



**The
Children's
Society**

Becoming a place of safety

A resource to help churches welcome refugees,
in Refugee Week and beyond

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Refugee Week

'Different pasts: shared future'

Refugee Week is the UK's largest celebration of the ways in which refugees contribute to society, and promotes an understanding of why people seek sanctuary. This pack for Refugee Week will help you think through the ways you and your church might begin to welcome refugees and advocate on their behalf.

Refugee Week is not just about one week, but about the whole year. This year's theme for Refugee Week is 'different pasts, shared future', and we hope this pack will help you to make long-term changes to welcome refugees. This is a resource for you to continue using beyond Refugee Week, as we move forward into that 'shared future'.

1. Becoming a place of safety

Practitioners from The Children's Society remind us of the ongoing need to support refugees

The refugee crisis is the humanitarian emergency of our time. At The Children's Society, we have been supporting young refugees arriving in this country since the Second World War, when we resettled children who fled Nazi Germany.

The Children's Society's work today

Through our frontline services we provide direct support to refugee and migrant children and families, and we also advocate for policies and laws that enable them to exercise their rights and entitlements.

Last year we:

- Worked directly with 674 children and young people who were refugees or asylum seekers¹.
- Conducted 777 group work sessions on issues related to seeking asylum, including discrimination, housing and benefits².
- Published a report – Not Just A Temporary Fix³ (2015) – which calls for better long-term support for migrant children separated from their families.
- Campaigned against Government proposals to remove support from families whose applications for asylum have been denied. As a result families are now supported for 90 days, rather than 30 days.

Why do we work with refugees?

As Christians, we have a responsibility to ensure that our communities practise inclusivity, prioritise respect and extend welcome without compromise. Throughout the biblical narrative, we see strangers

welcomed, and those who are living in fear protected and supported, so that they might flourish.

We recognise that there is an overwhelming desire to help refugee children throughout churches in England, and that communities are looking for support and direction to do this. The Hebrew phrase *Hat-tê-bāh* is used in two contexts in the Old Testament, once to describe Noah's ark⁴, and once for the basket used by Miriam to keep Moses safe in the River Nile⁵ – both uses depict places of safety and shelter.

As an organisation, The Children's Society is committed to prioritising the safety of children at all times. Our vision is for our communities to be places of safety, places of *Hat-tê-bāh*, for refugee children.

We are concerned about children who have been separated from their families and do not have a trusted adult looking after them, as well as migrant children still living with families that are not accessing the full range of support that they are entitled to. Our aim is to ensure that laws and policies help to keep young refugees and migrants safe and protect their rights as children, regardless of their immigration status or nationality. We want every refugee child in this country to be part of a welcoming, supportive, inclusive community.

Collectively, we can make a difference. Within the Church, each of us can contribute by doing our own small thing. And if we all each do a small thing, together we can achieve something huge.

Find out more

We want to be a part of the Christian response and be people of hope – not just hope for ourselves, but willing to offer hope to others. So we are asking our supporters to join us in taking action: praying,

¹ https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/2016_impact-report_mkt054a_.pdf

² Ibid

³ <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/resources-and-publications/not-just-a-temporary-fix-durable-solutions-for-separated>

⁴ Genesis 6-9

⁵ Exodus 2.1-10

listening, volunteering, speaking out and giving to support work with refugees.

If you are interested in helping to welcome and support child refugees in your church, we suggest that reading 'From fear to safety'⁶ is a good place to start.

From fear to safety

The Children's Society's resource 'From fear to safety: an exploration of the theological imperative to offer welcome to the stranger' examines the biblical precedent for welcoming those on the margins of society. This is a resource which will enable your church to grow your ability to understand the refugee crisis and respond to it well.

We hope that you will be inspired to share what you read with those around you. The ideas below are ways in which you can engage your church or community group with these resources, including service and talk ideas, suggestions for worship and discussion questions.

'From fear to safety': helping your church become a place of safety

A service is a great demonstration of public action, which can show local councils and decision makers that your community is committed to making a difference for asylum seekers locally. We have provided a series of service and talk ideas for you to use, or to share with your church leaders.

