The background of the top half of the page is a solid reddish-orange color. Overlaid on this background are several dark silhouettes of people walking in various directions. Their shadows are cast long and dark on the ground, suggesting a low sun position. The overall mood is one of movement and community.

# Faith & Immigration Justice



JUSTFAITH  
*ministries*

PARTICIPANT PACKET  
For Virtual Groups



# JUSTFAITH

*ministries*

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## WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

<b>Session and Theme</b>	<b>Readings</b> <i>Plan to have these readings <b>completed by</b> the date of the session specified in the left column. Some readings will help you prepare for the session; others will give followup information to topics introduced in-session.</i>	<b>Spiritual Practice</b> <i>Engage in this practice the week prior to the corresponding session.</i>
Session 1: Introductions— To Each Other and to a Theology of Migration		N/A
Session 2: History of Immigration to the U.S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Read the "Introductory Materials" in this Participant Packet.</i></li> <li>● <i>Welcoming the Stranger: Forward, chp 1-2 (p. 1-42)</i></li> <li>● Pope Francis: "<a href="#">Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 105th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2019.</a>"</li> </ul>	Become aware of migrant communities in your context. Do you know who lives in your city/town/state? Are there refugees or immigrants? Where do they live? Where do they come from? Where do you meet them? Every day, set aside time to uphold migrant communities in your prayers: name the people you may know, name their country of origin, and pray for safe journeys.
Session 3: "Why Don't They Just Get in Line?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Welcoming the Stranger: chp 3 (p. 43-66)</i></li> <li>● <a href="#">Refugee Screening Process (World Relief)</a>-- <i>(To learn more, click the green star and numbers in the middle of the infographic). <b>Even though the U.S. has</b></i></li> </ul>	The World Council of Churches maintains an Ecumenical Prayer Cycle that encourages Christians to pray for specific countries every week. Go to the <a href="#">WCC's website</a> and find out what countries are on the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle's list this week. Then locate each of them on the world map. If someone were to immigrate to the U.S. from one of these countries, what would their journey look like? Can you imagine some of the steps they would need to take and challenges they would very likely face?



	<p><b><i>mostly paused its refugee resettlement program, it is still important to understand this process in order to advocate for policies that reflect our faith.</i></b></p>	
Session 4: Why do People Migrate? Part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Welcoming the Stranger</i>: chp 4,6,7 (p. 67-84, 102-149)</li> <li>• Watch the first 38 minutes of <a href="#">Harvest of Empire</a>. (You will watch the rest of the video during session 4).</li> <li>• Optional: "<a href="#">No Queda De Otra: An Exploration of the Root Causes of Forced Migration to the Southern Border</a>" (Hope Border Institute)</li> </ul>	<p>Where does your food come from? See if you can trace the origins of a single meal. For example, who harvested the vegetables for your salad? Where was the dressing bottled, and who works there? How was it transported? Pray for those who contributed to bringing food to your table.</p> <p>In addition, do some research around <a href="#">Cesar Chavez</a> and <a href="#">Dolores Huerta</a>, and give thanks for their lives and witness. How can you advocate for the rights of farmworkers today? (hint: jump ahead to page 133 in <i>Welcoming the Stranger</i>).</p>
Session 5: Guest Speaker, Why do People Migrate, Part 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Line Becomes a River</i>, Prologue and Part 1 (p. 1-77)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Read Session 4 Attachment C</a>: "Why Do People Migrate?"</li> <li>• Optional: <a href="#">J. Hoffmeyer: Torture and the Theology of the Cross</a></li> <li>• Optional: "<a href="#">What Happened at Dos Erres</a>" podcast by <i>This American Life</i></li> </ul>	<p>For centuries, Catholic migrants have found hope and refuge in Our Lady of Guadalupe. This week, read more about her by exploring this <a href="#">article about Our Lady of Guadalupe by Justice for Immigrants</a>. Pray for those crossing borders right now.</p>
Session 6: Current Issues in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Line Becomes a River</i>: Part 2 (p. 81-160)</li> </ul>	<p>Read <a href="#">Psalm 46:1-3</a>. Then reflect on who/what serves as your refuge in times of hardship. Give thanks for those</p>



Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual Research — See Session 5 Attachment B</li> </ul>	who have been there for you, and for the people and places that have welcomed you. Pray for all the migrants and refugees who are seeking refuge. <a href="#">Listen to Warsan Shire reciting her poem, "Home"</a> .
Immersion Experience	N/A	N/A
Session 7: Advocating for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Welcoming the Stranger</i>: chp 8 (p. 150-180), Appendix 5 (p. 236-7)</li> <li><i>The Line Becomes a River</i>: Part 3 and Epilogue (p. 163-247)</li> </ul>	Romans 13 provides important instructions regarding our Christian relationships to law and the government. However, this chapter is frequently quoted to justify xenophobic policies. First, read <a href="#">Romans 13:1-7</a> and then <a href="#">read this article</a> . (Note: though this article calls out one particular political figure, politicians on both sides of the aisle throughout history have misinterpreted this passage). Then journal about the following questions: What is my personal Christian responsibility in regard to unjust laws? How can I discern whether a law is unjust? Over the next week, set aside two minutes each day to listen silently for the Spirit's guidance around these questions.
Session 8: Turning to Action	<p><b>IMPORTANT: Complete <a href="#">Session 7 Attachment C</a>. Plan about 45 minutes for this activity.</b></p> <p><i>Welcoming the Stranger</i>: chp 10 (p. 202-216)</p> <p>Session 8 survey for <b>participants</b>: <a href="https://justfaith.org/participant-post-program-survey/">https://justfaith.org/participant-post-program-survey/</a></p>	Included in Session 7 Attachment C.



Session 8 survey for  
**facilitators:**

<https://justfaith.org/facilitator-post-program-survey/>



Consider supporting JustFaith Ministries in order to inspire more people to work for justice: [justfaith.org/donate](https://justfaith.org/donate)

**JustFaith Network**

**Sign-up:**

<https://justfaith.org/get-involved/justfaith-network>



# INTRODUCTORY MATERIALS

**Bring this packet to every session!**

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On behalf of the JustFaith Ministries staff and board, thank you for dedicating your time to learning about immigration, a topic about which we care deeply. Especially in the midst of our polarized world in which both sides proclaim to be the sole bearers of truth and moral authority, it takes real courage to ask questions, explore complexities, and authentically listen to the perspectives on “the other side.” Some of the questions explored in this program include “Why don’t people ‘get in line’ to become citizens the legal way?” “Why do people migrate?” “What does the Bible say about immigration?” and “What’s going on with DACA?” Before you dive into the materials, we wanted to map out our hopes for this program, so that you have an idea of where your journey is headed.

1. First, we hope that this program will spark holy and healthy dialogue around this highly contentious topic that is nevertheless intricately linked with our Christian faith. Misconceptions and misinformation whirl around us, kicking up fear and resentment, toward both immigrants and each other. We hope that, through this program, participants like you will gain the confidence they need to choose love over fear, as well as the tools they need to speak truth within their churches, communities, and social circles.
2. Secondly, we hope you will walk away from this program better equipped to advocate for immigration policies that are just, effective, and compassionate, and to lead your community in extending hospitality and support toward your immigrant neighbors. The author of James writes, “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead” (James 2: 14-17). Indeed, our intellectual and spiritual growth demands our action.
3. Our third hope for this program is to deepen participants’ appreciation for the gifts that immigrants bring to our communities. It is not easy to uproot one’s life and move to another country, and many immigrants show incredible resilience and spiritual wisdom. In addition, immigrants have unique skills and knowledge that often go unnoticed: professional licenses and academic degrees frequently do not transfer between countries, and it is also difficult to communicate one’s leadership skills and knowledge in a second language. Dika Marsiano, an ESL student from Israel, remarked:



*When you come from another country, very different from your home, you have to start your life over again, and it's not easy to start your life over again when you can't speak the language. You're not the same person you used to be. It makes a big difference between who you were and who you are now. If you used to be smart, you don't feel smart anymore because you can't explain anything to other people. If you used to have a lot of friends, you don't have a lot of friends anymore because you can't communicate. If you have a good personality, other people can't see it because you can't express yourself. If you used to be funny, you're not funny anymore.... Because of the language.*

However, regardless of what someone has to offer, human dignity is a sacred right. All people, no matter what they do or do not contribute, are children of God and are of infinite worth. We hope that participants will walk away from this program inspired to convey their *respect* toward our immigrant brothers and sisters. After all, to see the face of God in the face of the Other is perhaps the greatest spiritual experience of our Christian lives.

## **Working for Versus Working With**

In their book *Living without Enemies*,<sup>1</sup> Marcia Owens and Samuel Wells distinguish between *working for* and *working with*:

*It is immensely satisfying to be able to do for someone exactly what they need to be done, whether it's fixing a child's toy or showing a novice how to find a website on a computer.... [However,] the working for model sets in stone a relationship in which one person is a benefactor and the other is a person in need. It is humiliating if many or most of your relationships are ones in which you need someone to do things for you. The working for model perpetuates relationships of inequality.*

*On the other hand, "Working with disadvantaged people means recognizing that social and economic disadvantage is not just about lacking income, but also about being excluded from positions of power. Disadvantaged people themselves must define what their needs are and then be supported in the action they decide to take to change things. This involves entering into a reciprocal relationship with disadvantaged people.... Working with is essentially about realizing that a social problem is everyone's problem. It is about everyone getting to feel satisfaction in resolving that problem, which in the conventional model only the professional person gets" (Owens and Wells, 33-35).*

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<sup>1</sup> Wells, Samuel, and Marcia A. Owen. *Living Without Enemies: Being Present in the Midst of Violence*. IVP Books, 2011.



Ultimately, Owens and Wells acknowledge that the *working for* posture is occasionally appropriate. They also encourage their readers to venture a step even further from *working with* to *being with*, a posture which makes room for true solidarity, rather than “turn[ing] everything into a problem ripe for solving” (p. 38). We hope that, as you and your group discern action steps, these principles will prove helpful in seeking justice in a way that both is effective and honors human dignity.

## Who is this program for?

In writing this program, we intentionally sought out resources from a variety of theological and political perspectives. Regardless of whether you consider yourself “conservative” or “progressive,” Catholic or Protestant, or if you don’t fit neatly into any of these categories, we hope that you will feel welcome in this program. After all, the materials the program presents are not meant to be the end-all-be-all voices of authority. They are merely a starting place for discussion, conversation partners for your journey. If you find yourself feeling alone in your perspective and thoughts, speak up! You are exactly the person from whom the rest of the group needs to hear.

## Creating A Brave Space

As articulated in the poem below, JustFaith Ministries programs foster a brave space, rather than a safe space, for conversation and learning. The intention of this program is to inspire action to address root causes of injustice while serving with love. Though we anticipate participants will experience the liberation and community that accompany justice formation and action, this program is not designed to facilitate group therapy or heal trauma. We highly encourage facilitators to attend facilitation trainings (including an anti-racist facilitation training), but most facilitators are volunteers — not professionals — who will be learning alongside your group. Also, fellow group members will be working through their own assumptions and biases and may express views you find hurtful or uninformed. When this occurs, care for yourself by taking a deep breath and noticing the emotions that arise within you. Take a break from the conversation if necessary: simply let the group know that you need to step out of the room or away from your computer for a moment. If you feel comfortable doing so, share your own perspective while following the group guidelines; however, know it is not your responsibility to fix or save anyone else. After the session is over, consider scheduling an appointment with a counselor, therapist, or spiritual leader, who can accompany you in processing the experience and discerning a way forward.

