

2016-17 ANNUAL REPORT

IMMIGRATION ACTION COALITION

Submitted by: Cheryl Valentine

Why we exist: The Immigration Action Coalition was formed in 2014 in response to a 150th Anniversary Service, “Welcoming the Stranger.” After hearing the family who we embraced into sanctuary in the 1980s talk about what that sanctuary had meant to them, we asked ourselves, “Why aren’t we putting our faith in the inherent worth and dignity of every person into action today to support our immigrant neighbors?”

Goals of the IAC: To educate ourselves and our congregation about immigration issues, to advocate for immigration policy reform and to act in support of immigrants in our community.

Accomplishments May 2016 to April 2017

- **Advocated against the deportations** of Alexis, Susana Bernabe-Ramiriz, and Yousef Ajin. Attended rallies, fund-raisers, and court hearings. Made phone calls, wrote letters, and signed petitions.
- **Educational program for RE.** What kids can do to welcome immigrants.
- **Supported Immokalee Farm Workers.** In collaboration with Mindful Eating and UofM Student Farmworkers Alliance boycotted Wendys and showed the film, “Food Chains.”
- **Understanding Ourselves and Our Muslim Neighbors** - Two-part educational program. Collaborated with Challenging Racism and Justice in the Middle East.
- **Political advocacy** packets distributed to congregation. Advocated for “Don’t Ask” at Ypsilanti City Council.
- **Moving towards becoming a Sanctuary Congregation**
 - Sanctuary workshop at UUAA Justice Fair
 - Presented slide programs, “What is Sanctuary?”
 - Collected pledges in support of sanctuary
 - Attended Sanctuary Training sponsored by Michigan United & UUA webinars
 - “I stand with my immigrant neighbors” - posters and social media campaign
 - Founding member of Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary

Members: Over 60 members on Immigration Action List Serve. Members who planned and/or presented programs and actions this year include: Cesilie Cordovilla, Joanna Courteau, Ruth Cassidy, Anne Drake, Vicki Echegoyen, Melanie Harner, Lucia Heinold, Arlene Huff, Louise Kazarinoff, Mollison Morgan, Linda Sprankle, Carol Thomas, Cheryl and Vey Valentine.