

WELCOMING THE STRANGER OVERVIEW

We live in an era of deep tensions in our country around issues of race, ethnicity, religion, and immigration. Fear of “the stranger” has been increasing, whether the perceived stranger is native-born, a new arrival or just looks “different” from the traditional majority. This leads to inhumane, fear-based policies and violence against people of color, immigrants and refugees. Worldwide, the number of refugees and displaced people is higher now than at any other time in human history. People experiencing or fleeing violence seek safety and security, but the paths they take to escape their situations are often dangerous or blocked.

As Christians we have a common identity as children of a loving creator who became vulnerable as Emmanuel, God with us. And we have a duty to treat all people in need as we would treat Christ among us: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35).