Before entering into your group’s first gathering, journal and pray about the following questions:

- Why have you chosen to embark on this journey in the context of community, rather than as an individual?
- What are the risks of stepping into this brave space? What hardships might you encounter, and how do you plan to respond?



## The Brave Ones

We gather, we brave ones,  
to create courageous community.  
Clumsily, we dance our dialogue  
and lean into discomfort.  
There is no safety here.

Uncomfortable tongues  
speak truths of harm done.  
As we reflect and learn,  
we'll receive words we'd like to return  
and say things we wish to unsay.  
We wound and are wounded.

And yet.....

We choose love over hate  
We choose to connect instead of isolate  
We choose to expand rather than shrink and disappear.

Our community will be flawed,  
But perfection is not our goal.  
Together, we find collective liberation  
in our mutual growth.

So when you feel angry and afraid  
(because you will),  
Stop. And take a deep breath:  
Inhale courage.  
Exhale fear.  
Feel the sacred presence in your breath  
and in the holy yet human connection between us.

– Adapted from “We Brave Ones”  
by Davelyn Hill,  
Executive Director of Speaking Down Barriers  
[Speakdownbarriers.org](http://Speakdownbarriers.org)



## The Focus of this Program

[According to the UNHCR](#) (The UN's refugee agency), there are 70.8 million forcibly displaced people worldwide. Needless to say, the scale of this issue is *huge*. Painting with too broad a brush would fail to do justice to the stories and situations this program seeks to address, as well as leave participants feeling paralyzed by the scope of the problem. For this reason, Faith and Immigration Justice primarily focuses on immigrants crossing our southern border, though the program certainly touches upon global migration and immigrants coming to the U.S. from non-Latin American countries. Ultimately, a deeper understanding of this particular slice of the issue will help you to better understand migration in general, as well as motivate you to learn about — and learn *from* — immigrants from all countries and cultures.

## Overview of the Program

This program includes eight 2 hour sessions and an immersion experience. During Session 5, you will hear from a guest speaker. Between sessions 6 and 8, your group will engage in a (virtual) immersion experience (see below). Each session of Faith and Immigration Justice includes prayer, dialogue, active listening, and relationship-building.

**Session 1: Introductions— To Each Other and to a Theology of Migration —** In this session, participants commit to guidelines for holding space for holy dialogue around this important yet controversial issue. You then learn about general themes within the biblical canon regarding migration, as well as zoom in on a specific passage. In addition, you will read and discuss denominational statements on migration.

**Session 2: History of Immigration to the U.S.—** An interactive activity guides participants in exploring the fears and hopes underlying immigration policy throughout U.S. history, so that we might avoid the mistakes of our past, as well as create policies that are rooted in love and justice, rather than fear or greed.

**Session 3: “Why Don’t They Just Get in Line?” —** This session features a simulation activity around basic immigration policy. Together, you and your group will consider questions such as “who is eligible for citizenship?”, “how do they apply?”, and “how long does the process take?”.

**Session 4: Why do People Migrate? Part 1—** Members of your group will view a documentary on the big-picture factors that spur migration, specifically international economic policies and military interventions.

**Session 5 (guest speaker): Why do People Migrate? Part 2 —** After hearing from a guest speaker, you will integrate stories and data from the past four sessions to name factors that “push” people from their homes and “pull” them to the United States.



**Session 6: Current Issues in Migration** — You will discuss current immigration-related topics such as DACA, TPS, and family separations at the border.

### **Immersion Experience in the Community**

**Session 7: Advocating for Change** — This session will equip you and members of your group to engage in advocacy around immigration policy and effect change in our nation and/or local communities, providing you with tools to help you create and meet realistic goals.

**Session 8: Turning to Action** — You will engage in a discernment activity in order to commit to action steps, both individually and as a group.

### **Immersion Experience**

The immersion (virtually) connects participants in your group with community organizations already integrated in an immigrant community and/or engaged in immigration justice efforts. You might also visit with members of a church in which the majority of congregants are immigrants. This real-world experience guides groups in discerning how they can put their learning into action. Your co-facilitators set up and facilitate the immersion experience, which typically takes place between Sessions 6 and 7.

### **Immersion experience Do's and Don'ts:**

- *Do* be sensitive about protecting your hosts' privacy and identity. Keep in mind that immigrant communities around the country are currently under a lot of pressure and may be wary of any type of intrusion by unknown people.
- *Don't* take pictures unless you have clear permission.
- *Don't* ask about someone's documentation status or whether they are a citizen.
- *Do* try to speak the native language of someone you're talking to, if you know a little of their language, and if it's clear that the person does not speak English. Even if you butcher the language, vulnerable situations like these can be deeply spiritual! However:
  - *Don't* assume that all immigrants don't speak English. For many second and third generation immigrants, as well immigrants coming from English-speaking countries, English is their primary language.
  - *Don't* expect immigrants to think it's impressive or funny that you know words like *taco* or *cerveza*.



- *Don't* say "you have really good English!" (this can come off as patronizing... for all you know, English may be their fifth language).
- *Don't* ask "...so where are you *really* from?" Many immigrants, and the descendants of immigrants, consider the United States to be their home.
- *Do* invite people to share their stories, but *don't* ask them to share things that are deeply personal or that might be connected to trauma. "Tell me about your friends and family," or "what do you like best about \_\_\_\_\_ (name your town or city)?" are a couple examples of icebreaker questions.
- *Do* treat everyone you meet with respect (rather than with pity), even if you hear stories of suffering and pain.
- *Don't* ask "are you grateful to be here?" This can minimize the pain that someone may be experiencing or come across as if you're reminding them that they're indebted to the benevolence of the United States.
- To the best of your ability, leave stereotypes about who immigrants are at the door. Embrace an attitude of openness!

## Resources and supplementary materials

- ***Welcoming the Stranger* by Jenny Hwang and Matthew Soerens:** This book provides an engaging and accessible overview of U.S. immigration policy, while also debunking harmful myths about immigrants and immigration policy. In choosing this book, we hoped that the authors' evangelical background would highlight areas in which people across denominations and political perspectives could find common ground through working toward immigration justice. In the reading chart, you'll notice that we've skipped over a couple theologically-focused chapters, which are relevant primarily to evangelicals. We feel that we have provided a substantial and more-inclusive theological foundation within the sessions and through the spiritual practices; however, particularly if you consider yourself an evangelical, you may want to read *Welcoming the Stranger* in its entirety.
- ***The Line Becomes a River* by Francisco Cantú:** This memoir by a former border patrol agent takes a more artful and story-based approach to migration. Cantú's narrative challenges both those who consider themselves "progressive" and "conservative" on this issue, motivating readers to consider more nuanced perspectives. This book will also create space for your group to process what you're learning not only intellectually, but spiritually and emotionally as well.



- **Spiritual practices:** Each week, you will engage in a spiritual practice intended to expand your understanding of faith and spirituality, as well as inform your prayer life. Start early in the week, as most spiritual practices require daily reflection. All of the spiritual practices are listed in the reading chart that can be found in your online account.
- **Participant packet (this document):** This provides all of the handouts you'll need during sessions. Please have it available on your computer (or printed) and bring it to every session.



## About the Image



This image of dark shadows and faceless people, featured in all Faith and Immigration Justice material, was designed by former JustFaith Ministries' staff member, Melissa Brown. "When you think about the shadow we cast, it's an outline, abstraction, or simplification of who we are. It's flat. One note. It's an abstraction of who we (and other people) are," Melissa says. "Our broken immigration policy simplifies people into shadows, stripping them of their identity. However, Christ calls us to recognize that identity. God calls us to be more fully who God has called us to be and to recognize the humanity and sacredness of the immigrant," Melissa elaborates. Even The Word (Jesus) was not merely a 2-D abstraction but became human flesh. Christ came to us less known in order to become fully known. We are called to recognize Christ in others, to affirm the humanity of our immigrant neighbors by knowing their names and learning their stories, and by ensuring that they have addresses, the ability to vote and provide for their families, and access to all that we would want for ourselves.

At the same time, "shadows are resilience and fragility," Melissa says. In this case, shadows also remind Melissa of a mother crossing the desert in the high heat with her baby in her arms (Melissa herself is a mother of two young boys). The mother casts a protective shadow over her child, reminding Melissa of Psalm 17:8-9:



“Guard me as the apple of the eye;  
hide me in the shadow of your wings,  
from the wicked who despoil me,  
my deadly enemies who surround me” (NRSV).

Melissa says, “Just as God brings us into the fullness of (dare I say) perfection, wholeness, and right(eous)ness, we are also called to draw near to our immigrant brothers and sisters until we are staring into their beautiful faces, every definition imprinted in our lives rather than glancing over long shadows that are simplified abstractions.”

Questions for reflective journaling or conversation with your group:

- What emotions or memories come to mind upon viewing this image?
- In what ways are shadows “resilience and fragility”?
- When have you felt held and hidden in the shadow of God’s wing?

## **We Want to Hear from You!**

We want to get this program right, and we hope that you will help us continually revise this program so that it can be the best it can be. JustFaith has a survey for you to complete at the end of the program – it should not take more than fifteen minutes. You can find the link to this survey in the post-program assignments in this Participant Packet.

## **About JustFaith Ministries**

### **Overview**

JustFaith Ministries (JFM) is a nonprofit organization that serves the work of justice, community-building and reconciliation by creating small-group educational programs that transform hearts, deepen commitment, inspire engagement and equip for action. Over 70,000 people across the country have participated in JFM programs! Our work is crafted and customized for both those who belong to a Christian community as well as those who approach the work of justice from a more broadly spiritual perspective.

### **Programs for Christian Communities**

JustFaith Ministries has a long history of serving churches and small faith communities to empower and expand their work on behalf of justice. Drawing from the heart of the Gospel, our faith-based programming allows participants to explore the intersection of faith and social mission, study an important issue intensively, build community, and discern next steps (faith-in-action). These small group programs include:

- **JustFaith Series:** this series explores the Gospel’s call to respond to poverty, equipping participants to take action in a way that is effective, sustainable, and reflective of their Christian vision. The ecumenical version of this series (JustFaith) consists of three 8-session programs, while JustFaith Catholic comprises four.



