

MIGRANT ACCOMPANIMENT

A Guide to Supporting Migrants and Immigrants Globally



CHURCH & SOCIETY

The United Methodist Church

LivingFAITH SeekingJUSTICE PursuingPEACE

MIGRANT ACCOMPANIMENT: SUPPORTING MIGRANTS AND IMMIGRANTS GLOBALLY

Understanding Migrant Accompaniment

Migrant accompaniment is a ministry of presence and action, walking alongside individuals and families throughout their migration journey. It encompasses:

1. **Physical Accompaniment:** Offering tangible support (food, shelter, transportation).
 2. **Emotional Accompaniment:** Providing pastoral care and emotional support.
 3. **Advocacy:** Advocating for policy changes that protect migrants.
 4. **Spiritual Support:** Offering spaces of worship and prayer in their native language.
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Why Migrant Accompaniment Matters

Migration is a global reality shaped by economic, political, environmental, and social factors. The United Methodist Church (UMC), guided by its Social Principles and Book of Resolutions, emphasizes the sacred worth of all people and calls congregations to be agents of justice and compassion for migrants and immigrants. This toolkit provides practical steps for congregations to accompany and support migrants, grounded in UMC values and teachings.

Migration Theological Foundations: Rooted in the UMC Social Principles

The Social Principles inform our response to migration:

- **Human Dignity and Rights:** We affirm all persons as equally valuable in the sight of God. We reject social discrimination and pledge to actively resist it.
 - **Justice for Immigrants:** The UMC opposes unjust immigration laws and practices that dehumanize migrants.
 - **Global Responsibility:** As part of the global community, the Church is called to advocate for humane migration policies and provide care for displaced persons.
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Actions For Your Church

1. Education and Awareness

- **Host Informational Sessions:** Invite speakers (immigration attorneys, activists, migrants) to share experiences.
- **Study UMC Social Principles:** Organize study groups to explore the UMC's stance on immigration.
- **Train Volunteers:** Offer workshops on cultural sensitivity and trauma-informed care.

2. Direct Service

- **Establish a Welcome Team:** Assist migrant families with housing, transportation, and navigating local services.
- **Offer English and Citizenship Classes:** Partner with local organizations or host classes in your church.
- **Create a Resource Center:** Provide food, clothing, and hygiene kits.

3. Advocacy

- **Engage in Policy Advocacy:**
 - Support comprehensive immigration reform.
 - Write to legislators advocating for humane migration policies.
- **Join UMC Advocacy Networks:** Connect with UMC initiatives like The General Board of Church and Society or United Methodist Immigration Task Force.

4. Spiritual and Emotional Support

- **Offer Multilingual Worship Services:** Create spaces for worship in the languages of migrant communities.
- **Provide Pastoral Care:** Offer counseling and spiritual guidance.
- **Celebrate Cultural Diversity:** Host events that honor the cultural traditions of migrant communities.

5. Partnering with Organizations

- **Collaborate with UMC Agencies:** Work with UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) and local United Methodist organizations.
- **Build Community Partnerships:** Partner with non-profits, legal aid groups, and community organizers.

6. Measuring Impact and Sustainability

- **Track Engagement:** Record how many migrants your congregation serves and the types of services provided.
- **Gather Feedback:** Regularly meet with migrant families to assess their needs.
- **Sustain Efforts:** Develop a budget and recruit volunteers to ensure long-term support.

7. Reflection and Prayer

Invite your congregation to reflect on the following:

- How does our faith call us to walk with migrants?
- What resources and gifts can we offer to support migrants in our community?

PRAYER FOR MIGRANTS (ADAPTED FROM THE UMC BOOK OF WORSHIP)

*Loving God, we lift up all those who journey far from home seeking safety, justice, and peace.
Guide our steps as we walk alongside them, offering love, support, and hope.
May we always see your image in every migrant and immigrant we encounter. Amen*

Additional Resources

- [UMC Social Principles](#)
- [General Board of Church and Society](#)
- [United Methodist Immigration Task Force](#)
- [UMCOR Migration Initiatives](#)

CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

UMCJUSTICE.ORG



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