

Immigration Statement of Conscience

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 15 May 2011 11:07 - Last Updated Wednesday, 18 May 2011 13:04

Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church Statement of Conscience on Immigration as a Moral Issue Revised and accepted 17 April 2011

Whereas the United States has a responsibility to control immigration as one aspect of its obligation to provide security to its citizens and foster economic well-being,

Whereas there are millions of undocumented immigrants residing within U.S. borders without a path to citizenship due to the lack of a comprehensive immigration system,

Whereas families are torn apart through immigration processing backlogs, detentions and deportations,

Whereas the current situation (e.g., inconsistent law enforcement, backlog in processing, porous borders, inadequate penalties for employers who hire undocumented workers, poor treatment of detainees, extended detention) caused by the lack of a comprehensive immigration policy weakens respect for and the effectiveness of both U.S. laws and political institutions,

Whereas the Unitarian Universalist principles state that we affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and we promote justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, and

Whereas the Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church supports humane policies for immigrants, recognizes the value of immigrant workers to our economy, and recognizes the right of the U.S. to provide security to its citizens by controlling its borders,

The Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church calls on Congress to enact immediate, just, and comprehensive immigration reform which includes the following:

1) immigration control that provides security while minimizing the impact to the lives, resources, and traditions of the existing legal U.S. residents,

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2) a path to earn citizenship for the undocumented who are already within our borders that emphasizes the responsibility of immigrants to comply with U.S. laws and contribute to the greater U. S. culture,

3) an accessible and timely process to obtain residency (both permanent and temporary) as well as citizenship for new immigrants,

4) equitable treatment and wages for all workers to include immigrant workers,

5) fair treatment and due process of law for immigrant detainees, and

6) access to medical care, education, and public safety for all.

In addition, we call on the Virginia General Assembly to enact laws to ensure the fair and humane treatment of all immigrants regardless of status to include complete legal review of criminal cases in which immigrant defendants were denied effective legal counsel regardless of the timeliness of their petitions following conviction.

We oppose any attempt to criminalize, demonize, or exploit undocumented immigrants and the people who give them humanitarian aid.