



Becoming An Immigrant Welcoming Congregation

A Journey Made By Walking

A Message from the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ Immigration Team

The 2016 annual meeting of our conference approved the *Resolution Calling on the Fifty-Fourth Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ and its Congregations to Covenant as Immigrant Welcoming Congregations*. In 2017, the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ approved the resolution *On Becoming an Immigrant Welcoming Church*.

The *Immigrant Welcoming* process is, first and foremost, a process that challenges us to learn and grow. Using the Open and Affirming process as a model, the *Immigrant Welcoming* movement uses two primary sources as its inspiration: the first is Biblical witness; the second is the Thirteenth General Synod's *Pronouncement on Justice in Immigration*.

In *Justice in Immigration*, the Thirteenth General Synod recognized that "the stranger and the sojourner always challenge the ethical and moral limits of the human community and the community of faith." The synod nevertheless affirms the stranger is "God's dialogue with human history [and] the sign of renewal and life. God utilizes the stranger to challenge and replenish the human situation and to proclaim grace and mercy as well as righteousness and life. For it is not only that Jesus was sent as a stranger, but that Jesus came as the stranger who brings us life and more abundant life."

We invite you to exploration and discernment. It is our conviction that each community which challenges itself to embrace the *Immigrant Welcoming* process is a community open to the dialogue God initiates within our current time and context. We also recognize that in each community, the nature of this dialogue will reflect that community's unique relationship with God. For this reason, we do not present a one-size-fits-all process. We do not dictate what becoming *Immigrant Welcoming* looks like. Instead, we offer this document as a menu of activities, resources and suggestions which inform what the process *might look like* for your community.

Lastly, we offer ourselves as partners to your congregation as you engage in this discernment. This is our ministry. This is where we see our calling. We are open to learning and teaching, advising and listening, accompanying and cheering your community along on its journey towards affirming itself as *Immigrant Welcoming*. Our prayer is that on this journey we come to a greater understanding of that very abundance of life that we find together in Jesus.

Special Thanks and Acknowledgement

In 2011 a group of students at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities collaborated on a sourcebook which they titled *Pilgrimage: Thinking Theologically about Immigration Issues*. The authors were Deb Braun, Judy Keim, Cathy Kolwey, Dana Strande, Hosie Thurmond, and Terry Williams. The resources they gathered are very relevant to Minnesota communities. We wish to thank them and acknowledge them for their hard work. When we list a resource that they compiled in *Pilgrimage*, we will denote it with a the * symbol.

We would be remiss if we did not mention that the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ drafted a document of the same name. This document was a primary source of inspiration for this handbook.

Resource Center for Churches

The Resource Center for Churches has enthusiastically offered their support in connecting churches to resources that help them explore many of the topics highlighted in this guide. They can suggest books, films, worship resources, and research more resources available online, such as videos and podcasts. The RCC is a joint project of the Minnesota Annual Conference United Methodist Church, Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, and Synod of Lakes and Prairies (PCUSA). All member churches of these organizations are members of the resource center as well.

Website: <http://rcc-mn.org>

FAQ: <http://rcc-mn.org/2015/12/14/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-rcc/>

Email: info@rcc-mn.org

Phone: 612-870-0861/888-293-9901

Learn about Our Faith

We live in a world of people on the move. According to the United Nations, there are over 59.5 million forcibly displaced people in the world. The Bible is full of stories about God's people being forced to leave their countries, Adam and Eve, Noah, Sarah and Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Naomi, Esther, Jeremiah, Jesus, Mary and Joseph to name some. We, in the United Church of Christ, find our grounding in God's Word about how we are to treat the stranger in our

midst. We, in the UCC, believe we are called to offer an “extravagant welcome.” Below are some resources to deepen your understanding of God’s call to us.

- Biblical References to Immigrants and Refugees
http://www.ucc.org/justice_immigration_worship_biblical-references-to
- *Faith and Immigration* (with Reflection Questions): A theological exploration of immigration and overview of the UCC’s General Synod’s thinking on this issue.
http://www.ucc.org/justice_immigration_worship_faith-and-immigration
- Theological Reflections on Immigration by Daniel G. Groody, C.S.C. including:
 1. Dying to Live: Theology, Migration and the Human Journey
 2. *Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees*:
<http://www.nd.edu/~dggroody/Published%20Works/Journal%20Articles/files/TSSeptember09Groody.pdf>
 3. *Strangers in the Land*, a 6 week Bible study dealing with immigration issues, developed by Sojourner Magazine. <https://sojo.net/node/216822>

Study United Church of Christ Teachings on Immigration

Some congregations may find it helpful to learn about United Church of Christ teachings on immigration. Our denomination has a long history of being on the forefront of calling for justice on many issues.

