

Sermon Suggestion 3 - By Church Response for Refugees

Why should the church welcome refugees?

We believe the church is in an incredible position, theologically and practically, to welcome refugees.

Theologically

There is a strong biblical mandate for churches to welcome refugees:

From Abraham to Moses to Ruth: God's people were a displaced people, sojourners, living in foreign places. God commanded them to be kind and hospitable to the aliens in their land.

Deuteronomy 10:19 says: *"You are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt."*

Jesus Christ himself knew what it was like to be a refugee. Jesus and his family fled to a foreign land, in Egypt, and survived a mass killing of young boys ordered by the dictator King Herod. But they lived as refugees. They lost their homes, connections with family and friends. And they depended on the hospitality of strangers in a foreign land.

Practically

Churches are very well resourced. You often find in parishes across the UK that the local church is the gel that holds the community together. It is relationally rooted to the local community, with tentacles that stretch out to local businesses and other faith groups. It can organise the community into action. It has manpower, volunteers, space, often funding and sometimes even spare properties to care for the vulnerable and the sick.

Traditionally

Churches have always been a place of welcoming, where people of different backgrounds and colours get on with each other under the same God. Churches have always taken a lead on giving shelter and food to the homeless, opening debt centers for those with money troubles, giving mental health support to people.