



Northern Illinois Conference

OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Commission on Religion and Race



DIY Faithful Action - Loving Our Neighbor Community Engagement Checklist

The United Methodist Social Principles affirm the dignity and rights of all people regardless of origin, urging churches to welcome immigrants and refugees as children of God. The church advocates for just policies, opposes family separation/detention, and calls for providing practical support, such as housing, healthcare, and education. [Article](#)

The DIY (Do-it-yourself) format encourages each congregation to organize an event that works for their church while bearing witness to God's commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself." This checklist is created to assist churches with planning an event that acknowledges the humanity and dignity of our immigrant siblings. Below are some things to consider in organizing your community engagement event.

- **Recruit a Planning Team**
 - The Planning Team may consist of members from your church or you may want to engage other United Methodist Churches near your church, other community partners, or other faith communities.
- **Decide what type of event you want to do?** Examples are:
 - A Prayer Vigil
 - A Rally or March
 - A "Know Your Rights" Training. Email Rev. Jeremiah Thompson, castiger1@gmail.com.
 - An "Immigration 101" Training. Email Lisa Rogers at jlrogers204@comcast.net.
- **Set a Date and Time** - suggested dates and times are:
 - Annual Conference with the CCORR (Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center), Mon., June 15, 2026
 - International Refugee Day, Sat., June 20, 2026
 - National Immigrant Heritage Month (June)
 - Carry the Annual Conference Rally Home, Sun., September 13, 2026
 - Anytime you choose through October 31, 2026
- **Decide where and with whom you want to organize.** Each local church should decide where it can have maximum visibility. Some ideas are:
 - If your church's location is prominent, gather there. If not, consider joining with another congregation or your cluster in a prominent location.
 - Consider partnering with other faith communities.
 - A Prayer Vigil could be held during church, after church, or during the week.
 - A rally or march could be held as a faithful witness in front of the church or into the streets. The church could walk to a certain place and join with other churches to meet up.



For those with limited mobility, a prayer time could be held in the church to pray for those who are walking.

- **Register your church's participation [here](#).** This will provide the NIC with a list of participating churches.
- **Check with local authorities**
 - Learn if a permit is required
 - Alert law enforcement of your plans
- **Publicize your event immediately**
 - Add the Rally to your church's communication platform and announcements.
 - Create a Press Release (provide a sample press release here) and send it to your local news outlets.
 - The NIC Communications may also post or do an article.
- **Personally Invite Members to Participate**
 - The most effective way to build participation is through personal invitation.
 - The Planning Team should encourage their circle of friends in the church and in the community to attend.
- **Consider a sermon or other means of grounding a prophetic witness** about immigrants and how our Christian faith and Wesleyan social activism call us to engage, support, and witness.
- **Decide how you want to dress.** Options may include:
 - Your "Sunday Best" right after worship
 - Your church's T-Shirts
 - T-Shirts with certain statements about immigrants
- **Decide how to convey your "Love Your Neighbor" message**
 - [Church & Society posters](#)
 - Create your own posters

Church & Society Resources

- [Faith and Facts Card — Immigration to the U.S. pdf](#)
- [Faith and Facts Card — Immigration to the U.S. — Español pdf](#)
- [Immigrant Welcoming Communities pdf](#)

Helpful Articles and Videos

- [When Fear Knocks, the Church Shows Up: A Chicago Story](#) (13 minutes)
- [First Korean Church Hosts Prayer Vigil](#)
- [Faithful Resistance: A Public Witness for Immigrant Justice](#) (4 hours)