



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Bethany Christian Services Statement on U.S. Immigration Policy: “Asylum-Seekers are humans created in the image of God, not criminals”**

**GRAND RAPIDS, MI (October 30, 2018)** - Bethany Christian Services released the following statement from President and CEO Chris Palusky, calling for compassion for those seeking refuge from violence and persecution:

“Bethany Christian Services is a nonprofit organization that brings and keeps families together. We have worked with refugee children and families for more than 40 years and are committed to having mercy on those who seek refuge – those who have been persecuted or who have suffered as victims of violence, sex trafficking, abuse, and slavery. At our core, we believe that refugee families belong together as they seek asylum and that they should not be jailed for seeking asylum. Our faith calls us to treat those who are fleeing for their lives as humans created in the image of God, not criminals.”

“The United States has long been a beacon of hope for those fleeing persecution and violence. In fact, our laws give any person the right to seek asylum in the U.S. It is wrong to jail refugee children and their families and it is wrong to intentionally separate them – Forcing asylum seeking families to choose between the two is inhumane.”

“Bethany serves children and families around the world. We know that the best way to help families stay in their homes is to address the root causes that are forcing them to flee in the first place. Ending migration flows from Central America will never be accomplished through deterrence and threats. We must advance solutions that address the root causes of violence and poverty. Let’s work with people throughout the region to create stronger humanitarian protections so that the inherent worth of each person is protected, families are kept together, and children are kept safe.”

**About Bethany Christian Services**

Bethany Christian Services believes that every child deserves to be in a loving family. We have a heart for children, and we equip families to be the answer for children in need. Bethany has been providing critical services to refugee children and families for more than 40 years.

For more information, please visit <https://www.bethany.org/refugee-and-immigrant-services>