Pronouncements and Resolutions Passed by General Synods

Pronouncements are a big deal. A *pronouncement* is a statement of Christian conviction on a matter of moral or social principle and has been adopted by a two-thirds vote of a General Synod. This is the strongest statement a General Synod can make.

Justice in Immigration

In 1981, General Synod XIII passed a pronouncement entitled *Justice in Immigration* (<http://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/JUSTICE-IMMIGRATION.pdf>). The summary¹ reads:

[This] pronouncement calls attention to global and domestic implications of United States immigration policy (both governmental and private sector) and recommends policies which call for:

- public and private practices which reduce worldwide pressures on persons to migrate
- a more open, flexible and humane United States immigration and refugee policy
- more humane administration of immigration law protecting civil rights

¹ Reformatted for readability.

- protection of undocumented persons during transition to new policies and laws
- greater involvement of the United Church of Christ in aiding immigrants in resettlement

General Synod Resolutions

Since then, General Synods have passed many resolutions speaking to the church on the vital humanitarian issues that surround immigration justice.

- *In Support of Salvadoran Refugees* (GS 13, 1981):
<http://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/SALVADORAN-REFUGEES.pdf>
- *Affirming the Dignity and Self-Worth of Immigrants* (GS 20, 1995)
<http://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/SELF-WORTH-IMMIGRANTS.pdf>
- *Border Justice Issues* (GS 22, 1999)
<http://www.ucc.org/justice/immigration/pdfs/Border-Justice.pdf>
- *Emergency resolution to end the death of migrants on the United States-Mexico border by offering water in Christ's Name* (GS 23, 2001)
<http://uccfiles.com/synod/resolutions/EMERGENCY-RESOLUTION-TO-END-THE-DEATH-OF-MIGRANTS-ON-THE.pdf>
- *Call for a more humane US immigration policy; end immigrant deaths; support immigrant communities* (GS 26, 2007): border enforcement strategy is inhumane and ineffective, guarantee rights to immigrant workers.
<http://uccfiles.com/synod/resolutions/immigration-final.pdf>
- *Resolution Supporting Compassionate Comprehensive Immigration Reform and the Protection of the Human Rights of Immigrants* (GS 29, 2013)
<http://uccfiles.com/pdf/g29-14.pdf>
- *On Becoming an Immigrant Welcoming Church* (GS 31, 2017): Declares the General Synod and ministries of the national setting as Immigrant Welcoming, and encourages conferences, associations, and local churches to do the same.
<http://synod.uccpages.org/res11.html>

Resolutions Passed by the Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ

- *Resolution on Immigration Enforcement* (St Anthony Park UCC, 2007): In protest of 2006 Worthington, MN ICE Swift meat packing plant raid

- *Resolution in Support of the Interfaith Platform on Immigration Reform* (Justice & Witness Ministries, 2011)
- *Resolution in Support of Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en Lucha* (Justice and Witness Ministries, 2011)
- *Resolution in support of an end to the DHS/ICE daily detention level mandate* (MNUCC Immigration Team, 2014)
http://uccmn.org/uccinmn/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/2014-Resolution-in-support-of-an-end-to-the-DHS.ICE-daily-detention-level-mandate_FINAL.pdf
- *Resolution Calling on the Fifty-Fourth Conference of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ and its Congregations to Covenant as Immigrant Welcoming Congregations* (MNUCC Immigration Team, 2016)
<http://uccmn.org/uccinmn/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Immigration-Resolution-As-Approved.pdf>

Explore Immigration in Worship and Communion

Worship is an intentional communal thin spot. It is a place where we intentionally prepare ourselves to encounter God. Within the worship experience lives transform, questions reframe, priorities reorder, and purposes realign to God's purpose through the power of the Holy Spirit. Communities which explore their connections to their immigrant sisters and brothers within the context of worship will naturally form deeper connections with the people and the stories they uncover there.

For this reason, we found it important to include a resources that congregations can use to facilitate worship planning. These resources are available through the United Church of Christ and our ecumenical partners.

