

EMM Liaison  
Newsletter #4  
Province II

Welcome your new neighbor  
and help inspire a more  
compassionate world

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*Introduction to EMM  
and Your Liaisons*

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Welcome to our fourth newsletter, bringing you information about Episcopal Migration Ministries as well as what we in Province II are doing in an ever-changing refugee landscape.

In this newsletter you get to meet The Rev. Deacon Jill Singleton, Director & Chaplain of [The Lighthouse](#) (for Asylum-Seekers & Refugees in Union City, NJ.) in the Diocese of Newark. Jill tells an amazing story of how The Lighthouse came into being. It shows that even if you are a small congregation, or even an individual, taking those first small steps can lead to great things.

We spoke with one of the asylum seekers who had been welcomed by The Lighthouse and learned firsthand of his (and his family's) journey from Africa to New Jersey – a journey pitted with violence, uncertainty, but full of hope and led by the Holy Spirit.

From the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, we hear about how working with refugees transforms our own lives. Sierra McCullough, Co-Chair / Vice President of Mission and Outreach, at [The American Cathedral](#) in Paris, France. There is also a [video](#), in conjunction with Episcopal Relief and Development, highlighting the support for Ukrainian Refugees in Wiesbaden, Germany.

Finally, we highlight 2 video podcasts from [EpiscoPols](#). Alan Yarborough, Director of Government Relations and Global Partnerships for the Episcopal Church interviews Troy Collazo, Immigration Policy

**Mission:** Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) is a key program within the Division of Public Policy, Partnership and Witness. Through EMM, we support dioceses and ministry networks around the church in responding to global migration, serving communities, and protecting the rights of all migrants.

EMM focuses on serving communities that help vulnerable migrants, addressing global migration and protecting the rights of migrants through education and advocacy.

### Your Province II EMM-Liaisons

Janet Day-Strehlow

José Delgado



*Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe*    *Director of Communications for the Diocese of Puerto Rico*

We hope that you will not only be inspired by the stories shared, but that you will share your stories with us. There are 13 dioceses in Province II and we want to hear from you. One of our goals is to be able to get parishes/people in touch with one another and start networking.

Please contact [jdelgado@episcopalpr.org](mailto:jdelgado@episcopalpr.org) and [jdaystrehlow@episcopaleurope.org](mailto:jdaystrehlow@episcopaleurope.org) with those stories, questions or feedback you may have.

According to UNHCR, there are approximately 122 million people who have been forced to flee their homes, 73.5 million are internally displaced. There are around 8.4 million asylum seekers globally and 5.9 million in need of international protection. For more details, take a look at [UNHCR Refugee Statistics](#) – we are seeing the highest levels of displacement on record.

Given enormity of the situation, we often hear the question “what can I/we do?” when looking at the current reality we live in. You may not be a large congregation with programs already in place, you may be looking for a way to help and make a difference. We hope that these stories will get you curious, light a spark or find new ways to expand existing programs. There are lots of links in this newsletter, so please take a look at them.

## Spotlight

### Diocese of Newark

**The Lighthouse** – It all starts with you!

*“Feeling helpless with all that's going on?”*

“Since 2017, The Lighthouse has been a resource and safe haven for asylum-seekers and their families as they engage in the process of pursuing their legal asylum in the United States.”



Listen to our [interview](#) with The Rev. Deacon Jill Singleton, Retired Head of School, All Saints Episcopal Day School, Hoboken, NJ, Deacon, The Church of St. Paul & Incarnation, Jersey City, NJ Director & Chaplain, The Lighthouse for Asylum-Seekers & Refugees, Union City, NJ.

Jill had a vision of a place filled with love and light. Even though her church in New Jersey was small and struggling, they started with an idea to house those being released from detention, and it blossomed into a safe and welcoming haven for asylum seekers, truly a blessed ministry (which includes 29 different partnerships: churches, synagogues and community organizations).

*Photo: Brandon Edling*

### **This is Kofi and Abena (names changed)**

Kofi and his wife, Abena, and 2 children (soon to be 3) are seeking asylum in the U.S. They are from one of the countries in Africa which criminalizes same-sex relationships. (here is a link to a [map](#) from The Human Dignity Trust/[ILGA World](#), showing where in the world being LGBTQ is criminalized – either imprisonment for 1-10 years or for life, in some countries they face the death penalty).

Kofi was raised as a Christian and went to a Catholic all-boys boarding school. Here he became involved in same-sex relationships, which is illegal in his country. This fact became known and he was beaten up by other students and hospitalized. His family disowned him, his father did not talk to him for 5 years. Kofi's family not only disowned him, but they tried to kill him. He endured bullying from everyone in his village.

In order to stay alive, he felt it necessary to get married, and through God's grace, found a woman he fell in love with. They had 2 children. However, his life was still in danger. He was shot, ran into the bush and escaped. His family car was burned and they threatened burning his wife and children alive if they did not tell where Kofi had escaped to.

With much effort, Kofi and his wife and their 2 children were able to emigrate to Nicaragua. Because of the language barrier, crime and discrimination, they continued their journey to Honduras by land, then to Guatemala, then to Mexico. The journey through the jungle meant carrying 2 bags of belongings, including medications and water, while Abena carried the younger child on her back while holding the hand of the other. They endured many hardships (dangerous river crossings, seeing their fellow travellers die, and once in the U.S., sent to separate detention camps.) Once released from their detention camps, they made their way to New Jersey, where they heard that there was a community from their home country. However, with no one to take them in, it was looking bleak, but as Kofi says, "It was God's intervention, through a chance meeting on the street, that I learned about The Lighthouse."