Church service preparation

The Bible is full of stories of people in exile, fleeing their homes or welcoming others. There is no shortage of possible readings relevant for a service about the refugee crisis, but if you have been asked to speak at a church service and are able to select the readings to preach to, we suggest:

- Deuteronomy 10.14-19
- 2 Corinthians 8.12-15

If you are unable to select the readings, then have a member of the congregation read out one of the two readings above before you start your talk/sermon, selecting the one which is most relevant to your talk and attempting to tie it into the readings you are given. Our Church team are able to offer guidance on readings if you give them at least two weeks' notice.⁷

The big idea: As Christians, we are called to love the stranger in our midst. In the current refugee crisis, we can feel overwhelmed by the need. By drawing from 2 Corinthians 8, what we can offer 'is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.'

The various points below are given as potential ideas to include in preparing your talk. Please adapt, edit and expand upon them as relevant to you and your audience.

Think through stories that you know, or which you may have read in the media where people were able to make a big difference by each doing something small but significant, and use these personal anecdotes to illustrate and personalise your talk.

- The reading from Deuteronomy calls on us to love the stranger in our midst. The Israelites believed themselves to be in a special relationship with God – chosen as his people. They therefore wanted to preserve their distinct culture and character. On the other hand, deeply ingrained within that culture was the requirement to love the stranger, and provide them with what they needed.
- In the midst of our uncertain post-Brexit nation, this passage resonates with us today. Indeed Archbishop Justin Welby recognises that 'Fear is a valid emotion at a time of such colossal crisis. This is one of the greatest movements of people in human history. Just enormous. And to be anxious about that is very reasonable. In fragile communities particularly there is a genuine fear: what happens about housing? What happens about jobs? What happens about access to health services? There is a genuine fear. And it is really important that this fear is listened to and addressed. There have to be resources put in place that address those fears⁸.'

⁶ <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/in-your-church/from-fear-to-safety>

⁷ church@childrenssociety.org.uk

⁸ <http://www.anglican.ink/article/%E2%80%9Cfear-valid-emotion-response-refugee-crisis-welby-says>

- Read 2 Corinthians 8.12-15. Paul calls for eagerness and equality in giving, rather than preoccupation in what or how much we can give. With such a 'colossal crisis' it is easy to allow ourselves to slip into inaction because 'we can't do anything on our own'.
- There is some wisdom in recognising our limitations, but it is deceptive wisdom when applied here. Deceptive because it ignores the power of the Church working together and God's sovereignty. Instead, we must begin in prayer and offer a gift according to what each of us has and can do, not according to what we don't have and cannot do.

Creating places of safety: The Children's Society's response

The Children's Society's response is demonstrated in Mujibullah's story, please do not alter his words or any other details of the story:

Mujibullah grew up in Afghanistan, where during the war the Taliban killed his father and wanted to kill him too. Scared for her son's life, Mujibullah's mother paid a man to take him out of the country. Mujibullah was put into the boot of a car with four other people – he was in there for three or four hours at a time as he was smuggled out of Afghanistan.

'There was just a little bit of air that came in through a hole so we could breathe. Sometimes they would give us water, sometimes they would not.'

When he finally arrived in the UK at age sixteen, Mujibullah didn't know anyone and couldn't speak English. He was arrested by police and sent to a social worker who was given the task of assessing his age. Without papers or a passport, they determined Mujibullah to be eighteen, and even though he was a minor, he was sent to live in a shared house with adult refugees.

'I didn't understand how to live or behave. I wasn't familiar with the city, and I didn't know what would happen to me.'

One day a project worker from The Children's Society visited the house Mujibullah was staying in.

'He was from my country and could speak my language. He told me about The Children's Society and that they help unaccompanied youth. I felt very happy when I met him.'

Mujibullah's project worker introduced him to a youth club where he met other young refugees. He was given a mentor who helped him learn the basics of UK living like shopping, transport and managing money. Mujibullah's worker also took him to see a solicitor, to challenge his age assessment and help him with his asylum case.

'In my first steps here, these things were good for me. When I first came here I didn't know how to live my life, but The Children's Society were there to help me. Now I know lots of things.'

Mujibullah is now in full time education after his project worker helped him secure a place at a local college. He feels positive about the future and is thankful for the help he received.

'I want to continue my education and live a proper way of life. The young people who don't know how to live their lives, The Children's Society will help them. I am very happy.'