Prayers, Litanies, and Liturgies

- Immigration Justice Worship Resources, United Church of Christ
http://www.ucc.org/justice_immigration_worship_index This page contains prayers, litanies, complete liturgies, and sermon examples compiled over the last decade.
- A collection of prayers regarding immigration from various Christian denominations*
<http://www.uua.org/immigration/worship/index.shtml>
- Responsive readings, prayer and scripture resources*
<http://www.welcometheimmigrant.org/worship/>
- Worship Tools (Litanies for the uprooted, refugees and asylees)
<http://lirs.org/worship-tools/>

Hymns from the New Century Hymnal

- Tú has venido a la orilla (You have come down to the Lakeshore), (173)
- De Colores (Sing of Colors), (402)
- We are Marching in the Light of God, (526)

- We Are Not Our Own, (564)
- Lead Us From Death to Life, (581) * Based on 2 John 1:3; Isa. 2:2-4
- Through all the world a hungry Christ (587)
- How Beautiful, Our Spacious Skies (594)* Affirmation of the Americas, indigenous and immigrant peoples
- This is My Song (591)* Hope for lasting peace & justice among nations, peoples and cultures
- O for a World (575)* Based on Acts 4:32-35; 1 Cor. 1:26-31; 1 Pet. 3:8-12
- Profetiza, Pueblo mío (You Shall Prophecy, All My People) (578)* Solidarity with the oppressed and the call to build a loving, just society
- For the Healing of the Nations (576)* Justice, peace and human rights
- Lead On Eternal Sovereign (573)* Prayer, preparation and strength for the work of justice
- Spirit of Jesus, If I Love My Neighbor (590)* Based on Rom. 13:8-14.

Build Relationships Through Face to Face Encounters

Relationship building is part of our calling as Christians. It is a cornerstone of our journey with God. It is in the encounter with others that we meet God more fully. When you get to know people through face to face encounters and hear their struggles, relationships are cemented. As we meet, encounter and grow in our relationships with the immigrants in our community, state, and country, we can build a movement for justice together with our immigrant brothers and sisters.

Minnesota is home to the largest Somali, Liberian, and Hmong populations outside their native countries. We also have migrants from Mexico, Central America, and other parts of Asia and Africa. At this point in time, about 75% of our Minnesota immigrants live in the 7 county metro area with the other 25% living in other areas throughout Minnesota.

There are several ways to get to know your immigrant neighbors. One way is through visiting the religious communities where they worship. Attending a local function sponsored by immigrants in the area is a good way to begin to learn about their culture and become supportive of them. A third way to encounter and support our immigrant brothers and sisters is by working together on immigrant justice. The following list are a few of the groups that you can have face to face encounters with as together you work on justice issues.

- **Navigate MN** (works for immigration justice and education equity)
<http://www.navigatemn.org/>
- **Manos a la Obra**: a Mexican American women's cooperative in south Minneapolis, MN where Latino women make jewelry together and support each other and sponsor events such as Queen for a Day to provide support for Latino women in their community. Email the Immigration Team for more information: uccmn.immigration@gmail.com

- **CLUES:** a resource and service center run by Latinos for Latinos <http://www.clues.org>
- **MIRAC** (Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Committee): Sign up on their Facebook page to learn about actions they take regarding the rights of immigrants, Latinos and others working together for justice. <https://mirac1.wordpress.com/contact/>
- **ISAIAH:** this organization has immigration justice as a key component of their justice work. 100 diverse churches work together. Contact Catalina Morales at ISAIAH for more information. <https://isaiahmn.org/contact/>
- Volunteer to work with an **ESL** group in your community as you tutor people in learning English. Check with your local school's Community Education program. Many Community Education programs offer ESL classes through Adult Basic Education.
- **Conversations with Friends (CWF)** training is provided to enable you to be a visitor of immigrants in various detention centers in Minnesota. For more information, contact Steve Kramer at stevekraemer@outlook.com
- **MN Council of Churches:** this is a good place to learn about refugees and consider co-sponsoring a refugee family. Your church can help assist them in becoming part of your community. (612.874.8605) <http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices/>
- Contact the **Minnesota Conference Immigration Team** to provide more local resources to enable your engagement with immigrants. Contact uccmn.immigration@gmail.com

Create an Immersion Experience

The best way to get excited about becoming an immigrant welcoming congregation is through meeting and getting to know our immigrant brothers and sisters. Where two or three are gathered, there is God in the midst of us. This has surely been the case for those who have had the opportunity to spend time getting to know immigrants. Most of our MN Conference congregations do not have any or many immigrants who are a part of our congregations. There are other ways to engage with the immigrant community.