- Racial Justice Series:
  - Faith and Racial Equity: Exploring Power and Privilege
  - Faith and Racial Healing: Embracing Truth, Justice and Restoration
  - Faith and Racial Justice: Changing Systems and Structures
- Eco-justice Series:
  - Sacred Land: Food and Farming
  - Sacred Air: Climate and Energy
  - Sacred Water: Oceans and Ecosystems
- Youth for Justice: Invites youth to explore contemporary social issues through the lens of the Christian tradition.
- Faith and Immigration Justice
- Just Action! How to Advocate and Mobilize for Justice
- Want to Talk? Communication Tools for Divided Times
- The Land Is Not Our Own: Seeking Repair Alongside Indigenous Communities
- Preventing Gun Violence: From Rhetoric to Real Solutions

### **Programs for Broader Audiences**

JustFaith Ministries also offers programs that are designed for broader audiences that may not define themselves as religious. Those who are unaffiliated with a church or religious tradition or who identify as “spiritual but not religious” will find these programs relevant and meaningful. These programs may also resonate with an interfaith audience. These programs include:

- Spirituality and Racial Equity: Exploring Power and Privilege
- Spirituality and Racial Healing: Embracing Truth, Justice, and Restoration
- Spirituality and Racial Justice: Changing Systems and Structures
- Want to Talk? Communication Tools for Divided Times

### **Impact**

The best testimony to our work are the outcomes: JustFaith participant involvement in justice and social ministry is vast. Participants report bringing more affordable housing opportunities to their communities; reforming the criminal justice system; advocating for hunger relief at the local, national and international levels; standing in solidarity with our immigrant siblings; becoming ambassadors for Fair Trade and micro-businesses; engaging in anti-racism efforts; advocating for the end of the death penalty; working for sensible gun laws; and many other commitments. The true measure of our work is what happens after the programs are done!

### **Welcome**

Welcome to the JFM community! We can't do this without each other. We are honored to walk alongside you in advancing peace, racial equity, economic justice and a sustainable world, and we hope that you will find as much love and liberation along this journey as we have. Please



keep in touch: let us know how your life has been transformed, the ways you are taking action for justice, and how we can best support you in your spiritual growth and work for justice. Most of all, know that we, the JustFaith Ministries staff, are holding you in our hearts and praying for you throughout your journey.

## Join the JustFaith Network

The ultimate goal of this program — and all our JustFaith Ministries programs — is to invite participants into a deeper commitment to the work of love and justice. To support program graduates, we created the JustFaith Network to provide lively and current resources that can sustain you spiritually and equip you with the tools you need for your work to be effective. By joining the Network, you will have access to reflections, small group guided conversations, speaker events, blogs, best practices, and an expanding list of items.

**The JustFaith Network is free and open to anyone. You can sign up at:**

<https://justfaith.org/get-involved/justfaith-network>

## Support Justfaith Ministries - And Inspire More People To Work For Justice

JustFaith Ministries is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. We rely on donations from graduates like you to help us create and distribute our high-quality programs. We hope you consider making a donation, and joining with us in building a more just, peaceful, and equitable world. To learn about ways you can donate (online; by check; through an IRA, donor-advised fund; and more), visit: <https://justfaith.org/donate>

## Special Thanks!

A huge thanks to the Office of Social Justice of the Christian Reformed Church for allowing us to extend their Church Between Borders materials, which you will find in Sessions 2 and 3, to our audience. In addition to contributing their teaching tools, we are grateful for the OSJ's leadership in immigration advocacy, and we encourage Faith and Immigration Justice participants to get involved with their work.

Thank you to the Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice, a statewide immigration legal service and advocacy organization who collaborated with us in updating this program. We encourage Iowan participants to get involved with their work: <https://www.iowammj.org/>

A special and continued thanks to the Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns for providing prayers that have been in several iterations of our migration program. We continue to be thankful for Maryknoll's witness for peace and justice in Central America, even during times of war, and we are honored to include their prayers, as well as pieces of their stories, in this program.



## Helpful Definitions

### **Assisted Voluntary Return**

Logistical and financial support to rejected asylum seekers, trafficked migrants, stranded students, qualified nationals and other migrants unable or unwilling to remain in the host country who volunteer to return to their countries of origin.

### **Asylum Seeker**

A person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than his or her own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, the person must leave the country and may be expelled, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds.

*Note: In the United States, an **asylum seeker** requests legal status while in the United States (often a port of entry). A **refugee** requests legal entry while still in another country, so that when they arrive in the U.S., he/she already has legal status.*

### **Deportation**

The act of a State in the exercise of its sovereignty in removing an alien from its territory to a certain place after refusal of admission or termination of permission to remain.

### **Displacement**

A forced removal of a person from his/her home or country, often due to armed conflict or natural disasters.

### **Documented Migrant**

A migrant who entered a country legally and remains in the country in accordance with his/her admission criteria.

- **Note: This program uses the term “undocumented immigrant” to refer to people without legal permission to reside in the United States. The term “illegal alien” is considered dehumanizing.**

### **Economic Migrant**

A person leaving his/her habitual place of residence to settle outside his/her country of origin in order to improve his/her quality of life. This term may be used to distinguish from refugees fleeing persecution, and is also used to refer to persons attempting to enter a country without legal permission and/or by using asylum procedures without *bona fide* cause. It also applies to persons settling outside their country of origin for the duration of an agricultural season, appropriately called seasonal workers.



### **Emigration and Immigration:**

- Emigration: The act of *departing* or *exiting* from one State with a view to settling in another.
- Immigration: A process by which non-nationals move *into* a country for the purpose of settlement.

*(Note: In other words, the distinction is in whether someone is leaving a country, or if they are entering a country. E.g: when Chelsea moved from Paris to Chicago, she was an emigrant from Paris and an immigrant to Chicago).*

### **Forced Migration**

A migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes (e.g. movements of refugees and internally displaced persons as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects).

### **Holding Center**

A facility lodging asylum seekers or migrants in an irregular situation as soon as they arrive in a receiving country; their status is determined before they are sent to refugee camps or back to their country of origin.

*Note: Detention centers are a form of holding center. Detention centers are to be distinguished from correctional facilities, though their physical environments may look similar. Detention centers are a "limbo place" in which immigrants await trial or deportation.*

### **Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx/Latine:\***

- *Hispanic* refers to people descended from Spanish-speaking populations (e.g. includes people from Spain but not those from Brazil).
- *Latino or Latina* refers to people descended from people from Latin America (includes people from Brazil but not from Spain). "Latino" is the masculine form, while "Latina" is the feminine form.
- *Latinx* is a gender-neutral form of Latino and Latina.
- *Latine* (pron. lah-teen-eh) is another gender-neutral form of Latino and Latina, but it uses the Spanish lexicon.

### **Internally Displaced Person (IDP)**

Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border

### **Migrant**

A migrant is any person who is moving or has moved across an international border *or* within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status;



(2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is.

*Note: Migrants don't move permanently, while immigrants do. For example, someone from Chicago might migrate to Florida each winter, or workers from Mexico might migrate seasonally to pick strawberries.*

### **\*Nativism**

The policy of protecting the interests of native-born or established inhabitants against those of immigrants.

### **Naturalization**

Granting by a State of its nationality to a non-national through a formal act on the application of the individual concerned. International law does not provide detailed rules for naturalization, but it recognizes the competence of every State to naturalize those who are not its nationals and who apply to become its nationals.

### **Refugee**

A person who, "owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country. (Art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees). (*See above for differences between asylum seekers and refugees*).

### **Remittances**

Monies earned or acquired by non-nationals that are transferred back to their country of origin.

### **Resettlement**

The relocation and integration of people (refugees, internally displaced persons, etc.) into another geographical area and environment, usually in a third country. In the refugee context, the transfer of refugees from the country in which they have sought refuge to another State that has agreed to admit them. The refugees will usually be granted asylum or some other form of long-term resident rights and, in many cases, will have the opportunity to become naturalized.

### **Smuggling**

"The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident" (Art. 3(a), UN Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000). Smuggling, contrary to trafficking, does not require an element of exploitation, coercion, or violation of human rights.



## **Trafficking**

"The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation" (Art. 3(a), UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000). Trafficking in persons can take place within the borders of one State or may have a transnational character.

## **Unaccompanied Minors**

Persons under the age of majority who are not accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other adult who by law or custom is responsible for them. Unaccompanied minors present special challenges for border control officials, because detention and other practices used with undocumented adult aliens may not be appropriate for minors.

## **Xenophobia**

At the international level, no universally accepted definition of xenophobia exists, though it can be described as attitudes, prejudices and behavior that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity. There is a close link between racism and xenophobia, two terms that can be hard to differentiate from each other.

*\*This definition is added from Google.*

## ***A Few Helpful Abbreviations:***

DACA: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

DHS: Department of Homeland Security

ICE: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

LPR: Lawful Permanent Resident or Green Card holder

TPS: Temporary Protected Status

UNHCR: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, created in 1950 in the aftermath of World War II

USCIS: United States Citizenship and Immigration Services



## FOR ALL SESSIONS: Opening Prayer

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- Reader 1: Creator God, your loving care is a home for all. No one is a stranger to you. With your generous blessings, watch over migrants and all who leave their homes to escape oppression, poverty, persecution, trauma and violence. Help us to also be sources of blessings through our acceptance and valuing who they are as persons eager for wholeness of life.
- Reader 2: Creator, you taught us to welcome all. Help us to remember that the land we call ours is a gift to be cared for and a gift to be shared with all who come. May we be open to all those searching for a safe and peaceful life.
- Facilitator: Help us to pour out your love and compassion to all our brothers and sisters.
- Reader 3: Creator, help us to respect and revere the unknown between and among us. May we grow into new discoveries and accept new ways of learning about our common needs and desires. May respect and reverence break down our fear, anxiety, suspicion, racism, hate and closed heartedness towards others.
- Reader 4: Creator, we build barriers in our hearts and make judgements that keep us from seeing others for who they are, the potential they have, and talents they have been given. You taught us to give witness to your love for all people. May we be accepting of those who want to be our neighbors. May we rejoice in their talents and accept new life-perspectives from them.
- Facilitator: Help us to pour out your love and compassion to all our brothers and sisters.
- Facilitator: Creator God, You who are present in all of humankind, guide us to be mindful of your presence and help us to act in ways pleasing to you towards all those who search for a better life. May we reach out to migrants in need of help and acceptance and stand by them as brothers and sisters in Christ. We ask this through Jesus, the Christ, who was a migrant. Amen.

*Written for JustFaith Ministries  
by Maryknoll Sister Elizabeth Knoerl*



# SESSION 1

## Session 1 Attachment A: Community of Trust Guidelines

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Adapted by Anne and Tom Johnson from:

- *Circle of Trust® Touchstones* developed by Parker J. Palmer and the Center for Courage & Renewal [www.couragerenewal.org](http://www.couragerenewal.org) (primary source)
- *JustFaith Group Guidelines* [www.JustFaith.org](http://www.JustFaith.org)

1. **Give and receive welcome.** People learn best in hospitable spaces. In this community, we support each other's learning by giving and receiving welcome.
2. **Be as fully present as possible.** Be here with your doubts, fears, and failings, as well as your convictions, joys, and successes, your listening as well as your speaking. Listen intently in order to fully understand different points of view. Honor the space between "no longer" and "not yet."
3. **What is offered in our community is by invitation, not demand.** Share what your soul calls for, and know that you do it with our support. Commit to ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to speak. Invite others to speak before speaking again.
4. **Speak your truth in ways that respect other people's truth.** Our views of reality may differ, but speaking one's truth in our community does not mean interpreting, correcting, or debating what others say. Knowing that we are each created uniquely, and have different backgrounds, experiences, and views, we commit to honoring differences, knowing they add to the richness of the community's experience.
5. **No fixing, saving, advising, or correcting.** This is one of the hardest guidelines for those of us who like to "help." But it is vital to welcoming the soul, to making space for the inner teacher.
6. **Learn to respond to others with honest, open questions....** Instead of counsel or corrections. With such questions, we help "hear each other into deeper speech." Commit to respectfully seeking clarification of others' perspectives to add to our understanding.



