

## **Statement**

**from the Church and Society Committee of the United Free Church of Scotland**

### **Why working with/for refugees is significant.**

Jesus asks us to consider 'who is our neighbour' when he tells us the parable of the Good Samaritan. He makes it very clear our neighbour is anyone who is in need regardless of their background and circumstances. Therefore in considering our response to the refugee crisis the question is not whether we seek to help these people but how we can be neighbours to them.

Our society would often have us regard refugees as a 'problem', and see them as a 'threat', and as Christians we acknowledge we can be influenced by such thinking. However we follow a God to whom each person is precious and part of our response to his love for us is to love others whoever they are and to demonstrate that love in practical concern and action. It is right that part of our response is to call on Governments and others to take steps to address the underlying causes of the current refugee situation which is causing such turmoil in various countries with many people having no choice but to flee and leave behind their homes, careers, schools and all that is familiar to them. However we also need to ensure that as these people move on they receive help and support and for those who arrive in this country, we have an opportunity to 'welcome the stranger' by offering them whatever help is most appropriate for each person and family.

The Church & Society Committee of the United Free Church of Scotland welcomes the opportunity to work together with our partners in this significant work in Scotland and beyond.

### **Why involved in joint faiths project:**

As Christians we are moved to action by the plight of the large number of refugees. We are aware that many of the refugees belong to a number of faith groups and appreciate the value of people from those faith communities working together so that we can most effectively provide the practical help and support which is needed as we seek to help these displaced people move on from the trauma they have experienced in their homelands.