- Visit a church where immigrants attend and begin conversations.
- Become a Conversation With Friends visitor and have meaningful visits with those immigrants who are detained.
- Volunteer to be an ESL teacher or assistant
- Partner with indigenous and marginalized communities around the world (including two Native American communities in North America.) Through immersion, participants engage with community members and support projects created and led by the community. Contact:
 - Grace Janssen: grace@xperitas.org Community Partnership Program Manager
 - Rachel Cagle: rachel@xperitas.org, Senior Program Manager. Rachel attends UCCNB.
- Make a border trip where you can meet immigrants and learn their difficulties in escaping the violence in their country as well as what they have experienced since arriving.
 - Contact Vicki Schmidt at Abriendo Fronteras: <http://www.openingborders.com/> for trips to the El Paso/ Ciudad Juarez border

- Contact Borderlinks at <http://www.borderlinks.org/> for info about trips to the border at Tucson and Nogales, AZ.
- Visit communities that have large immigrant populations.
 - Worthington, MN St. Mary's Catholic Church
<https://www.facebook.com/Saint-Marys-Church-Iglesia-Catolica-de-Santa-M>
 - Pelican Rapids is a town in northern Minnesota with a diverse population from Europe, Africa, and Latin America that was attracted there with the opening up of a turkey plant. Through the loving work of 5 women, this community was mobilized to welcome immigrants to their town and make them a vibrant part of their community. Visit there during Pelican Days and witness this amazing community. <http://www.pelicanrapidschamber.com/pelicanfest.html>
- Contact the Immigration team (uccmn.immigration@gmail.com) for more ideas

Learn about Root Causes for Immigration

Our media does not provide a deep analysis of why immigrants are seeking asylum or refugee status in the US or specifically in MN. It is vital for the understanding of why migrants are arriving to know the forces that push them out of their countries. There is a long history of the United States relationships with countries throughout the world that have led to migrants seeking refugee or asylum status. Through our trade policies, such as NAFTA and CAFTA, through our history of multinational corporations stripping other countries of resources that has led to forcing people off their lands, and through wars, migrants risk their lives to seek safety and economic security here in the US. Learning about these factors is important for increasing our understanding of why migrants are here and enabling us to then be sharers of that truth with others.

Here are some potential resources to deepen your church's' understanding of why migrants are arriving in MN.

Note: Remember to check with Resource Center for Churches (see page 2). They may have or may be able to obtain these resources at no cost.

- What are the Roots Causes of Migration?:
<https://www.weareoneamerica.org/root-causes-migration-fact-sheet>
- Rethinking the Immigration Debate: Addressing the Root Causes of Migration.
<http://www.rop.org/wp-content/uploads/Root%20Causes%20of%20Mexican%20Migration.pdf>
- *Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants* by David Bacon
<https://www.amazon.com/Illegal-People-Globalization-Criminalizes-Immigrants/dp/0807042307>
- *Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal* by Aviva Chomsky
<https://www.amazon.com/Undocumented-How-Immigration-Became-Illegal/dp/0807001678>

- *The Right to Stay Home: How US Policy Drives Mexican Migration* by David Bacon
<https://www.amazon.com/Right-Stay-Home-Mexican-Migration/dp/0807001619>
- *Teaching Immigration with the Immigrant Stories Project*: helps students learn about aspects of United States immigration, past and present, through the personal experiences of immigrants and refugees. The videos are 3 to 5 minutes long, so students may watch several in class.
<http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/teachingimmigration.html>
- Invite the Conference Immigration to your church to do a presentation about the root causes of migration. uccmn.immigration@gmail.com

Explore Immigration in Documentary & Film

A good way for a church to begin their journey of learning more about the story of our current migrants is through the viewing of a documentary or film. Two films have been produced in Minnesota about local communities and the third was produced by Minnesotans.

- **Abrazos** by Luis Argueta. This is the story of how a church in Worthington, MN with a large Guatemalan population made it possible for their US citizen children to travel to Guatemala to meet their extended families. See the trailer on Vimeo.
- **Arrival: Finding Home** This documentary follows five women who have migrated to Austin, Minnesota from various parts of the world. Learn about their journeys to Austin and their experiences in becoming members of that community.
- **Gold Fever** a documentary film made by Minnesotans with support from the UCC about how our multinational corporations have led to environmental and community destruction in Guatemala, pushing the eventual migration of many. <http://www.goldfevermovie.com>. Contact Thom Haines to show this film and lead a discussion afterwards.
Thom.haines@comcast.net
- **Well-Founded Fear** (2000) takes its title from the formal definition of a refugee under the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, as a person who deserves protection, "owing to a *well-founded fear* of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion." The film analyzes the US asylum process by following several asylum applicants and asylum officers through actual INS interviews.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Well-Founded_Fear
- **The Other Side of Immigration** Based on over 700 interviews in Mexican towns where about half the population has left to work in the United States, *The Other Side of Immigration* asks why so many Mexicans come to the U.S. and what happens to the families and communities they leave behind. <http://www.theothersideofimmigration.com/>
- **Immigrants for Sale** Countless lives of undocumented immigrants are being taken and sold for billions of dollars. Watch the disturbing details unfold and listen to the first-hand accounts of the real cost of private prisons. (Available on YouTube for free)
<http://www.bravenewfilms.org/immigrantsforsale/>