A response for all

- As the Church, we can be providers of places of safety, of *Hat·tê·bāh*. *Hat·tê·bāh* is used in the Old Testament to describe distinct, prepared places of safety provided for vulnerable people.
- Moses' basket and Noah's ark were examples of this; perfectly constructed to care for their cargo, for as long as it took. This matters. If we are to give refugee children a future then, we have to be prepared to be part of their future.
- These children are coming with an expectation of reaching the Promised Land. We need to be able to meet their expectations of that Promised Land.
- Noah didn't build the ark in fear, but in hope. We are called to take children from a place of fear, using a *Hat·tê·bāh*, to a place with a hope and a future.



2. Practical ways to become a place of safety

Standing in solidarity: ways for your church to become a place of safety

We are asking supporters to provide a welcome, to be a source of hope and a voice for those who most need it. We are calling for people to pray for refugees on their journey, for those seeking asylum, and for communities preparing to receive them. We are also calling for people to listen to the experiences of child refugees, to challenge the myths and misconceptions surrounding refugees and asylum seekers.

There are many ways you can do something to help, either individually or collectively. Knowing where to start can be overwhelming, but we've put together some suggestions of practical things you can do to both welcome refugees and advocate on their behalf:

- All-age worship ideas
- Bake and Brew
- Hat·tê·bāh initiative
- Pray for refugees
- The Postcard Project

We suggest that you read through these options, and work out what will work best for your church. Perhaps you can pull together a welcome plan incorporating a few of the following ideas?

All-age worship ideas

You will need:

- A map of the world, possibly showing the journey routes of refugees coming to Europe.
- Cards in the shape of sheep and cards in the shape of goats, at least one per member of the congregation (or simply cards in two different colours).

- A sheet of paper with 'When did we ever see you hungry, or thirsty, or sick or naked, or any of those things?' in large text, and another with 'but Lord we didn't know it was you.' in large text.

- Some pens or pencils.

Discussion starters:

Ask a few young people in your congregation questions along the lines of:

- Have you travelled to another country? How far away was it from your home? How did you travel? How many days did it take to get there?
- Where did you go? Why were you travelling there?
- Who looked after you on your journey? Did you feel safe? What was it that made you feel safe on your journey? If you didn't always feel safe, what was it that made you feel this way?

Thank those who took part and invite everyone to close their eyes and:

- Imagine making the longest journey they have ever made.
- Imagine moving away from everything and everyone that they know and love.
- Imagine making it alone, or with strangers.
- Imagine how they would get across the sea.
- Imagine how they would get across the land.
- Consider what they would most want on their journey.
- Consider what they would most want when they arrived in a new country.

Now ask them to imagine Jesus and open their eyes again. Ask them some words they'd use to describe Jesus. Then finish with:

- You are looking for 'refugee' because Matthew 2.13-15 tells how Herod, the King, sought the baby Jesus to kill him. So Joseph and Mary took their baby and fled to Egypt as refugees, to stay there until Herod died and the threat disappeared.
- Jesus made this very long and dangerous journey because he had no other choice. Today children like Mujibullah still have to flee from their home because they have no other choice.
- Show the map of the world, and the countries and long distances people like Mujibullah are travelling to escape danger.

What does Jesus tell us we can do?

- Invite any children to come forward and give each child either a sheep or goat card, and ask them to help you tell the story that Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 25.31-46.
- Jesus' invitation is to love the unloved, bring joy to the hopeless, and to welcome strangers. So what can we do for people who need our help?
- Pass round the pens, and sheep and goat cards.
- On the sheep invite people to write ideas for how we can create safe spaces for refugee children.
 - Ideas may include prayer, giving, volunteering, speaking out, listening.
 - As well as what they thought they would most want when they were imagining their arrival into a new country earlier in the service.
- On the goats, invite people to write how we can say sorry to God for times we have not helped people. These do not need to be handed in, or shown to anyone, but simply used for personal prayer.
 - Emphasize that we are called to be like sheep in the story. There are times when we fail in this but that's ok. Elsewhere Jesus talks about God's unending forgiveness (cf Matthew 18.21-35). So when we fail, we are able to stand up and restart.

Concluding the service

- You can use the calls to action from the sermon notes and close with some prayers for refugees or use some of the prayers we suggest later in the pack.

Bake and Brew

We helped 674 refugee and asylum seeking children last year, but we want to do even more. You can help raise money to support more vulnerable refugees and raise awareness of their plight by holding a Bake and Brew in your church. Hundreds of supporters every year hold Bake and Brew coffee mornings or cake sales in support of The Children's Society – they're guaranteed to go down a treat!