7. **When the going gets tough, turn to wonder.** If you feel judgmental or defensive, ask yourself:
  - “I wonder what brought her to this belief?”
  - “I wonder what he’s feeling right now?”
  - “I wonder what my reaction teaches me about myself?”Set aside judgment to listen to others — and to yourself — more deeply.
  
8. **Attend to your own inner teacher.** We learn from others, of course. But as we explore prayer, readings, questions, and silence, as well as engage with people both inside and outside our community, we have a special opportunity to learn from within. So pay close attention to your own reactions and responses, which are your most important teacher.
  
9. **Trust and learn from the silence.** Silence is a gift in our noisy world, and a way of knowing in itself. Treat silence as a member of the group. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words.
  
10. **Observe deep confidentiality.** Our community of trust depends on knowing that whatever we say will remain with the people to whom we choose to say it — whether in small groups or in the large circle — and will never be passed on to others without our explicit permission.
  
11. **Know that it’s possible....** To leave a meeting of our community with whatever it was you needed when you arrived, and that the seeds planted here can keep growing in the days ahead.

**Note: Because a primary aspect of our programs is building a community of trust, all participants who have webcams are expected to turn on their video for the meetings.**



## Session 1 Attachment B: Biblical References to Immigrants and Refugees

*(This list is taken from [The United Church of Christ website](#), and it is not exhausted of all Bible verses referring to immigrants. All quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version.*

**Genesis 3:22-24** – Adam and Eve are forced out of the Garden.

**Genesis 7 and 8** – Noah builds an ark and takes refuge from the flood.

**Genesis 12:1** – The call of Abram: “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.”

**Genesis 12:10** – “Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to reside there as an alien, for the famine was severe in the land.”

**Genesis 19** – Lot takes his family and flees Sodom.

**Genesis 23** – Abraham is a stranger and an alien in the land of Canaan.

**Genesis 46:1-7** – Jacob moves his family to Egypt to escape the famine and reunite with Joseph.

**Genesis 47: 1-6** – Joseph brings his brothers to Pharaoh and they are welcomed and given jobs.

**Exodus 1:8-14** – Joseph’s generation is gone, and the Egyptians oppress the Israelites. “Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor.”

**Exodus 1:15-2:10** – Pharaoh orders all the Hebrew boy babies to be killed, but Moses is hidden and is saved by Pharaoh’s daughter.

**Exodus 12:37-39** – The Israelites were driven out of Egypt so fast they had no time to make provisions and had to bake unleavened cakes of bread.

**Exodus 12:49 and Leviticus 24:22** – “There shall be one law for the native and for the alien who resides among you.”

**Exodus 22:21** – Moses gives God’s law: “You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.”

**Leviticus 19:9-10 and 23:22** – Moses gives God’s law: “You shall not strip your vineyards bare...leave them for the poor and the alien.”

**Leviticus 19:33-34 and 24:22** – When the alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

**Leviticus 24:23** – Moses receives God’s law: “With me you are but aliens and tenants.”

**Numbers 9:14 and 15:15-16** – “...you shall have one statute for both the resident alien and the native.”

**Numbers 35 and Joshua 20** – The Lord instructs Moses to give cities of refuge to the Levites so that when the Israelites must flee into Canaan they may have cities of refuge given to them.

**Deuteronomy 1:16** – “Give the members of your community a fair hearing, and judge rightly between one person and another, whether citizen or resident alien.”

**Deuteronomy 6:10-13** – The people of Israel are made aware that the land had come to them as a gift from God and they were to remember that they were once aliens.

**Deuteronomy 10:18-19** – “For the Lord your God...loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”



**Deuteronomy 14:28-29 and 26:12-13** – Tithing was begun, in part, for resident aliens.

**Deuteronomy 24:14** – “You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land...”

**Deuteronomy 24:17-18** – “You shall not deprive a resident alien...of justice.”

**Deuteronomy 24:19-22** – Leave sheaf, olives, grapes for the alien.

**Deuteronomy 26:5** – A wandering Aramean was my ancestor...

**Deuteronomy 27:19** – “Cursed be anyone who deprives the alien...of justice.”

**I Chronicles 22:1-2** – Aliens were important in building the temple.

**I Chronicles 29:14-15** – David praises God: “We are aliens and transients before you...”

**II Chronicles 2:17-18** – Solomon took a census of all the aliens and assigned them work.

**Psalms 105** – Remembering their sojourn: “When they were few in number, of little account, and strangers in it, wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people...”

**Psalms 137:1-6** – “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept...How could we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?”

**Psalms 146:9** – “The Lord watches over the strangers...”

**Ecclesiastes 4:1** – “Look, the tears of the oppressed—with no one to comfort them.”

**Isaiah 16:4** – Be a refuge to the outcasts of Moab.

**Jeremiah 7:5-7** – “If you do not oppress the alien...then I will dwell with you in this place...”

**Jeremiah 22:3-5** – Do no wrong or violence to the alien.

**Ezekiel 47:21-22** – The aliens shall be to you as citizens, and shall also be allotted an inheritance.

**Zechariah 7:8-10** – Do not oppress the alien.

**Malachi 3:5** – The messenger will bear witness against those who thrust aside the alien.

**Matthew 2:13-15** – Jesus and parents flee Herod’s search for the child.

**Matthew 5:10-11** – “Blessed are those who are persecuted.”

**Matthew 25:31-46** – “...I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

**Luke 3:11** – “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none...”

**Luke 4:16-21** – “...Bring good news to the poor...release to the captives...sight to the blind...let the oppressed go free.”

**Romans 12:13** – “Mark of the true Christian: “...Extend hospitality to strangers...”

**II Corinthians 8:13-15** – “It is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need...”

**Ephesians 2:11-22** – “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God.”

**Hebrews 11** – “By faith Abraham...set out for a place...not knowing where he was going.”

**Hebrews 13:1-2** – “...show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels...”

**James 2:5** – “Has not God chosen the poor in the world...”

**James 2:14-17** – “What good is it...if you say you have faith but do not have works?”

**I John 3:18** – “...Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.”

**I John 4:7-21** – “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God...” We love because God first loved us.”



## Session 1 Attachment C: Ruth 1:1-18 (CEB)

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1:1 During the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. A man with his wife and two sons went from Bethlehem of Judah to dwell in the territory of Moab. 2 The name of that man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They entered the territory of Moab and settled there.

3 But Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died. Then only they were left, along with their two sons. 4 They took wives for themselves, Moabite women; the name of the first was Orpah and the name of the second was Ruth. And they lived there for about ten years.

5 But both of the sons, Mahlon and Chilion, also died. Only the woman was left, without her two children and without her husband.

6 Then they arose along with their daughters-in-law to return from the field of Moab, because while in the territory of Moab they had heard that the Lord had paid attention to his people by providing food for them. 7 They left the place where they had been, and her two daughters-in-law went with her. They went along the road to return to the land of Judah.

8 Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, "Go, turn back, each of you to the household of your mother. May the Lord deal faithfully with you, just as you have done with the dead and with me. 9 May the Lord provide for you so that you may find security, each woman in the household of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. 10 But they replied to her, "No, instead we will return with you, to your people."

11 Naomi replied, "Turn back, my daughters. Why would you go with me? Will there again be sons in my womb, that they would be husbands for you? 12 Turn back, my daughters. Go. I am too old for a husband. If I were to say that I have hope, even if I had a husband tonight, and even more, if I were to bear sons— 13 would you wait until they grew up? Would you refrain from having a husband? No, my daughters. This is more bitter for me than for you, since the Lord's will has come out against me."

14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth stayed with her. 15 Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law is returning to her people and to her gods. Turn back after your sister-in-law."

16 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to abandon you, to turn back from following after you. Wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people,



and your God will be my God. 17 Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord do this to me and more so if even death separates me from you.” 18 When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, they stopped speaking to her about it.

## **Session 1 Attachment D: An excerpt from Pastor Deb Richardson-Moore’s sermon “Minority Report”**

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Today’s Scripture passage in the Old Testament book of Ruth addresses the minorities among us. And I find its presence in the Hebrew Scripture as brave as I find the presence of four separate gospels in the New Testament.

The early church made a conscious decision to include four versions of the gospel: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Four different reports that give us four different pictures of Jesus. That give us reports that are not exactly the same, any more than four of our descriptions of a wreck in front of the church would be exactly the same.

It would have been SO tempting to put just one story about Jesus in the Bible, to take all four gospels and make them agree. Indeed, there was a book called the Diatessaron that an early church father wrote in the second century that harmonized all four versions. But the church didn’t include that in the Bible. Instead, it included four gospel versions of the story of Jesus. And those versions vary in ways both great and small.... Well, the Old Testament does the same with the book of Ruth.

The Old Testament, or more accurately, the Hebrew Scripture is filled with stories about other nations and other cultures encroaching upon Israel. More than 400 years after the rise of King David, the Jews were taken captive in Babylon. It was the lowest point for the Hebrew people....

When the Jews were allowed to come back to Jerusalem, their Scripture reflected a need to purify their people from those foreign influences. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah talk about the sin and shame of intermarrying with other nations. The Jews vowed to intermarry no more. (Ezra 9-10; Nehemiah 10: 28-30; 13: 3, 23-30). And then they went a step further. Ezra had all the Jewish men banish their non-Jewish wives and children. (Ezra 10) They believed God wanted them to build a new nation, undefiled by foreigners. And then comes the book of Ruth. *Then comes the book of Ruth.*

Ruth is a delightful little story that some scholars believe was written as a “minority report” to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. On our Supreme Court, a dissenting judge often writes a minority opinion. It doesn’t stand as law as the majority opinion does, but it follows our democratic practice of giving a respectful hearing to the minority. As does the story of Ruth.



....The books of Ezra and Nehemiah give the majority line: *Purify the people by sending away the foreign wives you have married and the half-breed children you have produced.* The book of Ruth gives the minority opinion: *But wait. Let's look at another side.* And that other side is this: Ruth is a Moabite. She is a foreign wife, or worse, a foreign widow. But her impact on the future kingdom of Israel is wondrous.

Ruth's story is set in the time of the Judges, before Israel was a kingdom. Naomi's Jewish family moved from Bethlehem to the foreign country of Moab because of famine. While there, Naomi's two sons married Moabite women. Foreign women. But Naomi's husband and two sons died, and she wanted to return to Bethlehem, where the famine had lifted. She tried to leave her daughters-in-law back in Moab, where they might remarry. Orpah stayed. But Ruth insisted upon coming with her. In the ancient world, there was absolutely no one more vulnerable than widows with no male children to care for them. As Naomi and Ruth re-entered Bethlehem, they were in a terrible position economically.

