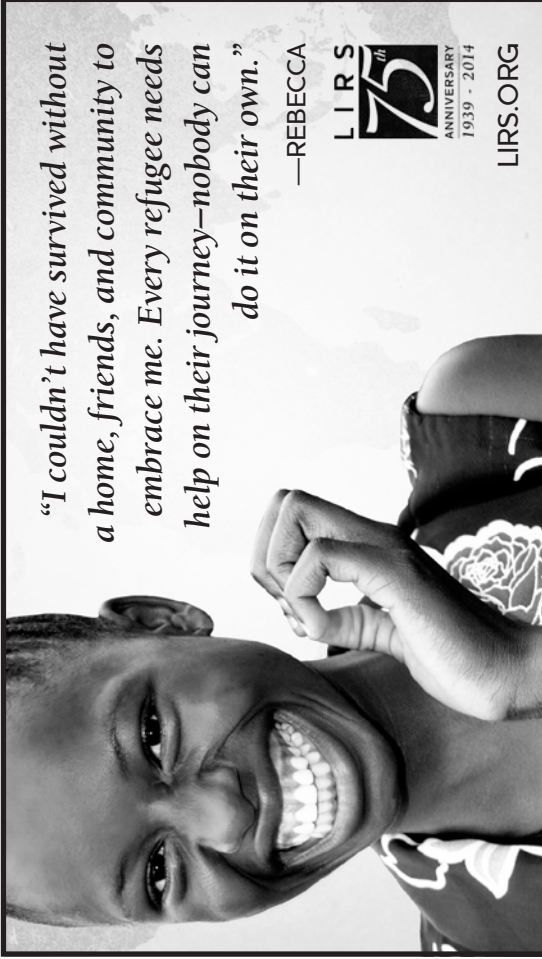
**YES! Connect me to stories, news, and action opportunities  
with migrants and refugees.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

What I'm most interested in is:

**STORIES      ADVOCACY      ACTION**

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What I'm most interested in is:

**STORIES      ADVOCACY      ACTION**

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## LITANY FOR REFUGEES

Pray The Litany for the day LSB p.288 or use this special litany.

**Leader:** Mighty Lord, as you guided the Israelites, through the wilderness,

**People:** be a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day for refugees in search of new hope and new life.

**Leader:** As you brought the Israelites out of bondage to freedom,

**People:** bring refugees out of persecution to safety.

**Leader:** As you protected the Israelites through 40 years in the desert,

**People:** protect those who languish for years in refugee camps.

**Leaders:** Wipe away their tears of sorrow,

**People:** that their mourning may give way to joyous hope.

**Leader:** Put an end to warfare and tyranny,

**People:** that some may return home without fear of violence.

**Leader:** Open the doors of safer nations,

**People:** that some may find new homes in new lands.

**Leader:** Rebuild their lives,

**People:** that they might enjoy the fruit of labors in peace.

**Leader:** Restore their material goods,

**People:** that they might sustain their families in prosperity.

**Leader:** Revive their hope,

**People:** that they might face a future with promise.

**Leader:** Shine your grace upon them,

**People:** that they might know your love

**Leader:** Strengthen their bonds of friendship and family,

**People:** that they might serve one another with encouraging love.

**Leader:** And inspire your churches to welcome the stranger,

**People:** that together we might build communities of hope where strangers become neighbors and friends, and brothers and sisters.

Amen.

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Here's help for the journey from \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

ENCLOSED IS:

☐ \$750.00

☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please charge my gift to Visa/MasterCard—Credit Card #*

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_



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UNIFORM DISCLOSURE STATEMENT Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is a §501(c)(3) organization, gifts to which are deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

California: Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service's audited financial statement is available upon request to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. 100 percent of your gift, less the fair market value of any materials received, may be deducted under federal and state income tax laws. Florida: A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL FREE WITHIN THE STATE, 1-800-435-7352. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. LUTHERAN IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICE'S REGISTRATION NUMBER IS CH36256. Georgia: Upon request, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service will provide a full and fair description of this and its other programs, and a financial statement or summary. Maryland: A copy of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service's current financial statement is available on request to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, 700 Light Street, Baltimore, MD 21230, and (410) 230-2700. For the cost of copies and postage, documents and information submitted under the Maryland Solicitations Act are available from the Maryland Secretary of State. Minnesota: 100 percent of your gift, less the fair market value of any materials received, may be deducted as a charitable contribution under federal and state income tax laws. Mississippi: The official registration and financial information of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service may be obtained from the Mississippi Secretary of State's office by calling 1-888-236-6167. Registration by the Secretary of State does not imply endorsement. New Jersey: INFORMATION FILED WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CONCERNING THIS CHARITABLE SOLICITATION AND THE PERCENTAGE OF CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHARITY DURING THE LAST REPORTING PERIOD THAT WERE DEDICATED TO THE CHARITABLE PURPOSE MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY BY CALLING (973) 504-6215 AND IS AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET AT <http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/ocp/charities.htm>. REGISTRATION WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT. New York: Upon request, a copy of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service's last annual report filed with the Attorney General is available from Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service or from the New York State Attorney General's Charities Bureau, Attn: FOIL Officer, Department of State, 120 Broadway, New York, New York 10271. North Carolina: Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at (888) 830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the state. Pennsylvania: The official registration and financial information of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. Virginia: A financial statement is available from the State Division of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services upon request. Washington: For additional information regarding Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service's activities or financial information, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is registered with the Washington State Charities Program as required by law and information may be obtained by calling 800-332-4483 or 360-725-0378. West Virginia: West Virginia residents may obtain a summary of the registration and financial documents from the Secretary of State, State Capitol, Charleston, West Virginia 25305. Registration does not imply endorsement.