Raising money at your Bake and Brew can make a big difference to the lives of children and young people we support.

Just follow these simple steps and you're sure to have a fantastic show-stopper event.

1. Order your free Bake and Brew pack

The pack contains everything you need to host a great Bake and Brew, including a handy guide full of tips, ideas and recipes, a poster to promote your event, cake labels, leaflets about our work and more.

You can order your free Bake and Brew pack to get started at childrenssociety.org.uk/bake

2. Organising your event

Once you've got your pack and you're ready to go, think about when you can host this event in your church. There are many options: it could be in conjunction with another event, as part of a Sunday service, or as a standalone activity for Refugee Week. You could host a bake sale, coffee morning or even a Bake-off style competition!

3. Get your recipes and invite your guests

We have a whole range of baking recipes for you to try. When inviting your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours, encourage them to bring along their own baked goods. You can use the poster in our pack to invite people along on the day, and it also doubles up as a thank you poster to let your guests know how much you raised.

Why not take a look at all the yummy recipes we have available at childrenssociety.org.uk/bake

4. Make it easy for guests to donate

Make it as simple as possible for your guests to donate at your event. Here are some of our tips:

- Have a central money pot and ask guests for a donation to sample the tasty treats on offer.
- Sell each slice of cake or cuppa for a fixed price.
- Share leaflets about the work of The Children's Society with your guests to inspire them to donate and support our work.

If your guests don't have cash on them, they could:

- Write a cheque made payable to 'The Children's Society'.
- Pay in a donation online.
- Text 'BAKE07 £10' to 70070 to donate £10. (They can also donate other amounts by texting 'BAKE07' followed by their donation amount).

5. Extra ideas for your Bake and Brew

There are lots of great ways you can boost the amount of money you raise at your Bake and Brew with just a few added extras:

- Sell extra goodies such as homemade jam, chutney or bric-a-brac.
- Run some games such as 'how many cookies in the jar' and give the jar to the winner.
- Hold a raffle and ask local business to donate prizes such as a haircut or a meal for two.

Then all that's left to do is pop the kettle on and welcome your guests.

6. Thank and bank

Once you've counted up the money you've raised, give yourself and everyone who contributed (from cake bakers to prize donors) a pat on the back. Well done!

All that's left is to send in the money you've raised from hosting a Bake and Brew. There are some really simple ways to pay in your money:

- If you ordered the pack you can use the enclosed giro to bank the money at your local Barclays bank, which will ensure the money comes straight to us, then just post the stub to us. (Other banks and Post Offices will accept giros, but you may incur a charge). If you didn't order a pack you can order a giro instead.
- Pay in using our handy online form.
- Pay in using a cheque made payable to 'The Children's Society'.

Our address for sending cheques or giro stubs to is:

**Freepost RSYH-HEEE-XZEG
The Children's Society,
Edward Rudolf House,
Margery Street,
London
WC1X 0JL**

If you have any questions or need any help please feel free to ring our friendly Supporter Care team on 0300 303 7000.

And remember you can order your free Bake and Brew pack and get started by visiting **childrenssociety.org.uk/bake**

Happy baking!

How your gifts might make a difference

For refugee and migrant children, reaching the UK should mean reaching safety. At The Children's Society we work to ensure that young people receive the help and the support that they need.

By fundraising with your church, your support could change the lives of some of this country's most vulnerable children. Here's how your support could make a difference:

£25

Could pay for an emergency pack containing toiletries, a towel, socks and underwear, warm clothing, a waterproof jacket, gloves, a hat and a scarf, and other essentials.

£50

Could pay for a one-to-one counselling session for an unaccompanied child who has fled to the UK and is struggling to adapt to their new life.

£100

Could pay for two sessions of one-to-one support to help a young refugee talk about their painful experiences.

£200

Could run a group work session offering young refugees who are struggling to adapt to their new life the chance to build their confidence and learn new life skills.

£300

Could help train a project worker to understand the issues of young refugees who have been trafficked and/or sexually exploited and understand how to keep these children safe.

Hat·tê·bāh : helping churches respond to the refugee crisis

The Hat·tê·bāh⁹ initiative aims to equip participants to better understand and respond to the issues faced by young refugees, through the delivery of free awareness-raising training.