Through the work of the Rev. John Guttermann's immigration ministry, churches and communities in Minnesota have been on the journey of growing in their understanding and support of refugees and immigrants in our country. Rev. Guttermann procured licenses to show numerous films and documentaries about immigration which he shared with congregations in Minnesota and beyond. Below is a list of some of those films. Contact the Conference Immigration Team if you are interested in viewing one of them. We will continue our immigration work in memory of John.

Here is a partial listing:

- **Harvest Of Empire: The Story Of Latinos In America.** Based on the landmark book, *Harvest of Empire* by award-winning journalist Juan González: a feature-length documentary that reveals the direct connection between the long history of U.S. intervention in Latin America and the immigration crisis we face today. 93 minutes.
- **Papers** - Stories of Undocumented Youth. Interweaves the history of immigration in the United States with the stories of undocumented students from several nations. 88 minutes (can be adapted to 63 minutes, shorter version recommended).
- **Which Way Home** (2010; the 2010 Emmy Award For Outstanding Informational Programming The Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award). Which Way Home shows the personal side of immigration through the eyes and stories of children. These are stories of hope and courage, disappointment and sorrow. 83 minutes.
- **Lost in Detention: The Hidden World of Immigration Enforcement (2011)**
more than one million immigrants have been deported since President Obama took office, deportations and detentions have reached record levels. The get-tough policy has brought complaints of abuse and harsh treatment. This PBS Frontline film investigates Obama's enforcement strategies and journeys into the secretive world of immigrant detention, with a penetrating look at who is being detained and what is happening to them. 60 minutes. **Free to view online!**
- **Not In Our Town: Light In The Darkness (2011)**
This documentary follows a community in crisis after the fatal attack on a local immigrant resident. Stunned by the violence, diverse community stakeholders openly confront the crime and the divisive atmosphere, and commit to ongoing actions to prevent future hate crimes and intolerance. 60 minutes.
- **Brother Towns:** a story of two towns linked by immigration, family, and work: Jacaltenango, a highland Maya town in Guatemala; and Jupiter, a coastal resort town where many Jacaltecos have settled in Florida. A great 'first film' that explores why people come and the different responses of people in Jupiter, Florida to the immigrants in their community. 58 minutes.
- **AbUSed:** An important film about the Postville immigration raid and the aftermath; describes what happened, its effects on the Postville community and the immigrants and their families; includes interviews with participants and visits individuals who were deported after their return to Guatemala (including citizen children born in the US). 97 minutes.

- **Dying to Live: A Migrant's Journey (2006)** An excellent film introducing us to migrants, why they come to the United States, and the dangerous journey many make to cross our southern border. 33 minutes.
- **Who Is Dayani Cristal?** An anonymous body in the Arizona desert sparks the beginning of a real-life human drama. The search for identity leads us back across a continent to seek out the people left behind and the meaning of a mysterious tattoo.

Hold a Small Group or Congregation Wide Book Study

There are many helpful books written about the immigrants that have come to the United States. Some of those books detail the policies that the US has put in place which have led to migration for thousands of people. Others detail what the journey is like for migrants as they seek safety and economic security. Or you may be interested in learning about the experience of those without papers and are forced to live in the shadows. You can also read about the contributions that immigrants make to our communities. If you have people who like to read in your congregation, you may want to conduct a book discussion based on one of the following books. Here is a list to get you started, note that the first one is written by a Minnesotan about the experience of immigrants settling in Pelican Rapids, Minnesota.

- *Faces of Change* by Joan Jarvis Ellison (the story of immigrants from around the world coming to work in a turkey factory, this book explores the challenges for the migrants as well as the challenges for those living in this small rural Minnesota community. Read how five women mobilized a community to offer an extravagant welcome to hundreds of immigrants.
- *Green Card Youth Voices*, a book of stories of young people recently arrived in Minnesota from around the world, compiled by Tea Rozman Clark.
- *Detained and Deported: Stories of Immigrant Families Under Fire*, Margaret Regan
- *Open Borders: the Case Against Immigration Controls* by Teresa Hayter
- *The Devil's Highway: A True Story* by Luis Alberto Urrea
- *Tailings of War and Peace* by Stephen Law
- *Our God is Undocumented: Biblical Faith and Immigration Justice* by Chad Myers and Matthew Colwell
- *The Politics of Immigration* by Jane Guskin and David L. Wilson
- *The Right to Stay Home: How US policy Drives Mexican Migration* by David Bacon
- *One Family Under God: Immigration Politics and Progressive Religions in America* by Grace Yukich
- *Enrique's Journey: The Story of a Boy's Dangerous Odyssey to Reunite with His Mother* by Sonia Nazario
- *No Longer Strangers: The Practice of Radical Hospitality* by Rev. Wendy Taylor a UCC pastor whose passion for working with immigrants begins to ignite a fire in her church and community and leads to the creation of a new organization with broad community support.

