



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Supporting Afghanistan
ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton Weekly Video Message
Aug. 27, 2021

We are devastated by the fall of Afghanistan's elected government, and our hearts break for our Afghan allies, their families and all those in grave danger of retaliation. Our prayers are with our imperiled Afghan neighbors, and we stand in solidarity with all those who are living in fear.

The immediate evacuation of American citizens, our Afghan allies and other vulnerable groups is the central focus of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS). In 1939, Lutherans in the United States formed Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service in order to resettle those fleeing Europe during and after World War II. We have since served and resettled people from Vietnam, Cambodians, Hmong — and now we're being called on again.

LIRS is doing everything they can do to save as many lives as possible and serve those who have already arrived in the United States today. As a resettlement agency, LIRS and its partners, including the ELCA, stand ready to welcome our allies and their family members. They are working with partners on the ground to support influxes of both Afghan families and thousands of volunteers wanting to help. And they have created the Neighbors in Need: Afghan Allies fund to provide direct support to Afghans arriving in the United States. Visit lirs.org/helpnow to learn how you can get involved.

Afghan families coming to the United States will need support for months, not just for days. And we need to call on our congregations to be sponsoring entities for the months to come. Join us in supporting the "long welcome" for these families.

Be well, dear church.