..... But what is important for us this morning are the repeated references to Ruth as a foreigner, a Moabite. The author of this story never misses a chance to remind us that Ruth is not an Israelite, not a Jew. In later verses, we read:

**"So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabites...."** (1: 22)

**"And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, 'Let me go to the fields....'"** (2:2)

Boaz asks his foreman who Ruth is, and the foreman replies, **"She is the Moabite who came back from Moab with Naomi."** (2: 6)

Ruth asks Boaz why he is favoring her, **"a foreigner,"** with safe work in his fields. (2: 10)

Boaz answers that he is keeping her safe because she left her **"homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before."** (2: 11)

Do we get it yet? *Ruth is a foreigner.*

Let's now turn to the story's ending in chapter 4.....

*13 So Boaz took Ruth and they became their wife. When they came together, the Lord made her conceive, and they bore a son. 14 Then the women said to Naomi, 'Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin; and may their name be renowned in Israel! 15 He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne them.' 16 Then Naomi took the child and laid them in her bosom, and became their nurse. 17 The women of the neighborhood gave them a name, saying, 'A son has been born to Naomi.' They named them Obed; he became the father of Jesse, the father of David.*



Did you hear the “gotcha” line? Ruth the foreigner, Ruth who has been described over and over and over as a Moabite, is the great-grandmother of King David. King David, the symbol of Israel’s most glorious days, would never have been born without this foreigner.

This is a real kick in the teeth to those insisting that the Jews returning from Babylon cast off their foreign wives and children. Because look: The great-grandmother of King David *was a foreigner!* What if these policies had been in place back then? No King David.

This is courageous stuff, including both majority and minority reports in the Bible. And it can take courage to make sure our minority reports are heard today. Because, believe me, it’s easier to hear them from controversies 2,500 years ago than those we currently face.....

.... Some rabbis way back in antiquity listened to the minority voice represented by the book of Ruth -- and welcomed her into their Scripture. Now it’s our turn to decide how we will treat the minorities in our midst. Amen.



## Session 1 Attachment E: Sample Church Statements on Migration/Immigration

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**United Methodist Church:** “At the center of Christian faithfulness to Scripture is the call we have been given to love and welcome the sojourner. We call upon all United Methodist churches to welcome newly arriving migrants in their communities, to love them as we do ourselves, to treat them as one of our native-born, to see in them the presence of the incarnated Jesus, and to show hospitality to the migrants in our midst, believing that through their presence we are receiving the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.” ([Book of Resolutions, 3281](#))

**U.S. Catholic Church:** “The Catholic Church in the United States is an immigrant Church with a long history of embracing diverse newcomers and providing assistance and pastoral care to immigrants, migrants, refugees, and people on the move. Our Church has responded to Christ’s call for us to ‘welcome the stranger among us,’ for in this encounter with the immigrant, the migrant, and the refugee in our midst, we encounter Christ.” ([USCCB statement on Catholic Social Teaching](#))

**Episcopal Church:** “Scripture and tradition call us to welcome the immigrant and the stranger. Abraham and Sarah’s travels in Genesis, including their hospitality to three strangers by the oaks of Mamre, and the Holy Family’s flight into Egypt in the Gospel of Matthew remind us that God protects those who seek safety in foreign lands. Scripture also calls people of faith to provide refuge: ‘The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt’ (Leviticus 19:34). The undersigned clergy of The Episcopal Church are making a shared statement of values about the presence of immigrants and refugees in our communities. Our congregations are diverse. We are high church and low church, big and small, from red states and blue states. Our parishioners hold points of view across the political spectrum. We share a common commitment to honor immigrants, refugees, and neighbors from different religions and we are deeply disturbed by the current swell of fear and scapegoating which seeks to criminalize and unfairly deport undocumented immigrants in our communities.” ([Episcopal churches statement in 2017](#))

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):** “This concern with immigration lays at the heart of who Presbyterians are as a people of faith. We believe in a God who migrated to the human condition in the person Jesus and we adhere to the Judeo-Christian tradition of providing hospitality and doing justice. Further, the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has several provisions that address specific needs of immigrant fellowships/congregations.” ([PCUSA 220th General Assembly in 2012](#))

**United Church of Christ:** “In a world becoming increasingly globalized, more people are leaving their homelands to seek better lives and opportunities in new countries. Their reasons



for leaving are diverse and complex: economic necessity, war, or persecution. The U.S. has long been a nation of immigrants and we have consistently been conflicted about this. We gratefully welcome immigrants and their contributions, and we exclude them, discriminate against them and, at times, inflict grave harm upon them. As Christians, we are called to love our neighbors. The Bible is unambiguous in calling us to welcome aliens and strangers in our land, and to love them as we love ourselves. In these times, let us listen to the voice of the still-speaking God. We will learn how to respond to these new sisters and brothers residing among us." ([UCC Current Statement](#))

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:** Immigration is an ever-present topic at our dinner tables and in our congregations as Congress continues to discuss long-overdue protection for thousands of our community members who lack permanent legal status. Scripture calls us to welcome the sojourner. God commanded of the Israelites: "The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:34). Today, I renew my call to all of us as Christians to recognize our neighbors as made in the image of God, and to our nation's elected leaders: Enact policies that provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented young people who arrived in the U.S. as children, known as Dreamers, and do so without harming other vulnerable immigrants. As Lutherans, we live out our biblical calling by serving in ministries with migrants and refugees in our communities and advocating for laws that reflect this commitment. I am troubled that policies under consideration will protect some of our community members while, at the same time, harming others. While recognizing the right of all countries to control their borders, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) social teaching affirms that "border policies should always respect the human dignity of all persons." ([Statement by the ELCA Presiding Bishop in 2018](#))



## SESSION 2

### Session 2 Attachment A: Immigration Storyline Exercise

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#### Instructions:

1. Pull up the Timeline Cards:  
<https://justfaith.org/app/uploads/2025/06/Session-2-Timeline-.pdf>
2. Locate the cards you've been assigned.

Group/individual 1: cards 3-4

Group/individual 2: cards 5-9

Group/individual 3: cards 10-12

Group/individual 4: cards 14-18

Group/individual 5: cards 19-21

Group/individual 6: cards 22-24

Group/individual 7: cards 25-29

Co-facilitators present cards 1-2, 13, 30-34.

Note: Co-facilitators will have their own separate group.

3. Read the timeline cards that have been assigned to you.
4. Jot down your answer to these two questions:
  - a. "What were the hopes or fears of the American people that characterized this period in U.S. history?"
  - b. How did those hopes and fears inform political opinions on the topic of immigration?
5. You will then prepare a 1 minute summary of what happened during the time period, as well as hopes and fears that you identified. When you share with the large group, you will simply provide a summary, rather than reading all of the cards.



## Session 2 Attachment B: Important Moments to Point Out

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**Native Americans, colonization:** People often say we are all immigrants, or we are a country of immigrants. While it's true that a majority of people in the U.S. have an immigrant history—and perhaps most within the past century—it's important to recognize that there were Native Americans here before European colonization. Africans were also forced to immigrate—what we would today call human trafficking. So while saying we are all immigrants is often intended to unite us, this statement can be dismissive of the experience of Native American and African American stories.

**Asian exclusion:** Point out that Chinese immigrants made up only 0.002% of the U.S. population at the time of the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882). People of Chinese descent were excluded from immigrating to the U.S. from 1877-1952, and many other Asians were also excluded within this time period.

**World Wars I and II era:** Growing isolationism and nativism led to two immigration restriction acts that set ethnic quotas on non-western European countries. The quotas established in the Immigration Act of 1924 led the U.S. to reject German/Jewish refugees aboard the steamship St. Louis in 1939. A quarter of those 900 refugees later died in the Holocaust. During this time, 87 percent of visas went to immigrants from western Europe.

**Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965:** This legislation changed the immigration system from being nationality-based and allowed for increased immigration from non-western European countries. Prior to 1965, our immigration system strongly favored western European immigrants, providing them an open, fast track to legal entry. (Ask participants if they've heard the statement "My family immigrated here legally, and other people should too!" How could this moment in history inform that opinion?)

**1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act:** Under President Reagan's administration, there was a two-pronged approach to immigration efforts: (1) over 3 million undocumented immigrants were given amnesty (granted legal, permanent status in the U.S.), and (2) proposals for enforcement of labor and border policies that did not come to fruition. No changes were made to the legal immigration system.

**Formation of Department of Homeland Security (DHS):** It's telling to track how the government shifted immigration enforcement to various departments over time. First, immigration was housed in the Department of Treasury (economic issue!). Then it moved to the Bureau of Labor (jobs issue!), then to the Department of Justice (public safety issue!), and then to the Department of Homeland Security (national security issue!).



## Session 2 Attachment C: Closing Prayer

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Reader 1: I want to welcome the stranger  
I need help Lord not to see differences but instead to see the face of God  
I need help Lord not to judge based on clothes, language or customs  
I need help Lord not to walk away pretending I don't see them

Reader 2: I want to welcome the stranger  
Help me Lord to delight in the variety and diversity of all people  
Help me Lord to see the spark of the divine in their eyes  
Help me Lord to take the risk and offer compassion  
Help me impart the dignity they deserve as children of God

Reader 3: I want to welcome the stranger  
I can't imagine living in a refugee camp or leaving everything in life behind  
I can't imagine not having enough food or water  
I can't imagine running for my life to escape war or gang conflict  
I can't imagine being totally vulnerable  
Help me to understand

Reader 4: I want to welcome the stranger  
Allow me to meet their glance and offer a smile  
Allow me to give a wave or nod of acceptance  
Allow me to help them navigate their new life

Reader 5: I want to welcome the stranger  
I want them to believe that they can start over  
I want them to believe in love not fear  
I want to acknowledge their gifts and know more about their lives

Reader 6: I want to welcome the stranger  
By doing so I know I will receive more than I give  
By doing so I know that I will be connected to the oneness of God

Leader: Infinite source of all, draw us closer to each other and to you- it is only with your help that we may one day truly be in communion together. Amen.

Prayer written for JFM by Santa Orlando,  
a member of the Albany, New York,  
Chapter of the Maryknoll Affiliates.



## SESSION 3

### Session 3 Attachment A: Immigration Simulation

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Note: This simulation was written by [The Office of Social Justice of the Christian Reformed Church](#) for in-person groups. JustFaith Ministries has adapted this simulation for virtual groups.