Hat·tê·bāh is a partnership initiative run by The Children's Society, Mothers' Union and Home for Good, alongside the Church of England. By working together, we hope to further the reach of this training and achieve more change for vulnerable young people.

The training is aimed at people who may come across refugees in their work or who might be influencers of others. This will include both church professionals (eg clergy, family or youth workers, chaplains and pastoral assistants) and other professionals within church communities (eg teachers, lawyers and medical professionals). The content will highlight issues facing refugees in this country, improve understanding of rights and responsibilities, and suggest how professionals can be more inclusive in their work.

This training covers topics such as: myth-busting; the issues and barriers within the immigration and asylum process through the eyes of an unaccompanied asylum seeking child; rights and entitlements; and how professionals can be more sensitive and aware in their work.

To find out more about this training in your area, please do contact us at church@childrenssociety.org.uk

Pray for refugees

Intercessions for young refugees

Feel free to use and adapt these intercessions and prayers for individual or corporate use.

For the Hat·tê·bāh initiative:

Loving God,
We pray for the Hat·tê·bāh initiative,
and for those who work to support child refugees.
We ask that you would bless the awareness training happening across the country.
We thank you for the expertise The Children's

Society is bringing to the training,
empowering others to welcome young vulnerable refugees.

We pray you would bless the partnership of
The Children's Society,
Mothers' Union and Home for Good.
We pray for your blessing on
the lives of hundreds of young people,
and the communities they enter.
In Jesus' powerful name we pray,
Amen.

We thank you that you care for those on the margins,
and we pray especially for refugees and unaccompanied children.

Help us to reach out to young people who are in need,
welcoming refugees into our communities with open arms.

May we have your eyes as we provide places of sanctuary,
and may we grow in compassion towards those on the margins.
Amen.

On the journey

Ever-present God,
most of us will never have to decide whether or not we should flee our home.

For this we are truly thankful.

Whether it is through war, oppression, religious persecution or other fears,
we commit into your hands

those children and families who have chosen the journey of a refugee.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

Their journey is dangerous,
the road they walk is treacherous
and their destination is not guaranteed.

At the end of their journey,
we pray 'they' become one of 'us':

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

Seeking a new life

Giver of new life,
thank you that we are a new creation
and that your mercies are new every morning.
We lift up children who are setting foot in our country
for the first time today.

May they experience warmth, welcome and love.
Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.
Anything new is full of opportunities and
uncertainties,
Loving God, we pray child refugees' uncertainties will
be stilled
and the opportunities our nation can offer become
apparent.
In this, we are particularly mindful of children
arriving on their own.
Lord, for those arriving in our community,
let us play our part in answering our prayer.
Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

For us and our nation

Lord of all,
understanding all the complexities and intricacies of
this world is beyond us.
Reconciling the evils we see children fleeing
alongside your love is deeply challenging.
Help our faith to grow and our trust in you to
flourish, so that we do not just lean on our own
understanding;
but trust your will and wisdom with all our heart.
Your kingdom come
your will be done.
Whenever we see refugees as simply statistics or a
problem,
rather than people made in God's image;
forgive our lack of perspective.
Thank you that you freely invite everyone to be part
of your kingdom.
Forgive us when we allow self-interested nationalism
to overrule our heavenly citizenship and God-given
common humanity.
Your kingdom come
your will be done.
Guide our Government, Lord,
particularly the Home Office, as they make decisions
about asylum applications.
Give them wisdom and discernment that transcends
targets.
For the role our local government plays, we see the
pressure housing and caring for refugees can bring.
Thank you for those who work tirelessly to welcome
vulnerable young people into our community.
Give us the patience, love and energy to be part of
this provision for child refugees.

Your kingdom come
your will be done.
Under all these pressures on government budgets,
we thank you for organisations like The Children's
Society
who are unceasing in fighting for the rights of
refugee children.
We praise you because we know that every gift,
action and prayer
we make is transformed into something truly
meaningful.
In supporting the marginalised and voiceless,
we see your will being done on earth as it is in
heaven.
Alleluia!
Your kingdom come
your will be done.

