

## **Community of Faith; ROUNDTABLE; Do any moral principles address how to handle illegal immigration?**

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### **Body**

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Some **moral principles** [that] I think **address** the **handling** of this issue are two of the Ten Commandments. "Honor thy father and thy mother" serves as a reminder that we are all brothers and have a responsibility to love each other. And "Thou shalt not steal" serves as a reminder of God's promised provision for each of us. A hymn by Geoffrey Shaw is a springboard to prayer for all citizens of the world looking for home: "Pilgrim on earth, home and heaven are within thee." The immigrant can't steal home, and the patriot can't be robbed of it.

--- Spring Griffith, First Church of Christ, Scientist, Lilburn

"Love your neighbor" comes to mind, but so does "Submit to those in authority by obeying the laws of the land." Keeping both of these sounds pretty simple, but it gets real complex when there is money to be made and an unfair and unethical advantage to doing it illegally. In many ways, we are simply reaping the natural results of our civil legislation: No Child Left Behind [Act], health care for all, etc., where we maintain the view of being all things to all people. The basic **moral principle** of ethical truth is to do things legally, otherwise the ones prospering are doing so at the expense of others who are being hurt and penalized. The **immigration** issue is just one of many conundrums that our country faces on the **moral**/ethical horizon.

--- Pastor Steve Wood, Sugar Hill United Methodist

Jesus told the parable of the good Samaritan to teach that human beings cannot just turn their backs to each other. Just building a wall is not the solution. People who build walls put themselves in prison also. We are related and dependent on one another. When one suffers, we all suffer. We pray at Mass for the "common good of all." This common good is a basic **moral principle** of the Christian **faith**. Obviously, you can't just leave this idea of the common good to whatever happens. We must be intentional in working toward this good through an organized, legal system of action. There is no way to avoid this work --- even if work, these days, is the worst kind of "four-letter word!"

--- Pastor David Dye, Mary Our Queen Catholic Church

The government has absolutely zero **moral** obligation to allow **illegal** aliens into the U.S.A. On the other hand, all immigrants have the **moral** obligation to obey the laws of the land they are seeking to enter. It is the height of arrogant presumption to cry foul when a nation demands submission to its laws from those who seek to enter that nation. The Bible teaches us to obey every ordinance of man as unto the Lord (1 Peter 2:13); I don't think it requires

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theological gymnastics to apply that verse to this current controversy in America. If illegals don't like it, they should pack up their bags and their Bibles and head back home.

--- The Rev. Jeff Lyle, Meadow Baptist Church

It would seem to me to be two moral imperatives regarding immigration. First, we are to welcome the stranger and treat with respect the alien among us. This is found in both Old and New Testaments. Second, we need to remember that all we have is a gift from God, entrusted to us to be used for the well-being of all. In Christ there is no "we" and "they," but all are one and welcomed in Christ.

--- Pastor Dale Sillik, Trinity Lutheran Church

\* Join the Roundtable: We want to hear from leaders from all the houses of worship in Gwinnett County. It's easy to participate. Each Monday, we e-mail the question of the week to roundtable members and they e-mail their responses. If you'd like to participate, e-mail [gwinnettfaith@ajc.com](mailto:gwinnettfaith@ajc.com).

## Graphic

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Photo: SPRING GRIFFITH

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