Instructions:

1. Pull up the identity descriptions and locate the identity assigned to you by your co-facilitator: <https://justfaith.org/app/uploads/2025/06/Updated-Identity-cards.pdf>
2. There are four ways, or four different visa categories, in which individuals can attempt to apply to enter the U.S. Which category might work best for the person in your story? Click on the links below to view the “visa applications.”
  - If the person in your story is hoping to work, you might try the EMPLOYMENT visa: <https://justfaith.org/app/uploads/2025/06/Employment-Visa-Updated.pdf>
  - If the person in your story is hoping to join family members in the U.S., try the FAMILY visa: <https://justfaith.org/app/uploads/2021/10/Family-Visa-Form-.pdf>
  - If you’re fleeing persecution, try the REFUGEE/ASYLUM visa: <https://justfaith.org/app/uploads/2025/06/Updated-RefugeeAsylum.pdf>
  - If you’re from a country that doesn’t already have a lot of immigrants in the U.S., try the DIVERSITY visa: <https://justfaith.org/app/uploads/2025/06/Updated-Diversity-Visa.pdf>
3. If the form you initially pick up doesn’t work, try a different form. If you feel confused or frustrated, that’s okay! The process itself *is* confusing and frustrating.



## Session 3 Attachment B: Points of Emphasis on the Visa Forms

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### Family

- The family member in the U.S. does the work of petitioning the U.S. government for their family member who wishes to immigrate. The family member in the U.S. must be a citizen or a legal permanent resident.
  - A person without legal status cannot petition for family members.
  - A person on a temporary visa cannot petition for family members.
- Highlight that the family member in the U.S. must meet certain financial requirements in order to petition for a family member.
- Emphasize that the family member in the U.S. must be 21 years old in order to petition for a family member to immigrate to the U.S.
- Your family member must be an immediate family member.
  - An immediate family member is a spouse, child, parent, or sibling.
  - Extended family relationships (aunts, uncles, cousins, grandchildren, grandparents) do not qualify.
- You may or may not be able to enter, based on the status of your U.S. family member.
  - If the family member is a U.S. citizen, they can petition for all immediate family members.
  - If you are a legal permanent resident (green-card holder) you can petition only for your spouse and unmarried child (minor or adult).
  - A majority of legal permanent residents can apply for citizenship after five years of living legally in the United States.
- Highlight the wait times. The forms show averages, but wait times are based, country of origin, family relationship, and how many applicants are in the line ahead of you.
  - There is a maximum number of family-sponsored preference visas that can be issued to citizens of any one country in a single fiscal year. No country can receive more than seven percent of the visas available for the year. This results in significant backlogs for high-volume immigration countries, like China, Mexico, and the Philippines.
  - Unlike all the other visa categories, Congress does not place a limit on the number of visas it will give annually for spouses and minor children. Therefore,



they tend to experience shorter wait times, but there is no guarantee that these visas will be granted.

## Employment

- The following individuals can obtain a visa to immigrate to the U.S. within 12 to 18 months: (Such individuals find this out at question one on the employment visa form and do not need to proceed to the other questions.)
  - People investing \$800,000 in a job-creating enterprise that employs and preserves at least 10 full-time U.S. workers.
  - “Persons of extraordinary ability” in the arts, science, education, business, or athletics; outstanding professors and researchers, multinational executives and managers.
  
- Otherwise, you must be a skilled worker to enter through this visa.
  - Individuals must have a permanent, full-time job offer from a U.S. employer, so this involves much more than being willing to work.
  - Before officially offering the job, the employer must go through a Department of Labor certification process to prove to that:
    - There are no other qualified U.S. citizens who want the job – this is to prioritize hiring U.S. citizens.
    - The employer must also prove that hiring a foreign worker will not negatively impact U.S. workers’ wages or working conditions.
  - The employer must petition for the prospective immigrant. As the visa form demonstrates, the employer may have to wait six to 10 years for the immigrant to receive their visa and typically pay \$5,000 to \$15,000 in legal and filing fees, so the employer has to really, really want this person.
  - A majority of immigrants coming through the employment “line” must have a college or advanced degree or two years of experience in the field in which they are seeking to work.
  
- Wait times for all employment visa categories are based on the annual limit on the number of visas given and the number of applicants for each visa.
  
- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. Farm Bureau estimates that 40-60 percent of all farm workers in the U.S. do not have legal immigration status. This demonstrates a major injustice of our immigration system—we have jobs that need to be filled but our broken system doesn’t give enough visas to allow people to come do the work.
  - There are visa shortages for high-skilled workers. So, many tech companies are strong advocates for immigration reform.



- Congress sets the annual visa limits for each category. For example, there are only 5,000 permanent low-skilled worker visas allowed per year, and seasonal workers do not qualify. Only Congress can change these numbers.
- Congress also sets the requirements. For example, if someone is working on a farm today and does not currently have legal status, there is basically no way for that person to get legal status without returning to their country of origin and entering through one of the four “lines” we have discussed. Congress created this requirement, and only they can change it.
- There are no temporary visas that lead to legal permanent residency (green card). If someone on a temporary visa wants to apply for a green card, they must apply to enter through one of the four doors.

## Refugee and Asylum

- A person may qualify for refugee and asylum status if they are fleeing a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a specific social group.
  - Meeting this legal definition is a requirement for someone to be considered a refugee or an asylum seeker.
- **The United States currently is not resettling refugees except in certain specific cases.**
- Difference between refugee and asylum status: Refugee status is processed overseas, and recipients arrive to the United States with legal status. Asylum status is requested when someone arrives in the U.S. and then applies for status while on U.S. soil. The criteria are the same for both categories.
- You are five times more likely to receive asylum status if you have legal representation, but a majority of individuals, including children, do not have access to legal counsel.
- There is a common perception that a “refugee” is a generic term for a desperate individual who cannot safely stay in their home country. It is critical to understand that the criteria is much stricter than this, and there is a high burden of proof required.
- A person fleeing persecution will often leave their home country and find safety in a United Nations-sponsored (U.N.) refugee camp or an urban center in a neighboring



country. The U.N. will do initial screenings and give refugee status to individuals. Only the most vulnerable individuals will be recommended to a third country for resettlement.

- There are about 30 countries that participate in refugee resettlement - one of them being the United States (**although the resettlement program is currently suspended**).
- Less than 1 percent of the over 21 million refugees will ever be resettled into a new country.
- Refugees are the most thoroughly vetted individuals to enter the United States (security checks can take up to two years).
  - There is very little evidence to connect refugees and the threat of violence. The Cato Institute reports that the chance of being murdered in a terrorist attack caused by a refugee is 1 in 3.64 billion per year.
- There are currently 65 million displaced persons worldwide, but because of the strict definition, not all are given refugee status (for example, economic migrants fleeing northern Africa to Europe).
  - 21 million of these displaced persons have refugee status.

## Diversity

- This visa category was created in 1990 to dedicate a channel for immigrants from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States.
- This visa acts as a lottery system. You must meet the criteria to be granted a visa, but selection for this visa is random.
- Each year only 55,000 diversity visas are available and in 2015 over 9 million individuals applied.
- This visa isn't for the poor: you have to meet certain education and job experience prerequisites, and there is a \$330 fee if you are selected.
- Being selected through the lottery does not guarantee a visa; you must also fill out online forms, go through an interagency screening process, receive a medical form, and travel to an interview.



## Attachment C: Reading Dialogue Questions for Small Groups

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*Instructions: You will have 25 minutes to discuss the questions below in your small groups. You might not have time to get to every question, and that's okay. Choose a facilitator to read the questions and facilitate the conversation. Ask a representative to share with the large group 1-2 sentences about key points your group discussed.*

*Readings for this week were: Welcoming the Stranger: chapter 3 (p. 43-66); [Refugee Screening Process \(World Relief\)](#).*

- How was your experience with the spiritual practice this week?
- What is one thing that stood out to you from any of the readings?
- What surprised you from the information you read about refugees?
- What lingering questions do you have about refugees? What can you do to find the answers to your questions?

### Questions from *Welcoming the Stranger*

- What are two or three goals that you find immigrants of the past and present share?
- If someone asked you: "my family came to the United States through Ellis Island in 1907, and they came the legal way.... Why can't immigrants today do the same?" how would you respond?
- What does the ebb and flow of historical sentiment toward immigrants reveal about our country? Is it an encouragement or a discouragement to read the brief historical immigration summary of our nation?
- How might an understanding of our country's history regarding immigration help someone to better understand immigration today?



## Session 3 Attachment D: Closing Prayer

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God of our Wandering Ancestors,  
Long have we known  
That your heart is with the refugee:  
That you were born into time In a family of refugees  
Fleeing violence in their homeland,  
Who then gathered up their hungry child  
And fled into alien country.

Their cry, your cry, resounds through ages:  
"Will you let me in?"

Give us hearts that break open  
When our brothers and sisters turn to us  
with that same cry.

Then surely all these things will follow:  
Ears will no longer turn deaf to their voices.  
Eyes will see a moment for grace instead of threat.  
Tongues will not be silenced but will instead advocate.  
And hands will reach out—  
working for peace in their homeland,  
working for justice in the lands where they seek safe haven.

Lord, protect all refugees in their travels.  
May they find a friend in me  
And so make me worthy  
Of the refuge I have found in you. Amen.

Source: Catholic Relief Services



## SESSION 4

### Session 4 Attachment A: Prayer for Travelers

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#### ***Prayer for Travelers***

This is a prayer for all the travelers.  
For the ones who start out in beauty,  
who fall from grace,  
who step gingerly,  
looking for the way back.  
And for those who are born into the margins,  
who travel from one liminal space to another,  
crossing boundaries in search of center.  
This is a prayer for the ones whose births  
are a passing from darkness to darkness,  
who all their lives are drawn toward the light,  
and keep moving,  
and for those whose journeys  
are a winding road that begins  
and ends in the same place,  
though only when the journey is completed  
do they finally know where they are.  
For all the travelers, young and old,  
aching and joyful,  
weary and full of life;  
the ones who are here, and the ones who are not here;  
the ones who are like you (and they're all like you)  
and the ones who are different (for in some ways, we each travel alone). This is a prayer for  
traveling mercies,  
And sure-footedness,  
for clear vision,  
for bread  
for your body and spirit,  
for water,  
for your safe arrival  
and for everyone you see along the way.

— Angela Herrera



## Session 4 Attachment B: Closing Meditation

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*Prayer written for JFM by Maryknoll Lay Missioner Rick Dixon, El Salvador*

Sweet, Spirit of Jesus, teach us 'I am' relationships, relationship in the present moment, relationships which belong to all humanity, in which all things have their being and come into being.

**R: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.**

The immigrant child becoming flesh the moment I see her, believe in her, reach out to her. Of her presence, full of grace and truth, have we all received.

