

Refugee, Immigration, Sanctuary Task Force History Report

For many years, St. Mark's has been a champion voice for Social Justice. As the political climate has been churning around refugees and deportation, St. Mark's leadership began to consider how to best be supportive. At the March 2017 Church Council meeting, a group of individuals expressed interest in exploring what it would mean to become a Sanctuary Congregation. This group was appointed as a Task Force and has taken numerous steps to inform and survey the congregation, including a town hall meeting, four round table discussions, two Rapid Response Observer Trainings, and an Immigration/DACA and Legal Aid Workshop. As of October 2017, the Church Council has approved the task force recommendation to become a Level 2 Sanctuary Church. This page is devoted to keeping the issues current and providing resources for your perusal.

Recap of August 2, Rapid Response Legal Observer Training

On August 2, Sacramento Area Congregations Together (ACT) presented a Rapid Response Legal Observer workshop at St. Mark's. Over thirty people, mostly from St. Mark's, were there to hear what Gabby Trejo, Edwin Valdez and their team had to share. Participants were instructed in what to do when Immigration and Customs Enforcement is at the door to remove someone for deportation: without obstruction, take notes, take a video or photos. Sacramento ACT has a hotline (245-6773) for calls from people who are under threat of deportation. ACT is also building a team of responders who could show up very quickly to document an ICE event. Several people from the workshop submitted applications to be part of the team of responders.

St. Mark's Refugee/Immigration/Sanctuary Task Force will hold an Immigration Workshop on Saturday, September 30 from 8:30 to 1:30. Legal service will be offered for those needing assistance completing citizenship applications, DACA applications, or notarized guardianship papers for their US citizen minor children. Other topics of interest will also be available.

February 6, 2018 SAC ACT Press Release:

On February 6, 2018 the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors voted to lift the age and enrollment cap on the Healthy Partners program, enabling 1000 more undocumented residents to receive health insurance, as well as lifting the age cap and opening the program to our elders who are over 65!

We celebrate this victory which was supported by ACT (and St. Mark's) leaders and members of the BHC Health Access Action Team who appeared at the Board of Supervisors hearing! We are grateful to all those who have been involved in the creation of this program since 2015, and its expansion this week.

<http://www.dhhs.saccounty.net/PRI/Pages/Healthy%20Partners/GI-PRI-Healthy-Partners.aspx>

Upcoming Events:

Citizen Workshop at Centennial United Methodist Church, 5401 Freeport Blvd., on the 3rd Thursday of every month from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. Please contact Attorney Sharron Williams for appointments at 510.288.8686.