



2014 CCVT Motion 3: Refugees and Asylum Seekers

That CCVT at its Annual General Meeting on May 3, 2014, affirms the following statement.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers are people made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and that their sorrow is close to the heart of God (Psalm 34:18). We acknowledge that throughout Scripture God commands that refuge, provision, protection and justice be extended to those who seek asylum.

Historically the Church has not always stood on the side of the poor and alien, and we seek to remedy that today. We repent for our greed, our ignorance and our lack of compassion as a nation, and as individuals, which has led to the current plight of refugees in being refused welcome in our abundant country.

We seek to participate in bringing the Kingdom of God to earth through practices of inclusion, justice, fairness and hospitality. This is stated clearly in the Shared Value of Justice in the CCVT Statement of Purpose: *We value the dignity, equality and inherent worth of all persons regardless of gender, race, economic standing or belief system. Therefore, in announcing the Kingdom and expectant of its arrival, we will work for social justice, equal opportunity for all persons.*

We call on our country's government to lead the way in responding generously to international crises which cause many people to flee their home countries through:

- humanising the plight of refugees and asylum seekers,
- the implementation of just domestic policies, *and*
- holding nations to account who inflict violence and human rights abuses against their own people.

We condemn government policies that seek to dehumanize and criminalize refugees and asylum seekers, and that are in breach of our international obligations under the Refugee Convention and our moral obligations under God's law.

Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania therefore commits to:

- Speak truth where there is misinformation
- Critique culture when it is in opposition to human rights
- Extend welcome and hospitality to those fleeing persecution
- Humanise Refugees and Asylum Seekers through hearing and sharing their voices and stories
- Advocate to the Australian Government for just, fair and transparent treatment of those fleeing persecution

And invites all churches and agencies affiliated with CCVT to make the same commitment.