- *Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal* by Aviva Chomsky
- *Working in the Shadows: A Year of Doing Jobs Most Americans Won't Do* by Gabriel Thompson follow this reporter as he goes undercover for a year to better understand the life of immigrants living in the shadows.
- *They Are Us: Lutherans and Immigration* by Stephen Bowman and Ralston Deffenbaugh
- *The Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle
- *The River Flows North** by Graciela Limon, Publisher: Arte Público Press (2009) ISBN: 9781558855854)
- *Try to Remember* by Iris Gomez, Publisher: Grand Central Publishing (2010) ISBN: 9780446556194
- *Just Coffee: Caffeine with a Conscious** by Mark Adams and Tommy Bassett III, Publisher: Just Trade Center, ISBN: 978-0981797601

The Somali Experience

- Abdullahi, Mohamed Diriye. *Culture and Customs of Somalia*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001.* General reference on the culture and customs of Somalia, written by a native Somali. High school / Adult.
- Aktar, Nasreen. *Samira's Eid / Samiira iyo Ciiddii*. London: Mantra Publishing Ltd., 1999.* An introduction to the Muslim holiday of Eid, in both English and Somali. Good for grades K-3.
- Ayanle, Nadifo. *A Somali Alphabet / Alfabeetadda Soomaaliyeed*. Portland, ME: Maine Humanities Commission, 2001.* Bilingual book links stories and memories of Somalia with the letters of the Somali alphabet.
- Fox, Mary Virginia. *Somalia*. New York: Children's Press, 1996.* Facts and photos provide an introduction to Somalia. Good for grades 3-6.
- Hassan, Marian A. *Dhegdheer: A Scary Somali Folktale*. St. Paul, MN : Minnesota Humanities Commission, Somali Bilingual Book Project, c.2007.* This bilingual book tells a traditional Somali folktale. Good for grades K-3.
- Hussein, Ikram. *Teenage Refugees from Somalia Speak Out*. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc., 1997.* Teenage Somali refugees tell their heartbreaking stories of fleeing their homes and moving to a new country. Good for grades 4 and up.
- Mirreh, Abdirahman. *From an Acacia Landscape: Poetry 1983-1993*. Great Britain, Haan Publishing, 1996.*
- Roble, Abdi and Doug Rutledge. *The Somali Diaspora: A Journey Away*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.* Photo essays show the lives of Somalis in Somalia, Minneapolis, and Columbus, Ohio.

The Hmong Experience

- Cha, Dia. *Dia's Story Cloth: The Hmong People's Journey of Freedom*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 2001.* The story of story of Dia, a young Hmong refugee, is told through a traditional Hmong story cloth, woven by Dia's aunt and uncle. Good for grades 1-6.

- Donnelly, Nancy D. *Changing Lives of Refugee Hmong Women*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997.* Female Hmong refugees in Seattle, and their changing roles in society.
- Fadiman, Anne. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997.* This non-fiction book explores the conflict between Hmong traditional beliefs and the medical system in the U.S.
- Hillmer, Paul. *A People's History of the Hmong*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2009.* A narrative history of the worldwide community of Hmong people.
- Moua, Mai Neng, Ed. *Bamboo Among the Oaks: Contemporary Writing by Hmong Americans*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2002.* An anthology of poetry, essays, and short stories by first and second generation Hmong Americans.
- Symonds, Patricia V. *Calling In The Soul: Gender And The Cycle Of Life In A Hmong Village*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005.* This book examines Hmong beliefs regarding the cycle of life and how those beliefs are expressed in practices surrounding childbirth, marriage and death.
- Vang, Chia Youyee. *Hmong in Minnesota*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2008.* A brief history of the arrival of the Hmong in Minnesota in the 1970s, their struggle to build community in a new land, and the challenges they face today.
- Yang, Kao Kalia. *The Latehomecomer: a Hmong Family Memoir*. Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 2008.* Kao Kalia Yang, a young Hmong Minnesotan, tells the tale of her family's escape from Laos to refugee camps in Thailand in the 1970s, her birth in Ban Vinai camp, and the family's struggles in the U.S. after relocating there when Yang was six.