**R: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.**

The barefoot child selling bread on the streets of San Salvador. The moment I gift her a smile and something to eat,

**R: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.**

The child of poverty who cannot go to school. The moment I buy a book and help find a way,

**R: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.**

The teenager who dies in a hail of gunfire. The moment I mourn and weep,

**R: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.**

A family fleeing war and violence. The moment I give them shelter,

**R: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.**

A child finding a word of life. The moment I imagine and care,

**R: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.**



## Session 4 Attachment C: Push & Pull Factors of Migration<sup>2</sup>

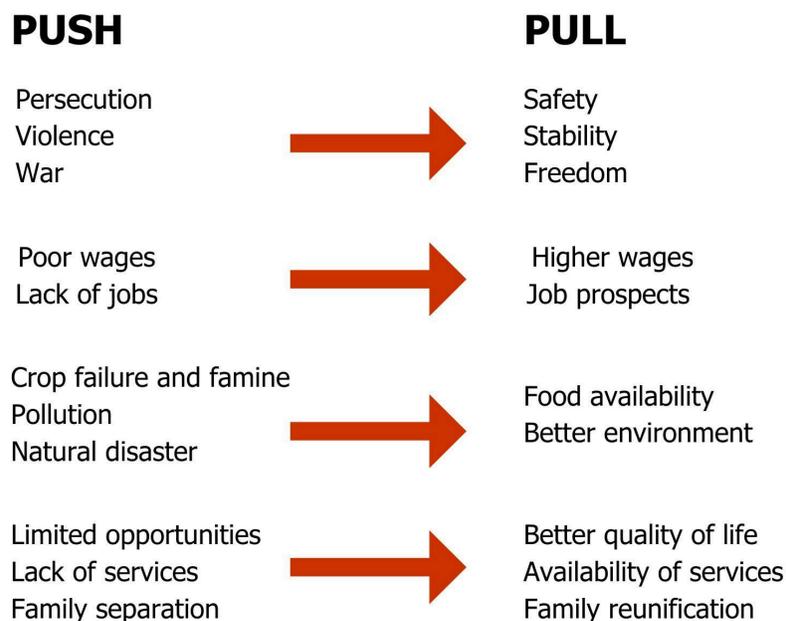
*"Migrants are our brothers and sisters in search of a better life, far away from poverty, hunger, exploitation and the unjust distribution of the planet's resources which are meant to be equitably shared by all. Don't we all want a better, more decent and prosperous life to share with our loved ones?"*

— Pope Francis, *Message for the World Day of Migrants & Refugees, 2016*

Across the globe, people migrate for a wide variety of reasons. Most of these reasons can be categorized in two ways: **push** factors, which *push* people out of their home countries, and **pull** factors, which *pull* them into a different country. Push and pull factors can be economic, political, social, or environmental.

On the one hand, push and pull factors can be helpful in identifying broad, underlying factors that spur migration so that we can make informed decisions around immigration policies. On the other hand, push and pull factors do not capture the specific and personal reasons that someone chooses — or is forced — to migrate; it is crucial to honor each person's unique story.

Through the readings and videos, you have heard several stories about immigrants. During Session 5, you will be asked to recall these stories and name the push and pull factors that contributed to their decisions to cross borders.



<sup>2</sup> This attachment draws from a 2016 handout created by Justice for Immigrants: <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/>



## SESSION 5

### Session 5 Attachment A: Closing Prayer

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All: Merciful God,

Our history as human beings, and even before, has been a history of life on the move. As your sons and daughters, we continue to search for a place to sleep, food to eat, and families and communities to support us. We are a people on a journey.

We are grateful for the earth that sustains us, but we do not always take time to thank you. Also, we lack compassion for our brothers and sisters who have been uprooted by violence, natural disasters and poverty.

Help us to remember that we are always on a journey with them and with You, to a new way of life in abundance.

Amen.

This prayer was written for JFM by Maryknoll Father Paul Masson, who served for ten years in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, just across the Rio Grande from El Paso, Texas.



## Attachment B: Preparing your Policy Briefing (Preparation for Session 6)

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Immigration policy is constantly changing. For this reason, you'll help to update your group on the status of important issues. Here are the steps for completing your research:

1. In Session 5, your facilitator assigned you with a topic to research this week (it could have been Asylum, DACA and DAPA, TPS (Temporary Protective Status), Family Separations, or another topic. If you don't know your topic, contact your facilitator.
2. Using the internet, find out some basic information about your topic. Try to find perspectives from a variety of sources and choose recent information. Be careful of [fake news!](#)
3. Jot down a few notes about your topic:
  - What's the historical background behind your issue? (answering who, what, when, where, and why/how could be a helpful way to approach this question.)
  - What are the latest updates on your topic?
  - Is there controversy around your topic? If so, what are popular perspectives on the issue? (Do your best to accurately represent these perspectives, even if you disagree.)
4. In session 6, you'll convene with other group members who researched your same topic, compare notes, and give a brief presentation to the rest of the group.



## SESSION 6

### Session 6 Attachment A: Reading Dialogue

*Instructions: You will have 15 minutes to discuss the questions below in your small groups. You probably will not have time to get to all of the questions, and that's okay. Choose a facilitator to read the questions and facilitate the conversation. Ask a representative to share with the large group 1-2 sentences about key points your group discussed.*

*Note: For this session, you will have read *The Line Becomes a River: Part 2* (p. 81-160).*

- What is one thing that stood out to you from any of the readings?
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. famously stated many times that “whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be... This is the inter-related structure of reality.” At the same time, Cantú describes (especially on page 138) how our society has largely become ambivalent to the violence which prompts migration. Do you agree with King’s statement? If so, how do you feel that you are affected by the violence that many immigrants face?
- What do you think about David Wood’s commentary on moral injury, which Cantú discusses on pages 150-151? How might you be exposed to moral injury?
- On page 157, Cantú quotes Cristina Rivera Garza: “Pain not only destroys, but produces reality.” What do you think Garza means here?
- Will Willimon, in his book *Fear of the Other*, writes:
 

*“Only an appropriately grateful fear of the Lord is sufficient to overcome the often deep divide between “people like us” and the mysterious, sometimes threatening, “them.” Love your neighbor—yep, your poor Black, rich White, Jewish, Muslim, NRA-conservative Republican, class-hating Democrat, atheist, homophobic, exuberantly lesbian—neighbor as yourself.*

*Let’s be honest that our faith requires us to go toward the Other without regard for whether or not the Other steps toward us. The outcome of my step toward is not predetermined. Sometimes my gesture will be unreturned. I may discover that the Other is so angry at the hurt received from me and my kind that the Other will be unable to step toward me. Jesus does not promise that by moving toward the Other we will bring out the best in the Other. He commands us to act toward the Other as Jesus has acted toward us.*

*In the light of Jesus, simply receiving the Other is not the full justice we owe. Jesus pushes us beyond the conventional invite and welcome toward nothing*



*short of love. But asking God to give us the grace to receive the Other is an essential first step on that journey. I find it helpful to be clear: I take the step toward and open my arms, not primarily because of my enlightened redefinition of the Other but rather **because of Jesus's redefinition of me.***

How do Willimon's words challenge you?

- How was your experience with the spiritual practice this week? Where do you find refuge in times of hardship?

## Session 6 Attachment B: Closing Prayer (10 minutes)

### Psalm 137 (adapted)

By the waters of the Rio Grande, there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion.

On the willows there we hung up our guitars, for there the border patrol asked us for songs and the vigilantes asked for laughter, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?

By the waters we weep and remember. We remember Mexico and El Salvador. We remember Honduras and Darfur. We remember Colombia and Bosnia. We remember Cuba and Haiti. We remember China and Romania. By the waters we remember.

On the willows we hung up our guitars. We hung up our hopes. We hung up our hoes, our land, our dreams. We hung up our poverty, our hunger, our thirst. We hung up our friends, our traditions, our culture. We hung up our family ties, our food, our language.

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? We sing only the song of the homeless, the unemployed, the laments of hunger and thirst, of death and destruction, the songs of the songless, the hungry, the thirsty, the songs of the lonely, the songs of the dying.

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?

From *Immigration and the Bible: a Guide for Radical Welcome*

By Joan Maruskin, UMW, 2012

*Used with permission*



# IMMERSION

## Immersion Attachment

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### Opening Prayer

**ALL:** For the experience of today and everyone we shall meet, for another chance to live and serve you and serve one another, we are truly grateful.

Free us this day from:

All fear  
All anxiety  
All bitterness toward others  
All cowardice  
All prejudice  
All laziness in our thoughts and actions.

Fill us with:

Love that knows no barrier  
Courage that cannot be shaken  
Faith strong enough for dark times  
Strength sufficient for our tasks  
Wisdom to meet life's complexities.

Be with us today and fill our hearts with love for all your people.

Amen.

### Closing Prayer

Reader 1: **As people of faith** — we work not only to form a just society that is inclusive, but also to transform unjust structures that are exclusive.

Reader 2: **As people of change** — we work to hear the voices of those on the margins, joining our voices with theirs, listening to them for guidance and leadership.

Reader 3: **As people of hope** — Give us the courage not to remain silent in the midst of injustice, apathetic toward great need, nor paralyzed by the immensity of the problem.

Reader 4: **As a people of prayer** — May unceasing prayer accompany all of our actions, as we work together to bring about God's Kingdom of justice and peace.



**All: Lord, you have given all people one common origin, and your will is to gather them as one family in yourself. Set our hearts on fire with the desire to ensure justice for all our brothers and sisters. Empower us to share what we have received from you, that we might “rejoice in that day and leap for joy” at the coming of your Kingdom. Amen.**



## SESSION 7

### Session 7 Attachment A: Reading Dialogue

*Instructions: You will have 20 minutes to discuss the questions below in your small groups. Choose a facilitator to read the questions and facilitate the conversation. Ask a representative to share with the large group 1-2 sentences about key points your group discussed.*

*Note: This week, you will have read Welcoming the Stranger: chapter 8 (p. 150-180), Appendix 5 (p. 236-7); and The Line Becomes a River: Part 3 and Epilogue (p. 163-247).*

#### **Welcoming the Stranger**

- What stood out to you from chapter 8?
- Do you think that the issue of immigration has been used for political gain by members of Congress and those running for president? If so, why do you think this political strategy has been effective?
- Work together to recall key points from the information in Appendix 5. Then ask: have you ever called your representatives? What was the experience like?

#### **The Line Becomes a River**

- What stood out to you from part 3 and the epilogue?
- What did you learn from José's story about legal proceedings regarding immigration cases?
- What do you think the wolf represents in this story?
- Turn to pages 190-193. What challenges do you imagine that second and third generation youth might face in regard to self-identity and belonging?
- On pages 230-231, Francisco's mother says: "What I'm saying is that we learn violence by watching others, by seeing it enshrined in institutions. Then, even without choosing it, it becomes normal to us, it becomes part of who we are..... You can't exist within a system for that long without being implicated, without absorbing its poison." Where else do you see this concept playing out, either in society or in your personal life?



- Cantú writes on page 163: “Jung went so far as to assert that it had become ‘a political and social duty’ to perceive ‘the other as the very devil, so as to fascinate the outward eye and prevent it from looking at the individual life within.’”
  - In your own words, what point is Cantú making here?
  - Thinking back on all we have learned during our time together, where have you seen evidence of this reality?

Where do you see evidence of this reality in your own life?