Kofi and his family lived almost a year at the Lighthouse and now have their own apartment, but have not yet been granted asylum. The Lighthouse was a blessing for him and his family, giving them lots of opportunity. They were accepted as a family. Jill and the Lighthouse got everything they needed: their room was already prepared to welcome them. They were fed. There were people to help them through the asylum process, there was counseling and coaching. Abena was trained and certified as a Certified Nursing Assistant, thanks to the generosity of Lighthouse donors. She is still working as a CNA now, but part-time, during her late-stage pregnancy. Kofi is also working, happy to help support the family. They are so thankful to be welcomed and loved in New Jersey, but worried about what the future may bring, given the current situation in the U.S. with asylum seekers.

Please keep Kofi, Abena and their family, as well as all other seeking a better life in the U.S., in your prayers.

## **The Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe**

In this month's Episcopal Relief & Development newsletter, there was a focus on what is happening in Wiesbaden, Germany in helping to preserve Ukrainian culture, supporting cultural activities for Ukrainian refugees: "Preserving Ukrainian Culture with Refugees in Germany".

In January 2023, as the [Ukrainian refugee crisis unfolded](#), the [Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe](#) (CECE) and [Episcopal Relief & Development](#) launched the Convocation Refugee Grant Program (CRGP) to help faith communities across Europe to deliver compassionate, targeted and effective support to refugees and displaced migrants.

Since its launch, CRGP has reached more than 200,000 people in 28 cities in 12 European countries with the help of 21 local churches.

In Wiesbaden, Germany, CECE and Episcopal Relief & Development support Ukrainian-led cultural activities hosted by the Church of St. Augustine of Canterbury that created a sense of belonging for

Ukrainian refugees. Watch the [video](#) to learn more about how the church has become a sanctuary for Ukrainians in their city.

**Testimonial from Sierra McCullough, Co-Chair / Vice President of Mission and Outreach, The American Cathedral in Paris, France**



*"My time spent with the refugee community, notably refugee youth, has been relatively short, but that does not lessen the impact I have experienced.*

*One of my first days volunteering with "Les Midis du Mie", a grassroots association developed to aid first arrivals, was a day that marked me for life.*

*The need, the desperation, the anguish and stress that radiated from the group was suffocating. These young refugees, mostly boys, were toppling over each other and rushing towards a table filled with less-than-desirable secondhand clothing. They were tearing at it as if their life depended on it, which was in fact the truth of the matter. Their life, their dignity, depended on this table of clothes that most of us wouldn't give a second glance at.*

*This scene was something I witnessed without even turning my head, this all took place in my direct line of sight. I couldn't imagine there would be something worse when I looked down. After the shock wore off and I could take in more from my surroundings, I noticed something heartbreaking: almost all of these boys were either shoeless, or equipped with inadequate shoe wear (flip flops, no socks, shoes with holes etc.)*

*If we say we are the hands and feet of God, how can ours (our hands and feet) be flourishing in privilege, while others suffer so radically?*

*My initial passions didn't lie in refugee work, but this struck me, changed me, turned me towards God in a way I had never imagined. We are the hands and feet of God, and in our privilege we must deliver."*

**EpiscoPols**

Did you know that the Office of Government Relations offers public witness video podcasts. There are 2 podcasts relating to EMM we would like to highlight.



These are hosted by Alan Yarborough, Director of Government Relations and Global Partnerships for the Episcopal Church.

They aim to “help educate, equip and inspire Episcopalians to weave public policy advocacy into their personal lives and church communities.”

In Season 4, Episode 3 (October 13, 2025), Alan talks with



Troy Collazo, Immigration Policy Advisor about the current state of immigration detention in the U.S., and how public support has shifted since the 2024 election. [Saying No to Expanding Immigration Detention](#)

Season 4, Episode 6 (November 3, 2025), Alan talks again with Troy Collazo about ways to support proposed legislation that offers a pathway to citizenship for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) recipients and “Dreamers.” [Pathways for Dreamers](#). Troy and Alan discuss faith and immigration, the state of play of immigration in the US, Episcopal Church immigration weekly, Episcopal Church resolutions and The American Dream and Promise Act.

For more EpiscoPol episodes on YouTube, please click [here](#).

Thank you for your support and all that you do to  
welcome our newest neighbors!

## Important Links

EMM: [EMM](#)

OGR: [OGR](#)

Episcopal Migration Response Network: [EMRN](#)

The Rainbow Initiative: [Rainbow Initiative](#)

Neighbor to Neighbor Program: [Neighbor to Neighbor](#)  
Study and Worship Materials: [Study and Worship Materials](#)

## Register for Webinars and Calls

### *Episcopal Church* *Immigration Updates*

When: **Every Tuesday** 1:00-1:30pm EST  
Where: Zoom webinar – [Register here](#)

Please join Episcopal Migration Ministries and the Office of Government Relations for regular **30-minute updates on U.S. immigration policy and the responses in our churches and communities**. Spanish interpretation will be available. [Register here](#).

### *Office of Government Relations Weekly Network Call*

When: **Every Thursday** 1:00-1:30pm EST  
Where: Zoom webinar – [Register here](#)

Join the Office of Government Relations for a 30-minute, **weekly conversation about the policies and legislation we are advocating for**. This is a chance to take part in a conversation on advocacy asks, the political environment, and the legislative outlook [Register here](#).

EMRN meeting: [Join Episcopal Migration Response Network - Formstack](#)  
EMRN Second Monthly Meeting: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)