Prayerful Action: Get Involved in a Local Campaign

“and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?”

Micah 6:8 NRSV

It is in the doing of justice that we experience the God of justice walking with us. We are called to action! There are many ways that you can get involved in seeing that justice is done for our immigrant brothers and sisters. One of those is through prayerful action.

1. **Hold or join a prayer vigil.** For five years on the first Sunday of the month different faith communities have led a vigil in front of the Ramsey County Detention Center. There are also detention centers in Sherburne County, in Elk River, Freeborn County Jail in Alberta Lea, and the Carver County Jail in Chaska. Contact the Immigration team for how to get permission to undertake this.
2. **Stay Informed.** During January through May each year, the MN Legislature looks at bills that are being proposed, oftentimes bills that involve our immigrant brothers and sisters are among them. Keep abreast of what is happening in the Legislative session. This

year there is a bill that will decide if a for profit prison will be opened in Appleton, MN. Join others in campaigning against this. For several years the Legislature has debated whether or not to grant driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants. We continue this campaign. .

3. **Call your legislators.** Contact the I Team to get on a list of people interested in receiving action alerts to call your Legislators or Congressional Representatives about issues that are being considered by the State Legislature or Congress. If you want training in how to make contacts, the I Team will be happy to assist you.

Create a Covenant

When your congregation has decided that they want to embrace becoming an immigrant welcoming congregation, developing a covenant is the next important step to take. A covenant in our faith tradition is an agreement that God makes with God's people. It indicates what God will do and what God's faithful followers are to do. This is not something to be taken lightly. It is a sacred arrangement. Create a covenant that fits what your church sees as God's call to them. Each covenant will look unique to that particular congregation. It is important that the covenant has "feet." In other words, when your congregation is ready to declare itself an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation, your covenant should include what your congregation will do to continue that covenantal journey.

Examples of covenants adopted by Minnesota UCC congregations:

Mayflower Community Congregational Church

Mayflower Community Congregational United Church of Christ has been transformed by opportunities to walk beside and learn from immigrants who have come to our church, who live in our neighborhoods and who we have met at the border. We covenant with God and each other to continue to seek out, welcome and deepen relationships with our immigrant brothers and sisters and to work together with them to see that immigrant justice is done.

The following is supportive to the above covenant.

Resources from the Scriptures

Leviticus 19:33b-34 (Jewish and Christian traditions)

The immigrant who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the immigrant as you love yourself for you were an immigrant in the land of Egypt.

Surah 4:36 (Quran, Muslim Tradition)

Do good unto your parents, and near of kin, and unto orphans, and the needy, and the neighbor from among your own peoples, and the neighbor who is a stranger, and the friend by your side, and the wayfarer and your servant.

Some Things We Can Continue to Do

1. Pray for immigrants, that just laws are passed that will support immigrants, such as a driver's license for all
2. Continue to learn about the root causes of migration
3. Speak out against injustices that immigrants face such as exploitive labor policies
4. Support congregations where immigrants facing unfair deportation are in sanctuary.
5. Invite immigrants to share their stories here at Mayflower
6. Support local initiatives by immigrants

Appendix: Example Immigrant Welcoming and Sanctuary Resolutions

Robbinsdale United Church of Christ

Resolution Declaring Sanctuary

WHEREAS, the congregation of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ committed to discern becoming an Immigrant Welcoming congregation at our January 2017 annual meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Coordinating Council of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ committed to offering to provide sanctuary support and refuge to immigrants, regardless of their legal status, at our December 2014 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the congregation of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ has been working with representatives of the local and national sanctuary church movement for two years; and

WHEREAS, we are a welcoming community that follows the teachings of Jesus and calls upon scripture to guide us in his teachings, "When the alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." Leviticus 19:33-34; and

WHEREAS, immigrant and refugee families are our friends and neighbors who enrich our lives with their very presence and help to make up the colorful tapestry of US society; and

WHEREAS, we have affirmed our covenant "working for peace and justice, sharing God's Love in the world." And in so doing we declare our support for opposing the powers of injustice; and

WHEREAS, the current immigration laws, enforced by the US, serve to break up families, both traditional and non-traditional, by restricting free travel between countries; and

WHEREAS, a militarized border control strategy has historically never been successful in stemming the flow of immigrants; and

WHEREAS, many undocumented immigrants who have paid taxes and lived in the US for many years have been forcibly deported without the notification of their families, put on common carriers to their country of origin, or worse yet, have been detained for years without being formally charged with a crime and without access to legal counsel; and

