

LUTHERAN CHURCH *of the* RESURRECTION

A Pastoral Response to Disparaging Posts About Lutheran Agencies —From Pastor Jeff Frohner

This past week there have been some rather disparaging remarks about two Lutheran organizations, Lutheran Social Services (now known as Lutheran Services in America) and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (now known as Global Refuge). There was a suggestion that these organization were somehow illegally benefiting from government funding and even some rather silly (if not so damaging) suggestions that this was “money laundering” by the church. Each of these organizations publicly publishes their budgets and tax information (they are all required to post their 990s). They are highly rated, transparent, non-profit agencies that have been supported by Lutherans for generations but are separate from any particular Lutheran body. All payments that were made to them from governmental agencies are for grants the organizations have applied for and received, or for services rendered via contracts that state and federal governments have entered into to have these organizations carry out requested work by the government.

I invite you to look at the website for Lutheran Social Services in Iowa and Lutheran Social Services and see for yourself how they have helped the elderly and disabled stay in their homes, worked with the federal government to help legally authorized immigrants, worked with mental health for traumatized teens, provided foster care services, adoption services and early childhood protection—just to name some of their good work. Lutheran Social Services (Lutheran Services in America) is one of the largest social service agencies in America with a long track record of transparency and working for the common good. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (Global Refuge) starting in 1939 began its work with German and Eastern European refugees escaping the horrors of World War II, it was instrumental in helping the families of our friends in Vietnam to find safety here in the US (in fact LCR participated in directly helping in this effort with a family) and has continued to work fully within the bounds of US immigration policy and the Biblical mandate to care for the stranger. In short, we can be proud of the work of these organization who put into practice the words of Jesus.

We will continue to support their good work and correct comments that are baseless slander. I invite you to share this with others as you see fit, including your local, state and national leaders. We can disagree on policy and implementation—we cannot allow such differences to defame those who strive to live out Jesus’ words to love our neighbor and do so much good work in our communities.

<https://lsiowa.org/> Lutheran Social Services in Iowa

<https://lutheranservices.org/> Lutheran Services in America