



The following was approved and released by the ICCC Board of Trustees on June 29, 2018.

#### STATEMENT OF CONCERN

From the Board of Trustees, Endorsed by the Board of Directors, International Council of Community Churches

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?

Isaiah 58:6

From our beginnings in 1950, the International Council of Community Churches has spoken and lived a powerful witness for justice, reconciliation and Christian unity. Central to our witness has been our conviction, based on Jesus' teachings, that all of God's children are precious and valuable. So, it is painful and distressing to us as an international fellowship, when governments treat human beings and their status as pawns in internal political maneuvering, and when those who are fleeing violence in their former homelands are treated with contempt.

The recent decision by the government of the United States to separate children from parents whose immigrant status is under question, is an offense against human dignity and against the will of God. Attempts by government officials to justify their policy of separating families by appealing to Holy Scripture are an abomination. We are taught "you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:34). Jesus' commandment is, " 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12: 29-31.)

Keeping families together rather than tearing them apart is not an unreasonable request on government. However, asylum is guaranteed under international law. The administration has changed what was a misdemeanor into a crime which excludes the opportunity to apply for asylum. Separating families as a "deterrent" is evil. Jesus foretold the final judgment on those who mistreat the least among us: "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me...." (Matthew 25: 41-43)

We call upon Republicans and Democrats to reason together and craft a policy/legislation that humanely reflects a policy based of justice for all of God's Children. We call upon the churches and ministry centers of the International Council of Community Churches to stand with the least of these, to protest government policies that separate families, to advocate for policies related to immigration that are centered on respect for human beings; and to seek answers to public policy issues that fulfill the vision of Amos (5:24): "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." As Christians seeking to be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ, we call upon governments and governmental agencies to treat all human beings with respect and dignity.