WHEREAS, because Robbinsdale United Church of Christ has many members who are passionately working for immigrants' rights, and it is right and just to support them in hearing and responding to the call of God to faithful action; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, Robbinsdale United Church of Christ, having completed a prayerful discernment process with study, listening and discussion, has decided to become a sanctuary congregation and will joyously proclaim this in public; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Robbinsdale United Church of Christ Church Council will charge a task force, named the New Sanctuary Task Force (NSTF), to oversee our involvement in the national and local Sanctuary Movement; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Robbinsdale United Church of Christ will petition national governing bodies, US or international, to pass into law and uphold just immigration policies; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Robbinsdale United Church of Christ Church will commit to symbolic and public action in support of immigrant and refugee rights and will continue to be a witnessing presence at local federal detention and processing center for immigrants and refugees for as long as it is deemed necessary by the NSTF; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Robbinsdale United Church of Christ will maintain relationships with liaisons who represent the national and local Sanctuary Movement, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, and other member congregations, for the purpose of guidance and direction concerning how best to work in concert, to further our common goals of advancing the cause of immigrants and refugees; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Robbinsdale United Church of Christ will continue to educate and inform its congregation with respect to immigration issues and to the plight of immigrants and refugees; and

FINALLY LET IT BE RESOLVED, that Robbinsdale United Church of Christ Church with careful consideration, will offer hospitality to person/s from any country or faith perspective who is in danger of being deported and thus being separated from their families (which may be characterized as either traditional or chosen), if the need presents itself, as the Senior Minister deems appropriate, with periodic reports by the Senior Minister to the Church Coordinating Council regarding actions taken pursuant to this resolution.

Resolution to Discern Becoming an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation

Background

Robbinsdale United Church of Christ has periodically focused on such topics as

- the stranger and the sojourner
- theologies of radical welcome and hospitality
- communion theologies that challenge us consider who isn't at the table.

We have also intentionally sought and uncovered how our country's immigration policy has torn into the fabric of our very own community. This exploration led us to declare sanctuary at the 2016 annual meeting.

Recent events have redirected our attention to what Martin Luther King called the "fierce urgency of now;" a time when our immigrant families fall under increased threat, virulent attacks, blind rage, and direct affronts to their dignity. In this context we now look at the message of the wider church; this message is a call to Covenant of radical welcome; it is a call for us to covenant as an Immigrant Welcoming Community.

When we look to Biblical models of covenant, we gain the following insights.

1. The making of sacred covenant is an intentional, prayerful and deliberate process. It takes time and attention.
2. Covenant coaxes us more readily into conversation, connection and relationship.
3. Covenant making does not preclude action and engagement; rather it invites it.
4. Covenant making leads to covenant keeping, an intentional and persistent tending of trust and relationships.
5. While the cup of covenant models sacrifice; it also overflows with promise, grace, and forgiveness.

In the spirit of nudging us into covenant, the Mission and Identity Vitality Area and the Coordinating Council recommend the following resolution for consideration:

RESOLVED that Robbinsdale United Church of Christ dedicates itself to a period of discernment and exploration including

1. uncovering more of the immigrant stories in our community;
2. a deeper engagement with the immigrants among us;
3. further reflection on the theologies of hospitality, connection, healing and compassion as they relate to the stranger and the sojourner;
4. discovering practices of redemptive resistance to counter the effects of estrangement and alienation increasingly felt in vulnerable communities;

RESOLVED that the Robbinsdale United Church of Christ invites the Minnesota Conference UCC Immigration Team to assist us in our discernment; and

RESOLVED that the Coordinating Council may seek volunteers to draft a covenant for congregational consideration; and

RESOLVED that the congregation will consider entering into an Immigrant Welcoming covenant at its 2018 annual meeting or at a special meeting called for this purpose.

Document Revision History

Date	Author/s	Revisions
5/14/2016	Nathan Syverson Diane Haines	Initial draft taken from document of same title from the South West Conference found on the UCC Justice and Witness Immigration Page.
5/19/2016	Nathan Syverson	Additions made to book list
2/13/2017	Diane Haines	Film added, updated info on CWF and film introduction. Diane Haines
2/22/2017	Nathan Syverson	Update to Robbinsdale UCC Immigrant Welcoming Covenant; Addition of Sanctuary Resolution
5/25/2017	Nathan Syverson	Reorganized sections, cosmetic edits, Addition of RUCC Immigrant Welcoming Discernment Resolution
6/17/2017	Nathan Syverson	Added Resource Center for Churches, minor update of forward.

9/21/2017	Nathan Syverson Diane Haines	Verified links, added resources.
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