

The Clergy and Faith Leaders in Warren County and Bowling Green lament the illegal arrest, detention, and incarceration of Ernesto Manuel-Andres by the Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. We demand his immediate release on humanitarian, legal, and moral grounds.

Ernesto has followed all legal requirements as set forth by our country on the path to legal citizenship in the United States. He entered the country as an unaccompanied minor, was processed by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and obtained Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) status that allows him to be in the United States **legally**.

Ernesto has followed the rule of law; ICE has not.

No matter our faith, each of us is committed to recognize the dignity of every human being and to follow the laws of this land. Ernesto's dignity and legal rights have been violated since being kidnapped by ICE Agents on June 4th. His right to habeas corpus has been denied as the federal government has yet to offer him due process, an inalienable right for ALL in this country.

Ernesto has not committed any crime. He is being illegally detained. The rights that we are all entitled to, that Ernesto is entitled to, are being willfully violated. The United States was founded on principles of faith, including liberty and justice for all. None of us can stand idly by as these principles, so dear to all of us, are blatantly and willfully violated.

Those of us who follow Jesus are motivated to speak out because Scripture tells us, "Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt." (Exodus 23:9) And elsewhere, when asked what was most important, Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27). The very words of our faith call for us to stand and demand our government follow the rule of law and the guidance of God.

We ask all of our citizens commit to the following actions:

- Regular vigils, praying for Ernesto's immediate release;
- Fasting (as we are able) to suffer alongside Ernesto while he remains illegally imprisoned in a jail cell in Louisiana;
- Advocating publicly to and with our elected leaders at the local, state, and federal levels to end this unconstitutional and unconscionable wrong perpetrated against Ernesto Manuel-Andres.

Please join us in prayer at Christ Episcopal Church (1215 State Street) on Tuesday, June 17 at 7pm and at Broadway United Methodist Church (1323 Melrose Street) at 7pm on Thursday, June 19. Friday is a regular day of fasting in many of our traditions, and so, on Friday, June 20 from 8am until 6pm, please join us in fasting as a sign of our commitment to the relief of Ernesto's suffering.

Ernesto Manuel-Andres is a child of God and a child of Bowling Green. May we work for his liberty and justice. May we welcome him home soon.

#FreeErnesto

The Rev. Megan Huston, First Christian Church  
The Rev. Dr. Steven Pankey, Christ Episcopal Church  
The Rev. Kellie Mysinger, Christ Episcopal Church  
The Rev. Dr. Adam Shourds, Broadway United Methodist Church  
The Rev. Louis Tagliaboschi, Broadway United Methodist Church  
The Rev. Laura Vincent, Broadway United Methodist Church  
The Rev. Joe Patterson, Broadway United Methodist Church  
The Rev. Jason Brown, Broadway United Methodist Church  
The Rev. Dr. Kourtney Warren, State Street Baptist Church  
The Reverend John C. Lee, Jr., Mount Zion Baptist Church  
The Right Reverend Terry A. White, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Kentucky  
The Rev. Robert Tackett-Evans, St James United Methodist Church  
The Rev. Ashley Tackett- Evans, Scottsville First United Methodist Church  
The Rev. Craig Tuck, State Street United Methodist Church  
The Rev. Dr. Weston Williams  
The Rev. Philip G. Johnson, Taylor Chapel AME Church  
The Elders of The Presbyterian Church of Bowling Green