

EMM Liaison
Newsletter #2
Province II

Welcome your new
neighbor and help
inspire a more
compassionate world

Introduction to EMM



Welcome to our second newsletter, bringing you information about Episcopal Migration Ministries as well as what we in Province II are doing in an ever-changing refugee landscape. We were a bit ambitious in getting a newsletter out each month, so for the moment we are looking at bi-monthly updates.

Janet Day-Strehlow and José Delgado are your Province II – EMM Liaisons. Janet is part of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe and José is 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.

[Share your story with us!](#)

And if you are wondering where to start on your journey of helping, please take a look at the resources on the EMM website, especially the Essential Resources for Immigrant Families [Essential Resources](#), which includes Know Your Rights guides and Family Preparedness Plans.

Each month we will share video conversations and stories with you. In this newsletter we speak with Allison Duvall (EMM), Max Niedzwiecki (Rainbow Initiative), The Rev. José Cantos (social development and immigration projects in the Diocese of New Jersey) and from the Episcopal Migration Caucus, The Rev. Leeann Culbreath, Marty Dickinson and Kaki Logan.

In case you are not aware of what EMM does, here is an overview from the EMM website:

“Our Mission

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

Responding to global migration

Dioceses throughout The Episcopal Church work together and in partnership to serve migrants from sending and receiving communities. We offer a range of services and ministries and recognize the complex factors leading to migration. In partnership with churches around the Anglican Communion, we educate and advocate for conditions where no one is forced to migrate, and if they must, they are able to do so with dignity.

Serving Communities

Across our church, we work to welcome and serve newcomers, recognizing the unique needs and contributions of all who are part of our communities. Ministries around the church help asylum seekers process claims, support refugees and other migrants to find housing, job training and education, and a place to shelter.

Protecting the rights of all migrants

We advocate for the rights of all migrants to be respected through engaging the U.S. government, the United Nations and other multilateral institutions, and the private sector. We collaborate with ecumenical, interreligious and secular organizations to promote human rights and to educate communities about the experiences of migrants.”

On June 20th we celebrated World Refugee Day, where the Episcopal Church called attention and action to the plight of refugees worldwide, to ensure we uphold the dignity of all. There are currently c. 123 million people (one in 67 globally) who have been forcibly displaced due to war, violence, persecution and climate change.

June and July were also months in which we celebrated Pride. [Rome Pride ENS article](#). Last year St. Paul’s in the Walls was the first church in Rome to take part in the Pride Parade. This year they were joined by other faith communities, which gives us hope!

Spotlight

- 1) Meet Allison Duvall, Senior Manager for Church & Community Engagement, Episcopal Migration Ministries. You may know Allison from the weekly EMM update calls or the Episcopal Migration Response Network meetings. Allison talks about her background and her passion for her job.

[Conversation with Allison Duvall -Video](#)

- 2) We talked with Max Niedzwiecki, who was instrumental in working with EMM to develop the Rainbow Initiative. Max has held senior positions with NGOs focusing on forced migration, faith and LGBTQ+ communities and was also an Executive Director at Integrity USA. Max started working with forced migrants and refugees back in the 1980's.

[The Rainbow Initiative](#) is Episcopal Migration Ministries' response to General Convention 2022 Resolution D045 "On Supporting LGBTIQ+ Refugees and Asylum Seekers". The goals for the Rainbow Initiative include: working with Episcopal congregations and others to bring visibility and aid to LGBTQ+ forced migrants, and reviewing and revising EMM materials and procedures in order to ensure that they are fully inclusive of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. If you visit the link, you will see more details, including learning opportunities, resources and guidance, blog posts, prayers, and witnessing through World Refugee Day events and Pride parades. If your congregation is interested in joining the Rainbow Initiative, contact rainbowinitiative@episcopalchurch.org to learn more, or apply to become a partner with the [Rainbow Initiative Covenant](#).

[Conversation with Max Niedzwiecki - Video](#)

- 3) We have a conversation between José and The Rev. José Cantos, who is working in Hispanic communities in New Jersey and looking how we can provide a safe space and be a welcoming church, as well as addressing the fear in the communities he serves and has personal suggestions of what we can do.

[Conversation with Rev. José Cantos - Video](#)

- 4) The Episcopal Migration Caucus formed just before General the 81st General Convention. The Caucus organized a pilgrimage to New Mexico and Texas this past June, holding vigils outside detention centers. One of the aims was to bring awareness of the over 200 ICE detention centers in the US and how the system impacts everyone in it, not only those detained and their families, but those who work for Border Patrol or in the facilities as well as the communities around them. Uplifting the dignity of all people was the driving principle. Their team has put together [Resources for a Migration with Dignity Vigil](#), which has a wealth of information including possible ways to use the Vigil Liturgy, scriptures, Prayers of the People as well as considerations for planning a vigil. Please also take a look at [Defending Dignity at the National Cathedral](#), an interview with Marty Dickinson.

[Migration with Dignity - Video](#)

Other news

The Diocese of New York has launched a campaign called #OneSingleAct, to respond to the hatred and cruelty we are encountering with simple acts of courage, care and connection. [OneSingleAct news](#). In a time where we often wonder what we can do or if we are doing enough, this challenges us to drive compassion and encourage hope.

[Engine of resistance](#). Here is a link to an opinion piece from Presiding Bishop Rowe, reflecting on The Episcopal Church emerging as a leader in resisting the overreach and recklessness of the current administration.

There are many ways we can get involved, either as individuals or parishes. The Welcome Quilt Project presents an important public counter-narrative to the current negative rhetoric about children and families who are seeking asylum or have immigrated to the United States. Instead of fearing or dehumanizing them, this project seeks to create a sense of community, belonging, and support. Utilizing the symbolic warmth of handmade quilts, it welcomes them as future neighbors, friends, and family. Through the project, people have drawn heartfelt messages of welcome and support on fabric squares which are then sewn into Welcome Quilts and displayed individually in communities or as part of a Welcome Quilt Exhibit.

The idea was developed by Gale Hall in partnership with [Voices from the Border](#). The quilts are really the emblem of a more encompassing project. It is not just about making and displaying quilts, although that is key. More importantly, making the welcome squares and displaying the quilts acts as a vehicle to facilitate investigation and reflection on the topic of immigration in creative ways. Gale developed a comprehensive empathy-based curriculum with activities for all ages for this purpose. She also wrote the children's book *Lili's Quilt: A Story of Immigration, Welcoming, and Belonging* to accompany this project. Hopefully, conversations resulting from the book and the curriculum in conjunction with the quilts will lead to positive activism on behalf of children and families immigrating to the United States as we examine our role as a welcoming nation.

For a copy of the Toolkit with quilt directions, the comprehensive curriculum, and exhibit ideas, please email Gale at welcomhomequilts@gmail.com. She is happy to answer any other questions you may have about the project

Please contact jdelgado@episcopalpr.org and janet.daystrehlow@gmail.com with stories or ideas or with any questions you may have.

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.

[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.

EMRN meeting: [Join Episcopal Migration Response Network - Formstack](#)