

Minnesota Conference Immigration Team Annual Report 2023

The Minnesota Conference Immigration Team is grateful to the many churches in the MN Conference who have continued to welcome and accompany immigrants this past year. Over 20 Minnesota UCC congregations have become Immigrant Welcoming Congregations over the past 7 years and have written covenants to continue the work of welcoming our immigrant brothers and sisters. Several congregations have either welcomed refugees from Ukraine or Afghanistan and others are exploring this. Won't those of you who have not done so, prayerfully consider what God is calling you to do.

This past year one brave congregation, Gaylord UCC, invited us to their church to learn how they can get involved in an immigration ministry. With the pandemic abating, our conference immigration team is hopeful that other congregations are experiencing God's call to explore how they can become immigrant welcoming congregations. This ministry can enliven your church as you accompany some wonderful people. Our team would be very willing to visit with members of your congregation that wish to explore this. Just contact Diane Haines at diane.m.haines@comcast.net for more information.

In October 2022 through Mayflower UCC, our conference immigration team in conjunction with Mayflower's immigration team, sponsored its 7th border trip to Nogales, AZ and Nogales, Sonora Mexico. Members from Union Elk River, First Congregational in Northfield and Mayflower UCC Minneapolis participated. This is an important opportunity to witness what is happening at the border, to learn from those working with migrants how challenging the US immigration system is and to discover how US policies need to be changed to be more immigrant friendly. If you are interested in participating in a border trip this upcoming fall, contact me.

This year the team is providing another workshop that is a follow-up to the Resolution passed in June 2019 regarding creating and advancing a Minnesota Statutory State Law separating ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) from local law enforcement. Come to the workshop to see what has transpired over the past 4 years regarding this resolution.

If you are Interested in being a part of the Conference Immigration Team or having the team come to your congregation, contact Diane Haines.

Diane Haines