

Ideas for First Baptist Participation in the New Sanctuary Movement

General Activities

1. Adopting a policy of nondiscrimination and of welcoming and helping persons in need, regardless of immigration or citizenship status, race, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation, etc.
2. Adopting a policy that respects privacy by not asking FBC members, or members of the public who interact with the congregation, about their immigration status, and adhering to a policy of not recording any information about any individual's immigration status.
3. Providing shelter, food, or other services to a broad set of people, including citizens and noncitizens, regardless of immigration status.
4. Speaking out on behalf of immigrants' rights, and expressing support for keeping families together and reforming the immigration laws to make it possible for undocumented immigrants to adjust to a lawful status. Supporting or working with local and state governmental authorities to adopt legislation and regulations that protect immigrants and refugees.
5. Making a public statement that all are welcome at FBC, regardless of immigration status, and that FBC will lend assistance to all those in need. Speaking out against injustice.
6. Referring undocumented immigrants (or all persons your congregation is serving) to legal assistance resources, including pro bono immigration legal help. Holding legal information sessions, hosting legal clinics, and making referrals for social services.
7. Exercising the right to refuse to consent to law enforcement officers coming into or searching non-public areas of the church, and demanding to see a lawful warrant signed by a federal judge. Identifying non-public areas of the church. Develop response plan to ICE presence. Provide guidance to staff.
8. Providing information to members about opportunities to get involved in the Rapid Response Network in Dane County to respond to ICE actions. This could involve being on-call to respond to assistance requests or notifications of immigrant raids. Other examples of tasks include: mass protest, faith leader engagement, family support, food and water, marshalls, media, legal observers, civil disobedience. Members could be present to observe, bear witness, pray, photograph/video, etc. Other follow-up activities to a deportation action: petitions, rallies, community events, media outreach, etc.
9. Participating in a communications network to be notified of potential or actual raids and to mobilize members to participate in actions to oppose the raids.
10. Informing the congregation about immigration policies, actions, other background information, and current news.
11. Connecting with immigrant rights organizations, legal support organizations, etc.
12. Forming an action team to lead First Baptist's response to the immigration crisis.

Activities in Support of Sanctuary

1. Authorizing the Church Council or some designated group to make public statements in support of the sanctuary movement.
2. Publicly joining with other congregations supporting sanctuary.
3. Providing support services to congregations offering sanctuary (provide meals, provide support to family members, provide financial support, etc.).

References: ACLU "Sanctuary Congregations and Harboring FAQs" and other materials from New Sanctuary Movement