Two prayers for children seeking refuge
and asylum

God of compassion,
we have seen the harrowing images
of children fleeing danger and desperately seeking
safety;
of families risking everything without the assurance
of anything in return;
of young people whose only hope depends on finding
refuge in an unknown country.
Lord, may we offer a welcome
as warm as the one we would offer the child who
once fled to Egypt.
God of hospitality,
we are thankful that this crisis isn't going
unreported,
and for the immediate sanctuary provided by our
nation.
But when the cameras stop rolling,
may our welcome be ever-flowing and our
compassion unceasing.
Lord, may our love for those seeking refuge be
steadfast,
no matter the political climate.
We make this our prayer,
in the name of your Son, who offers hope to the
weary,
respite to the traveller and peace to all your children.
Amen.

¹⁰ <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html>

¹¹ https://www.jcwi.org.uk/sites/jcwi/files/2017-05/Etiquette%20guide%20A3%20Final_0.pdf

Light a candle for young refugees

As part of our Hat-tê-bāh initiative to welcome refugees, we are inviting everyone to take a simple action; to prayerfully light a candle for children who have fled violence, war, persecution or natural disaster. You will need:

- A candle
- Matches

Set up your candle in a place where it is safe to light and read through all the instructions before beginning.

- As you strike the match, pray about the conflicts, disasters and persecution that have led children to flee their country: Syria, Iraq, Eritrea, Sudan, and others.
- Hold the match upright so that it burns slowly, leaving destruction in its path. Pray for the renewal, restoration and reconciliation of nations so that no young person feels they have to flee their home.
- As you light your candle, pray for children facing serious dangers crossing seas and from traffickers as they move from their own country to a new and unknown land.
- After your candle is lit and the match extinguished, breathe slowly and spend a minute focusing on the light. Think about the images of light used in the Bible: invite the light of Christ to replace the darkness these young people have faced. Pray that God would be a lamp for their feet and a light on their path. Ask God to show you ways that you can allow your light to shine before others, so that others may see your good deeds and glorify God.
- Just as a candle turns potential into light and energy for many, thank God for the talents, gifts and potential of these young people. Ask God that young refugees will reach their potential through the welcome, nurturing and encouragement we offer.
- Extinguish your candle and pray that there will be an end to people needing to seek refuge.

Speaking out: communicating the refugee crisis to others

We hope that you will join us in speaking out on behalf of young refugees. This is a crucial issue, and yet it can be a challenge to convey to others why this is something that you are so passionate about. If you're thinking of doing a talk in your church or community, or if you're hoping to raise awareness about refugees amongst friends and family, here are some of our thoughts on how you can do this effectively.

- **Do your homework.** Nothing is going to be more convincing than someone who has done some research first. Find out more about who is supporting refugees in your area and what their needs are. You can search for local refugee and migrant services online. Searching for 'refugees' or 'Syrian resettlement scheme' should bring up information about what your local council is doing to support refugees. The UNHCR website is a helpful place to go to for definitions, figures and further information¹⁰.
- **Take your time.** Don't hurry through a conversation/talk. Thinking through what you have to say and saying it calmly and clearly will mean that more people will stop and listen to you.
- **Use real life stories and anecdotes.** We have provided some anecdotes from young people that we support earlier in this resource. Perhaps you know of other refugee and migrant young people in the UK that you can refer to. Use the aforementioned biblical stories to underpin your message where appropriate.
- **Use visualisation activities and prompts.** Guide the person/people that you are talking to so that they can imagine the ways that young people arrive in this country and understand the vulnerabilities they face.
- **Practise.** If you're doing a talk or presentation, take some time to practise what you're going to say beforehand. Record yourself speaking and listen back. Share your talk with a friend or family member.

- **Stay tuned in.** Keeping up to date with current events will really help. Following what's happening with refugees in the UK and abroad will enable you to answer questions, and you can play a part in ensuring the refugees are both welcomed and protected. The political landscape is constantly changing and there is a need to respond to it. Knowing what MPs and others are discussing (including which ones are supportive) will really help. You can also think about speaking to your local MP to ensure that they are supporting refugees.
- **Connect.** Talk to others who are campaigning on behalf of young refugees. Share ideas, and speak out together. Where can you join up with charities or community groups who are advocating on behalf of refugees locally? Are you able to create a space where all members of the local community can come together and support refugees?

The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants have produced a help sheet on speaking about immigration¹¹, which you might like to put in your church porch or send to a friend.

If you would like someone from The Children's Society to come and speak in your church, you can request a speaker for your church service by visiting childrenssociety.org.uk/fundraising

Becoming a place of safety

Could your church become a place of safety for refugees? Committing to being a place of safety could encourage young refugees in your community. If you'd like to commit and become a place where vulnerable child refugees flourish, we suggest that the Postcard Project is a good place to begin.

