



An Advent Call to the People of The United Methodist Church
from the United Methodist Immigration Task Force

December 1, 2025

From November 18-20, 2025, the United Methodist Immigration Task Force (UMITF) met in Los Angeles to recommit to the charge of its collective calling “to lead the church in a prophetic response to refugee and migrant issues by interpreting official policy in light of current realities, coordinating vision, analysis, education and action.”¹ This group of representatives from the Council of Bishops, general agencies, racial-ethnic plans and caucuses, and Methodist-related agencies surveyed the current context through conversation with leaders of United Methodist and ecumenical organizations engaged in resettlement, legal assistance, advocacy, and accompaniment.

Experts shared startling stories of government atrocities including violent apprehension, inhumane detention conditions resulting in over 20 deaths, brutal beatings, disappearance, separation of families and the manipulation of detainees to agree to voluntarily self-deport. Consistently, stories were shared where due process was ignored, which has led minors to present their case to judges without legal counsel. United Methodist lay, clergy and bishops shared their strategies for engaging in advocacy and protection, as well as their efforts to legally and peacefully protest immoral and illegal government actions with migrants.

The UMITF was challenged to respond to the scriptural call to sing with our lives the Magnificat, the song of Mary, that reminds us that we should rejoice because a savior is coming, and that savior is Jesus, the Migrant Messiah. Mary’s song notes that God will uplift the poor and vulnerable and pull down the powerful and rich.²

This Advent season, as we sing “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus,” we invite God to incarnate into our lives, to “move into the neighborhood,” as Eugene Peterson translates, and to make a home in our hearts.³

¹ (“Resolution 4273: Global Migration and the Quest for Justice,” Amended and Readopted 2016, 2024, *The United Methodist Book of Resolutions, 2024*)

² (Luke 1:46-55, NRSV)

³ (John 1:14, *The Message*, Eugene Peterson)

In this spirit, the UMITF calls on the Council of Bishops to continue to publicly lift up the prophetic Gospel witness of welcome and care for the migrant, and encourage and support pastors and lay leaders to do the same. We also call bishops to issue a clarion call to United Methodists in their episcopal areas to further engage immediately and intentionally in ministry with migrants. Bishops and Annual Conference leaders will need to organize their work according to their own ministry context, but some actions could include:

- Hold conference-wide rallies on migration matters.
- Develop safety plans in the event of ICE/CBP raids.
- Support [Immigration Law and Justice Network](#) and its sites.
- Volunteer with [Church World Service](#) and its resettlement offices and affiliates, National Mission Institutions and other community-based organizations directly engaged with immigrant and refugee communities.
- Apply for a [Community Engagement Grant](#) for community-based trainings through the General Board of Global Ministries.
- Apply for an UMCOR [Mustard Seed Migration Grant](#).
- Create rapid response teams in conjunction with the [General Board of Church and Society](#).
- Share the stories of migrants with [United Methodist Communications](#) (UMCOM).
- Utilize [General Commission on Religion and Race \(GCORR\)](#) expertise on appropriate allyship and trauma-informed care.
- Involve migrants in the planning of any migration projects you develop. The [Plans and Caucuses](#) are key resources for connecting with specific migrant populations in your community.
- Utilize educational resources and toolkits found at [ResourceUMC.org/Immigration](#).

As a church, it is time to lean into our call to be a church of welcome; a church that “resists evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves;”⁴ a church that refuses to detain or deport Jesus; a church that magnifies the Lord by singing a song of rejoicing and by acting now. History will decide whether the church stood boldly or backed down. This is our time to live into the kin-dom of God. Make your heart ready, for Jesus, the Refugee Redeemer, is coming.

⁴ Baptismal Covenant I, The United Methodist Book of Worship.