

The Potential for the UUCGT to become a Sanctuary?

There are many facets to consider before our congregation and/or our building could become a refuge for those in fear of deportation.

Sanctuary has many aspects. The concept is one that offers availability for safe communication and meeting, safe support for other organizations involved, compiling of resources available to the refugee and those intending to have a positive influence to assist. It also can provide understanding and interpretation of the law and legal suggestions.

The UUA offers many guidelines and services, help in becoming a Sanctuary Congregation. I cannot outline them all here but can incorporate their internet links for your reference.

This link is a key guide for how and why to begin- <http://uucsj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Sanctuary-Toolkit-2017.pdf>. As we learn more and move to Sanctuary, we could consider signing the pledge, as individuals, and later as a congregation, to help the cause of protecting and preserving human rights to all of our neighbors. <https://action.groundswell-mvmt.org/petitions/we-pledge-to-resist-deportation-and-discrimination-through-sanctuary>.

There are many UUA guides in this link: <https://www.uua.org/lovesresists/sanctuary/physical-sanctuary>. Here is another very excellent guide:

<https://bjconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Sanctuary-FAQ-FINAL1.pdf>

The most important document to read and consider is <https://www.nwirp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/ACLU-Sanctuary-FAQ-March-2017.pdf>

I have spoken with Marcelo, the attorney associated with Justice For Our Neighbors. At this point now, he does not know of a need to harbor an immigrant who is in fear of deportation. He is glad to know of our interest and would work us when/if the time comes.

I have also contacted the First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor which is a Sanctuary Church. Please see this wonderful FAQ page: <https://uuaa.org/index.php/social-justice/faith-in-action/immigration-action-coalition/sanctuary-faqs>

There are three imminent issues to consider. One is the need or urgency now, and second our legal liability. The other is considering the more recent practice by ICE of penalizing, with a large fine, those organizations resisting the ICE raids and deportation of people. The subject needs research, with our principles in mind, to help any and all people where need and fear exists.

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