3. The Postcard Project

What is the Postcard Project?

This simple initiative will involve you sending positive messages of support, via postcard, to young migrants and refugees that we work with.

We will be launching this project during Refugee Week, and we would encourage you to write and return your postcards during that week if possible. You could organise a postcard-writing day in your church, for example as part of a service, or at any events you might already be hosting eg if your church is hosting a Bake and Brew as part of refugee week you could also invite people to write a postcard.

How would I know what to write?

We are looking for positive messages of solidarity to welcome young people who have recently arrived in the UK. When we send out your pack of postcards, we'll also send you some guidance about what kind of messages you could leave.

The Postcard Project: an activity for young people

The Postcard Project also provides a way for young people to take action to help child refugees. Using the story of Paddington Bear is a great way to communicate the situation refugees find themselves in to children.

Sketch the outline of an old-fashioned suitcase on a large sheet of craft paper.

Paddington Bear story and discussion:

Ask: Who has ever been on a journey? Who did you travel with? What did you take with you? Where were you going? Did you speak the same language as people there?

This is a story you may know. Who has heard of Paddington Bear? Paddington was a young bear who lived with his elderly aunt. When she could no longer take care of him (she went to live in a home for retired

bears), she felt the best thing for Paddington would be to journey across the world from his home in Peru, to England, where he could have a better life. So Paddington leaves Peru in a large ship, with his duffle coat and his hat, and a suitcase full of marmalade sandwiches (who has tried marmalade sandwiches?), which were his absolute favourite food. And he took one other thing...

Ask: Who can tell me what the one other thing Paddington had on his journey was?

(Some discussion about tickets, passports, money etc may ensue) All good things for a journey. But the thing that we know for sure was the extra item that Paddington Bear had was a luggage label, tied to his coat.

Ask: Who knows what it said?

That's right 'Please look after this bear. Thank you!' She couldn't look after him, but Aunt Lucy hoped and prayed that someone would look after Paddington when he arrived in London. Paddington was very lucky. The Brown Family happened to find him in Paddington Station in London, and they took him home with them and he became part of their family.

Activity

Using our **Paddington activity labels**, encourage each child to think through information about them, and their families, that they might tell someone if they were on a journey.

Please look after this child

I am: (name)

I live with: (who cares for me)

I love:

I like to eat:

Help each child tie on their label so they are wearing it when they go back into the service or meet their family and/or carers after church.



Campaign with us

We are looking for passionate volunteers to sign up to become Campaign Champions and help us create vital changes for children.

Campaigning is about creating a change that you want to see. It can tackle an injustice, encourage politicians to support something, reverse or stop a bad decision, or change the way people think about an issue.

Your support with our campaigns is essential if we are to change children and young people's lives. Right now, around one child in four lives in poverty, and neglect and a failure to meet young people's fundamental needs are blighting too many lives. In order to drive change in society, we need your help to raise public awareness of the issues we are working on and demand action from decision makers – whether by contacting local decision makers, signing a petition or holding a local event.

We have created a campaigns toolkit to give you practical tips to get you started with campaigning that you can download. If you would like us to send you a copy of the toolkit in the post, please just let us know.

To find out more about becoming a Campaign Champion just register your interest and we'll be in touch with you soon!

Get in touch

If you would like more information about the Postcard Project, please get in touch with Jacq McNee at jacq.mcnee@childrenssociety.org.uk

We would love to help you do all that you can to be a place of safety and protection. Do feel free to write, email or ring us, as we would love to help tailor these activities to your particular church audience.

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It is a painful fact that many children and young people in Britain today are still suffering extreme hardship, abuse and neglect. Too often their problems are ignored and their voices unheard.

The Children's Society is a national charity that runs local services, helping children and young people when they are at their most vulnerable, and have nowhere left to turn.

We also campaign for changes to laws affecting children and young people, to stop the mistakes of the past being repeated in the future.

Our supporters around the country fund our services and join our campaigns to show children and young people they are on their side.

We are proud of our close partnership with the Church, who play a vital role in our work.

We want to work with every church in the country so that, together, we can change the lives of many, many more children.

The logo for The Children's Society, featuring the text "The Children's Society" in a serif font, centered within a white square that is part of a larger black and white graphic element.

**The
Children's
Society**

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