

**Santa Barbara Friends Meeting  
Minute on Child Refugees and Migration  
January 11, 2015**

*In gratitude to Friends at Inland Valley, Redwood Forest, and Humboldt Meetings for their faithful inspiration in similar minutes*

As you are well aware, the humanitarian crisis on our southern border has burgeoned with tens of thousands of young people, children, and mothers arriving due to the violence and extreme poverty in their home countries. Imagine your children or grandchildren being subject to such violence that you would take the chance to send them traveling a treacherous route alone with only a 50-50 chance of making it to safety. Imagine not only the desperation but also the perseverance, judgment, and strength of each of these young people.

We call on our government, with this minute, to declare these young people and families refugees, allowing for their access to resources and protection under the law. As a nation, we can provide shelter, care and education as well as legal assistance to help them navigate the immigration system. We can also encourage the Mexican government to provide similar compassionate treatment for these young people, and we can support nonprofit organizations in Mexico who are trying to help these children and families. We can encourage and support non-violent efforts in their countries of origin to alleviate the conditions that cause so many to flee. We must consider how our governmental policies influence violence and poverty in other countries.

Santa Barbara Friends Meeting encourages all acts of compassion and kindness directed toward these refugees who have left their home countries under conditions of fear and intimidation and have entered the United States in the hopes that by crossing our borders they may find peace and safety. We oppose their prolonged incarceration in detention facilities or deportation back to their countries of origin where their lives are in danger. We call for an end to the practice of for-profit detention of these families. We join hands with all those who are working to provide these refugees with food, shelter, medical care, due process in their immigration proceedings, and hope for a better life.