

BECOMING A SANCTUARY CHURCH

Immigration and Refugee Justice Task Team - MACUCC

Please contact Rev. John Allen (john@fccmilton.org) with any questions or for support through this process

- 1.) Gather those in your community who are interested in offering sanctuary for a time of prayer. Ask for God's presence and guidance throughout this process.
- 2.) Download the "Sanctuary Toolkit" and "Sanctuary Tactics and Resources" from: <http://imij.org/resources-for-sanctuary-supporters>. These documents will guide you through the process of becoming a sanctuary church, and they offer many helpful resources the help you along the journey.
- 3.) Partner with the Task Team. We can do much more together than we can do along. The Immigration Justice Task team will help you connect with grassroots immigration advocacy organizations that will want to know you are offering Sanctuary. We will also connect you with other congregations in the Conference who would like to support a Sanctuary congregation.

Frequently Asked Questions

Would we be breaking the law?

"There is a law against bringing in and harboring persons not authorized to be in the U.S. (INA Sec.274). Some courts have interpreted harboring to require concealment of a person, when we declare Sanctuary for an individual we are bringing them into the light of the community, not concealing them in the dark of secrecy (U.S. V Costello, 66 F.3d 1040, 7th Cir. 2012). Other courts have interpreted harboring to be simple sheltering (U.S. V Acosta de Evans, 531 F.2d 428 (9th Cir. 1976)... To date no one has ever been arrested for offering Sanctuary." - From the New Sanctuary Toolkit

What prevents ICE from entering a church to execute a deportation order?

There is nothing that categorically prevents ICE from entering a church, however there is an existing Memo (<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/ero-outreach/pdf/10029.2-policy.pdf>) that advises officers and agents to avoid "sensitive locations" including schools, hospitals, churches, and the site of a public demonstration.