

## **Evanston Sanctuary Community Resolution**

### **Part A. Resolution**

Whereas, our Unitarian Universalist principles call us to affirm and promote the worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and to respect the interdependent web of all existence;

Whereas, our commitment to standing on the side of and answering the call of love, demands that we amplify the voices of those who are most marginalized and oppressed in our communities;

Whereas, we are inspired by the sources of our faith, including the words and deeds of prophetic people, who have resisted slavery, colonization, segregation, as well as housing, education, and employment discrimination, throughout the centuries;

Whereas, our Judeo-Christian roots remind us to love our neighbors as ourselves, to welcome the stranger, and provide radical hospitality and radical inclusion to all who seek the truth in love;

Whereas, our nation was founded by peoples of diverse faiths and backgrounds - many fleeing persecution, some brought forcibly as slaves;

Whereas, beginning on July 1, 1968, and continuing to the present, our nation has adopted severe numerical and other restrictions on legal immigration from the Western Hemisphere, including Mexico and Central America, while simultaneously embracing policies that encourage the immigration and employment of undocumented immigrants;

Whereas, on September 30, 1996, the U.S. Congress enacted the Illegal Immigration and Immigrant Responsibility Act ("IIRIRA"), which made it impossible for many U.S. citizens and lawful permanent resident to obtain legal immigration status for their undocumented spouses, children, parents, and siblings;

Whereas, millions of people subject to oppression, persecution and violence have been forced to flee their countries in search of safety and freedom in the United States;

Whereas, the U.S. Congress has failed to enact comprehensive immigration reform to provide legal status and a pathway to U.S. citizenship for those who are undocumented;

Whereas, President Trump has declared his intention to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ("DACA") program, which President Obama in June 2012 initiated to secure the rights of immigrants brought to the United States as children pending the enactment by the U.S. Congress of comprehensive immigration reform, placing approximately 800,000 DACA recipients at risk of deportation;

Whereas, a lawsuit filed by the State of Texas and a number of other states prevented President Obama from implementing his November 2014 Executive Orders expanding DACA to protect additional immigrants who came to the United States as children and implementing Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (“DAPA”), a new program which would have protected from deportation millions of parents of U.S. citizen and lawful permanent residents;

Whereas, since his inauguration, President Trump has implemented a change in our nation’s immigration enforcement policies that is greatly increasing the number of deportations, threatening the stability of millions of families with undocumented family members at risk of deportation, and causing severe hardships and misery to millions of American citizens, lawful permanent residents and the undocumented members of their families;

Whereas, border security can be achieved without breaking up millions of families with undocumented members;

Whereas, many families in Evanston and surrounding communities have undocumented family members who are under threat of deportation and are experiencing the reality or possibility of family separation or the departure of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to live abroad with their undocumented family members and the resultant hardships;

Whereas, the Sanctuary Movement began in the 1980s as a religious and political response to the deportation and asylum denials of hundreds of thousands of Central American refugees fleeing persecution, violence, and civil unrest;

Whereas, the Sanctuary Movement has been revitalized in recent years to encourage religious and other communal institutions to provide protection to undocumented immigrants and their families;

Whereas, numerous cities, including Evanston, and other local governments have enacted sanctuary resolutions, and our state has enacted the Illinois Trust Act, in order to protect undocumented immigrants and their families and restrict the involvement of local and state law enforcement authorities in immigration law enforcement;

Whereas, in addition to protecting undocumented immigrants and their families, the Unitarian Church of Evanston remains committed to protecting other vulnerable populations who are particularly at risk of prejudice, discrimination and violence, including African Americans, Muslim Americans, LGBTQ Americans, Native Americans, and women.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Unitarian Church of Evanston declares itself an Evanston Sanctuary Community.

LET IT BE RESOLVED that through this declaration, the Unitarian Church of Evanston commits itself to take actions consistent with the values and resources of our community to oppose

xenophobia and to protect undocumented immigrants from deportation and the hardships such deportation will cause them and their families.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the Unitarian Church of Evanston will create its own strategy for engaging in Sanctuary work that best fits the skills and strengths of our community. We also commit to work in partnership with all communities that sign this declaration.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, in committing our community to protect the undocumented immigrants and their families, we will not overlook the needs of other vulnerable populations facing prejudice, discrimination, and violence, and will seek to connect the struggles of undocumented immigrants with the struggles of other vulnerable populations in our country.

### **Part B: Actions that Unitarian Church of Evanston, as a Sanctuary Communities May Take**

The following actions are examples of the types of actions that Evanston Sanctuary Communities can take to protect the well-being of undocumented immigrants under threat of deportation and their families:

1. Conduct an intense education campaign within our organization and in the broader community about the injustice of our nation's immigration laws, the need to protect undocumented immigrants from deportation, and the hardships deportation will cause them and their families.
2. Support Sanctuary ordinances and laws enacted by units of local government, including the City of Evanston, to protect undocumented immigrants and the enforcement of such ordinances and laws and the Illinois Trust Act.
3. Support the passage by the U.S. Congress of legislation to protect DACA recipients from deportation and to secure their right to remain in the United States permanently with a pathway to U.S. citizenship.
4. Explore with other Evanston Sanctuary Communities Know Your Rights and Active Bystander Trainings<sup>1</sup> to educate members of the congregation and the broader community about the rights of undocumented immigrants and their families and strategies for defending their legal rights.
5. Work with other religious organizations, community-based organizations, and nonprofit immigrant service providers to build strong coalitions in support of immigrant justice and comprehensive immigration reform.

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<sup>1</sup> KYR Trainings seek to educate community members about the constitutional and legal rights of the undocumented in our midst. Active By-Stander Trainings teach tactics of nonviolence and civil disobedience with the goal of supporting people who are being targeted without engaging in aggression or escalating conflict.

## **Part C: Resources**

- [ACLU legal toolkit](#)
- [Chicago's History as a Sanctuary City](#)
- [Black People Need Sanctuary Cities Too](#)
- [Trump's Immigration Policies Explained](#)
- [The Sanctuary Movement: How Religious Groups are Sheltering the Undocumented](#)
- [What You Need to Know about DACA](#)
- [Union for Reform Judaism Sanctuary Resolution – 2017](#)
- [Memo on Tax Exempt Status for Religious Institutions Providing Refuge for the Undocumented](#)
- [Webinar: Sanctuary in the Era of Trump](#)
- [Interfaith Immigration Coalition Toolkit- includes toolkits for Rapid Response, Vigils, Town Hall Meetings and more](#)
- [Interfaith Sanctuary Toolkit](#)