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A Sunday of Solidarity for Suffering Children | Sunday, June 30

In light of the recent news about children in U.S. government holding facilities along the U.S.-Mexico border, the United Methodist Committee on Relief has received numerous requests to respond. We have heard the plea for action from the church. Unfortunately, the facilities in question are managed in such a way that precludes even UMCOR's assistance. Access to these government facilities is extremely limited.

As the arm of The United Methodist Church mandated to cultivate and promote mission, the General Board of Global Ministries seeks to equip your church with tools to use as you confront the frustration and helplessness that this situation evokes. While this particular case is in the U.S., we recognize that migration is a global issue and the breadth and depth of our Global Migration programming at UMCOR and Global Ministries reflects that fact.

As a church that is united on the need to care for children, we can be in mission together.

This Sunday, June 30, Global Ministries encourages you to take part in **A Sunday of Solidarity for Suffering Children** in three ways:

1. **PRAY - We encourage you to pray for children.** Below, you will find a prayer to use this Sunday. You might choose to dedicate a service to suffering children everywhere or conduct a prayer vigil in your community for the children suffering along the border.
2. **ACT - We encourage you to act on behalf of children.** While we cannot take UMCOR hygiene kits to the U.S. government holding centers, we are distributing UMCOR hygiene kits at transitional shelters all along the US-Mexico border. In the last three months, UMCOR delivered 46,128 hygiene kits to six church-run transitional shelters. Instructions on how to make and send these kits are available at this webpage: <https://www.umcmmission.org/umcor/serve/relief-supply-network/hygiene-kit>

You can also act by calling your U.S. elected officials. The following link to the General Board of Church and Society, our sister United Methodist agency responsible for advocacy, will give you some suggestions on issues to raise with these officials. <https://www.umcjustice.org/what-you-can-do/advocacy/take-action/stand-with-immigrants-and-refugees>

3. **GIVE - Finally, we encourage you to give on behalf of children.** Through the Global Migration Advance (<https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-525-global-migration.aspx>), UMCOR provides grants to organizations along the U.S. border and elsewhere around the world that are working to fill gaps in the needs and rights of migrants.

Jesus implored his disciples to welcome the children. This is our mission: to make sure the children are welcomed. Thank you for your prayers, your actions and your gifts.

A Prayer for Suffering Children

God of All Children Everywhere,
Our hearts are bruised when we see children suffering alone.
Our hearts are torn when we are unable to help.
Our hearts are broken when we have some complicity in the matter.
For all the times we were too busy and shooed a curious child away,
forgive us, oh God.
For all the times we failed to get down on their level and look eye to eye with a child,
forgive us, oh God.
For all the times we did not share when we saw a hungry child somewhere in the world,
forgive us, oh God.
For all the times we thought about calling elected officials to demand change, but did not,
forgive us, oh God.
For all the times we thought that caring for the children of this world was someone else's
responsibility, forgive us, oh God.
With Your grace, heal our hearts.
With Your grace, unite us in action.
With Your grace, repair our government.
With Your grace, help us to find a way to welcome all children everywhere,
That they may know that Jesus loves them,
Not just because "the Bible tells them so,"
But because they have known Your love in real and tangible ways,
And they know that nothing, absolutely nothing, can separate them from Your love.
Amen.

About the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)

Founded in 1940, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is the global humanitarian aid and development agency of The United Methodist Church. UMCOR is working in more than 80 countries worldwide, including the United States and its territories. Our mission, grounded in the teachings of Jesus, is to alleviate human suffering - whether caused by war, conflict or natural disaster - with open hearts and minds to all people. UMCOR responds to natural or civil disasters that are interruptions of such magnitude that they overwhelm a community's ability to recover on its own. UMCOR works through programs that address hunger, poverty, sustainable agriculture, international and domestic emergencies, refugee and immigrant concerns, global health issues, and transitional development. Learn more on our website at UMCOR.org, or social media: Facebook.com/UMCOR and twitter.com/UMC_UMCOR.