

Voces de la Frontera: Wisconsin religious, immigrant leaders declare resistance to Trump's threatened escalation against immigrant families

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MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN – On Thursday, religious leaders from the Racine Interfaith Coalition, United Church of Christ, and Evangelical Lutheran Church of America joined Voces de la Frontera members holding Jericho Walk protest outside of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office in Milwaukee to say that faith communities will stand with immigrant families amid the President's recent threats to escalate ICE raids and, in his words, deport "millions" of people. [Video of the program following the Jericho Walk is available here.](#) **Speakers announced a larger protest on Monday, June 24th, at 1:30pm at the Milwaukee ICE office** to resist Trump's attacks on immigrant communities and threats to escalate ICE raids even further. Information about Monday's protest is below.

"Delegates from the United Church of Christ from around the country will be coming to Milwaukee this weekend for our national synod," said **Rev. Andrew Warner of the United Church of Christ.** "There is nothing more important in the work of the church than speaking up for justice. That's why on Monday, June 24, we will march from the Wisconsin Center to the ICE building to stand in solidarity with Voces de la Frontera and all those working for justice. Our delegates will be here in prayer and

solidarity with all those being held in detention centers. In the words of St. Augustine centuries ago, 'a nation without justice is just a great robbery, a band of pirates.' When I think of what's being done to immigrant children and families, to immigrants to our country, it seems to me that this great injustice makes us a band of robbers, and I can't stand for that as a Christian, as a person, as an American. So I hope that you will join us Monday to be in prayer and solidarity."

"Ours is a congregation that cares deeply about our immigrant neighbors," said **Rev. Mary Janz, the retired pastor of Emaus Lutheran Church in Racine**, where she served for 25 years. "We were privileged in March to receive Pastor Betty Rendón as a student pastor as she was preparing to begin her doctorate in preaching. And then on May 8th we received the message that Betty was not able to come to church because ICE was at her home. It's been a whirlwind since then. We have cried, we have supported one another, we have come together to support the family, Betty's daughter Paola and granddaughter Leyla. We have been part of prayer vigils in Kenosha, press conferences in Chicago. We had a prayer vigil of our own on May 28th, the sad day, the horrendous day when Betty and Carlos, after having been in 5 different detention centers in 3 weeks, were deported to Colombia. We are crying out for immigrant reform. The broken laws that affect so many vulnerable people have to change. We have to be a part of that change. We are resolved on this day, World Refugee Day, to continue this process. Our bishop Paul Erickson is right now in Washington speaking to our elected leaders."

"Without exception, all faith traditions tell us to treat others as we would want to be treated and to stand up when we see injustice," said **Nikki Fisher, Vice President of the Racine Interfaith Coalition (RIC)**. RIC is a coalition of 28 congregations in the Racine area. "We know of over two dozen people who have been taken and disappeared from our community by ICE, and their families are struggling. We can't look away. One mother was brought to her 8-year-old and 10-year-old children's school by ICE to say goodbye before they took her from her children's lives. We met a young man from Central America in the Kenosha Detention Center whose brother was killed in front of him, who himself had been left in a ditch for dead, and who had then walked thousands of miles to seek asylum in the US only to be detained in Texas and then moved from detention center to detention center finally to Wisconsin, with no support and no help. We can't look away. As human beings we have an obligation and a responsibility to stand up. We will pray, but prayer without action is not enough. So we must act."

“Absolutely I believe this escalation on families could happen,” said **Christine Neumann-Ortiz, Executive Director of Voces de la Frontera**. “It’s happening already. This is how fascism grew in the past. They went first after one group, then after another. And there was not sufficient unity, not sufficient recognition of the human rights violations that were happening. That’s why we are inviting everyone to join us at the ICE building on Monday, June 24th, at 1:30pm. This building should be a place people go apply for their papers so they can have legal paths to citizenship, so they can work with dignity and not have to live in fear. So little children do not have to worry about being separated from their parents. That’s the future we’re fighting for.”

The Monday, June 24th, rally will take place at 1:30pm outside the Milwaukee ICE office (310 E Knapp St). Prior to the rally, members of the United Church of Christ in Milwaukee for their General Synod will march from the synod at the Wisconsin Center at the corner of Wisconsin Ave and Vel Phillips Ave to the ICE office. The march begins at 1:15

Who: Voces de la Frontera, New Sanctuary Movement of Milwaukee, Racine Interfaith Coalition, United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministry, Paula Hincapie (daughter of recently deported student pastor Betty Rendón), immigrant families, community supporters, more

What: Interfaith Protest to Resist Trump’s Threatened Escalation Against Immigrant Families

When: Monday, June 24, 1:30 pm CST

Where: Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Milwaukee Office, 310 E Knapp St.

Visuals: Hundreds of marchers coming from the United Church of Christ’s general synod. Hundreds of demonstrators with colorful signs and banners.

[Livestream to be available here](#)

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