



OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

J. HERBERT NELSON, II  
STATED CLERK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Friday, November 2, 2018

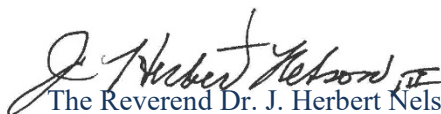
*“The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller. The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped” (Proverbs 11:24–25, MSG).*

Siblings in Christ, we are called upon again today to request that our government treat the whole of humanity with freedom, dignity, and love, as we learn of its plan for our Southern Border.

Migration is a right recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The need to migrate because of danger in one’s home country is recognized in our nation’s asylum laws. We, as a body of faith, know that our ancestors both chose to and had to leave their lands because of genocide, family ties, and to answer the call of the Lord. This administration’s plans for those on their way goes against this nation’s global agreements and asylum laws, and our call, as followers of Christ, to welcome the newcomer and love our neighbor. This plan will make our nation smaller. This plan will keep us from being a blessing and from being blessed.

Yesterday, our President called this nation’s asylum system a “loophole.” Yet, this church has witnessed how difficult it is when we, our friends, and our family encounter the asylum system. We had church policy demanding a fairer and more humane system that honors due process. Making an already unjustly complicated system even more difficult will harm many. To inflict harm on our siblings in Christ, to attempt to make us believe we must fear them, is not who we are called to be.

In these seasons of division and fear, we are called to respond with radical love and hospitality. We were also strangers in a strange land, and yet God did not forsake us<sup>1</sup>. And God will not abandon those seeking safety, protection, and refuge in another land. We have laws in place that allow for such welcome. May we stand up to allow those laws to work in tandem with their need. Is this not a time for us to reach from within to show God’s light to the world and not hide our flames under a bushel? We, as followers of Christ, we can and will do better. I invite each of you to prayer, reflection, and action as we discern God’s call, and may we respond from a place of radical love united in God’s mercy for God’s people. We pray that the Spirit will lead all of our politicians beyond political posturing towards a disposition of affirming all people as worthy of freedom, dignity, and love.

  
The Reverend Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II  
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

---

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 10:19