

## PRAYER FOR SYRIAN CRISIS

God of mercy,  
We can no longer pretend to be distant from the heartbreak afflicting your children  
who have fled Syria in fear of their lives,  
stopped at the borders of countries too overwhelmed to welcome  
held in trains, awaiting a word of hope,  
huddled in camps and overcrowded shelters  
with nowhere to turn and no way to turn back.

We can no longer pretend that that small pair of black tennis shoes,  
washed up on the shore,  
could not be the shoes of one of our own sons or daughters.

We know the truth: all of these children are our sons and daughters; and their parents  
are our brothers and sisters, and we owe them a room in the inn, a place of safety, a  
chance to live and thrive.

We ask your forgiveness for our short attention spans and our limited imagination.  
We pray that you will help us to do better.

We pray for those who live in Syria still,  
for the many whose faith in You has made them a target of hate  
For those trying to hold life together, always watching and waiting  
for the ominous movement of troops on the road into town  
for the whistle of incoming shells,  
for a cry from a desperate neighbor or a shout of warning  
wondering, *is it safe to remain? Shall I send my family away?*

We pray for neighbors in Lebanon, in Jordan, in Turkey,  
who have already welcomed so many,  
whose resources are strained under the burden of hospitality  
but who are still willing to do more.

We pray for those of us in the West, in Europe, the United States and Canada whose  
time for generosity is upon us.

May we reach deeply, give generously, and welcome extravagantly.  
May we lift our voices in a strong and unified advocacy so that governments will  
act now to save lives and to protect the peoples of Syria.

Jesus, who said, *let the children come to me*, receive our sorrow and the gift of our  
broken spirits, for we have so much yet to do to welcome even a few of *the least of these*  
to save your broken children, to strengthen and support their communities to call the world  
to accountability, to generosity, and to peace.

Help us find courage, compassion and hope, for we need your grace. Amen.

*Prayer written by the Rev. Dr. Laurie Ann Kraus  
Coordinator, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance*

*September 4, 2015*

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