## Session 7 Attachment B: Closing Prayer

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- Reader 1: I walk the path that you took  
hours or days ago.  
Stones and slope and thorns  
threaten each step with  
danger.
- Reader 2: I see where you slept  
under the mesquite tree  
home to spiders, snakes, ants -  
familiar to coyotes, Gila monsters,  
God knows what.  
A piece of plastic,  
grass woven into the branches  
for shade against the merciless sun,  
a tuna can, toothbrush,  
tortilla cloth, used bus ticket -  
all part of your story,  
your life lost in this desert.
- Reader 3: Nearby a tiny silver spoon  
engraved, a love letter  
your bible, a pair of panties,  
a baby bottle, birth control pills,<sup>[1]</sup>  
breast cancer medicine,  
diapers, one chancla,<sup>[2]</sup>  
perfume bottle,  
a pair of pants with  
a name and number written in the inseam.
- Reader 4: O, what you leave behind  
haunts me  
I know you  
Sister, mother, friend,  
Lover, aunt.  
Some day  
we will all be held  
accountable for  
  
your suffering, your loss.



Reader 5:           Some day, we will  
                          celebrate your courage,  
                          your story, your making  
                          your way to the Promised Land.  
                          Some day we will  
                          name this crossing Exodus  
                          and thank God that  
                          some of you make it  
                          Across.

Reproduced here with Rev. McCormick's  
permission.

[1] Special note regarding the mention of birth control pills: Women on migrant trails are often sexually assaulted. For this reason, many take birth control pills on their journey in order to avoid getting pregnant. This decision, for many, defies their Catholic faith.

[2] Chancla means flip-flop.



## Session 7 Attachment C: Discerning Next Steps

*Read between Sessions 7 and 8. Attachment B is in the participant packet and is not needed to facilitate this session.*

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*"Vocation is where our greatest passion meets the world's greatest needs."  
— Frederick Buechner*

During Session 8, your group will plan the action steps you will take in response to what you have experienced in this JustFaith Ministries program. While it is important to continue educating yourself about injustice, insight without action is of little or no value, and your action plan should therefore include concrete steps you will take to address systemic injustice. If your group would like assistance with the discernment process, contact Outreach and Engagement Manager Leila Oakley by emailing [leila@justfaith.org](mailto:leila@justfaith.org).

To prepare for your group's discernment process, follow the instructions below.

- 1. Center yourself in the Holy Presence:** Find a quiet, comfortable space where you will not be distracted. Take a few moments to notice your breath. Invite God's Spirit into your discernment process.
- 2. What action step will you take individually?** Consider all you have experienced on your JustFaith Ministries journey. Flip through your books and program material; as you do so, recall where you experienced a sense of energy, urgency, excitement, or anger. These emotions may give you a clue as to how you are being called to take action as an individual. In addition, read through your group's "Now What?" list, if you have it available, and read through the suggestions on Session 7 Attachment D. Do you feel any energy around any of these potential action steps?

During Session 8, you will be asked to name your individual action step aloud.

- 3. What action steps will you take with your group?** Taking action as a community can help you maximize your impact and engage in mutual support. During Session 8, your group will choose one of four options for how you will take action as a group.

Prayerfully consider each of the options so you can bring an informed opinion to your group's discernment process during Session 8. Choose at least two options you'd be open to taking.



Option 1: **Continue on to another JustFaith Ministries program.**

**Who is this for?** Option 1 may be the best fit for groups whose members want to continue exploring root causes of injustice before taking collective action.

**How to prepare:** Peruse the JustFaith Ministries programs page to discern which program might be most interesting and relevant to you and your group. The program *Want to Talk? Communication Skills for Divided Times* may be of particular interest, as it can guide your group in exploring how to navigate important conversations around immigration.

JFM program page: <https://justfaith.org/programs/>

Option 2: **Cultivate a new group:** Together with your current group, offer Faith and Immigration Justice for a new group of participants. Option 2 requires all hands on deck from everyone in your current group: in addition to two co-facilitators, you will also need volunteers to invite new participants into the group, create social media and/or bulletin announcements, and help plan other logistical details.

**Who is this for?** Option 2 can be a particularly effective next step if your current group belongs to the same church or organization. Getting more individuals from your institution on the same page about immigration justice can help you mobilize the institution as a whole. By working together, you can create a sustainable immigration justice/welcoming team and accomplish bigger goals. (Faith and Immigration Justice can serve as a training or enrichment tool for this team).

**How to prepare:** Consider who from your current group might be a good facilitator and if there is a role you would like to serve in coordinating and supporting a new group.

Option 3: **Create a community action plan using the JFM program *Just Action! How to Advocate and Mobilize for Justice* to guide your process:** *Just Action* will walk your group step-by-step through creating and implementing an achievable immigration justice action plan. Along the way, it will introduce practical grassroots organizing and advocacy tools that can equip you for effective and sustainable action that aligns with your faith.



**Who is this for?** Option 3 is especially great for groups who are serious about creating systemic change, and who can dedicate about four to six months to participating in *Just Action* and implementing their action plan.

**How to prepare:** Read about *Just Action* on JustFaith Ministries' website, and consider whether it could be a helpful next step for your group:  
<https://justfaith.org/just-action-how-to-advocate-and-mobilize-for-justice/>

Option 4: **Take action as a group without using *Just Action*:** If you choose this option, your group will review the "Now What?" list and discern a goal together. Next, you will name action steps to help you achieve that goal.

**Who is this for?** Option 4 is for groups who feel they are ready to jump into action without further guidance from JustFaith Ministries, or for those who cannot commit to taking *Just Action*.

**How to Prepare:** Consider ideas for what your group's goal might be, as well as steps you might take together to achieve it.



## Session 7 Attachment D: Suggested Action Steps

### Shifting the Narrative around Immigration

- **Facilitate the immigration simulation (Session 3) and/or timeline activity (Session 2) in your church or community.** This can be a great way to dispel harmful myths about immigration and prepare your church or community to more fully welcome immigrant neighbors.
- **Host a Welcome Table:** A Welcome Table is a gathering where people can come together to share a meal, stories, and conversation, in order to shift the narrative around immigration. This is a highly flexible format centered on community and connection, and Welcome.US provides all the resources you need to get started: <https://welcome.us/learn/welcome-tables-a-hosting-guide>

### Advocacy

- **Take the [Faith in Action: Practicing Biblical Advocacy](#) online course:** Contacting or meeting with your elected officials may feel daunting, but it can make a real difference and bring about long-term changes to unjust systems. Created by the Christian Reformed Church (who also developed the timeline activity and immigration simulation), this workshop will help you learn how to navigate the U.S. political system and make your voice heard by policymakers. Enroll for free [here](#).
- **Make [5 Calls](#) to your elected officials:** 5 Calls is an easy, effective way for U.S. constituents to make a political impact by calling the offices of their elected officials about important issues. This platform is regularly updated with [relevant policy issues](#), including immigration, and equips people to make calls with up-to-date scripts. It's best to call your legislators' Washington, DC offices so that your concerns are shared with their legislative staff.
- **Email your elected officials and get action alerts sent to your inbox:** As part of their advocacy work for immigrants and refugees, Church World Service offers regularly-updated [action alerts](#) to equip people of faith to send emails to their elected officials about current policy issues affecting immigrants and refugees. View all of their action alerts [here](#) and sign up to receive the latest action alerts to your email inbox [here](#).
- **Write a [letter to the editor](#) or an [opinion piece](#) in your local newspaper:** An effective way to raise your voice, get your legislators' attention, and act on issues important to you is to write a letter to the editor (LTE) or an op-ed in your state or local



news outlet. Learn how and where to write and submit an LTE [here](#) and an op-ed [here](#). You may consider using the issue descriptions provided on the [5 Calls](#) platform mentioned above—as well as your personal experience and perspective—to help you craft your argument.

- **Note: If you live in Iowa,** the **Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice** can be a great way to get involved in advocacy. This membership-based organization provides immigration legal services and circles of solidarity among immigrant families, and its advocacy arm is driven by the stories and patterns they encounter in their work. To get involved, visit their website and contact their office: <https://www.iowammj.org/advocacy/>

### Support Existing Efforts

- **Support or volunteer with an immigration legal services organization:** Take a look at [this map](#) from the Immigration Advocates Network to find immigration legal services organizations in your area and contact them about any volunteer opportunities they may have. Many organizations rely on volunteers to support their workshops, citizenship classes, court accompaniment, interpretation, and more.
- **El Refugio** is a nonprofit organization (started by JustFaith grads!) in Lumpkin, GA that accompanies migrants at Stewart detention center and their loved ones through hospitality, visitation, support, and advocacy. There are many ways to support their work. Visit their website to learn more: <https://elrefugiostewart.org/en/advocacy>.

### Stay Informed!

Insight without action is of little or no value. However, staying up-to-date on immigration policy can help you discover the most effective ways to take action. Learn about policy updates through the [American Immigration Council](#) website or the [Welcome.US website](#).



## SESSION 8

### Session 8 Attachment A: Continue on to Another JFM Program

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Continuing on to another JustFaith Ministries program can be a great fit for groups whose members want to continue exploring root causes of injustice before taking collective action.

The program *Want to Talk? Communication Skills for Divided Times* may be of particular interest, as it can guide your group in exploring how to navigate important conversations around immigration.

If your group has chosen this option, follow the steps below.

#### **Step 1: Decide which program your group would like to take next.**

If some participants have not had a chance to read the descriptions of each program on the JustFaith Ministries website, it may be helpful to display the program page so that participants can see all the options available: <https://justfaith.org/programs/>

#### **Step 2: Decide the following logistical details:**

- When will you begin your next program?
- If your group will be meeting in-person, decide where your meetings will take place.
- Decide if you would like to open your group to new participants. The recommended group size is 7-14 for in-person groups and 7-12 for virtual groups, including facilitators.

#### **Step 3: Decide who will co-facilitate.**

- You will need two co-facilitators. While current co-facilitators can certainly continue in their roles, choosing new co-facilitators can prevent facilitator burnout and create opportunities for shared leadership.
- Co-facilitators should have the capacity to invest the following time each week:



- 1 hour for weekly session preparation, plus additional time for coordinating a guest speaker and immersion experience for most programs
- 1-1.5 hours to complete weekly assignments
- 2 hours to facilitate each weekly session
- Facilitator training and support is available from JustFaith Ministries.

#### **Step 4: Brainstorm about the immersion experience and guest speaker:**

During most programs you will have the opportunity to hear from a guest speaker during Session 5 and engage in an immersion experience between Sessions 6 and 7. With your group's program topic in mind, can you think of anyone you would invite as a guest speaker? How about a group or organization you would like to visit with for your immersion experience?

You do not have to decide the answer to this question today! However, it can be helpful to begin thinking about who you would like to invite, as well as who from your group could coordinate the guest speaker's visit and immersion experience.

#### **Step 5: Reflect on the following questions:**

- Thinking back on your group's journey together so far, is there anything you would like to do differently as you embark on this new phase of your journey? (For example, groups may wish to convene before or after each session for extended conversation and fellowship, or perhaps there is a group guideline you would like to commit to following more closely).
- What are decisions you have made that you would like to uphold and continue during the next phase of your journey? Or, what are qualities of your group that you really appreciate?



## Session 8 Attachment B: Cultivate a New Group

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Making this program available to a new group of participants is one effective way to take action in response to what you have learned during your own journey. By working together with program graduates of multiple small groups, you can accomplish much bigger goals than you could individually or as a single small group.

If your current group is part of the same faith community or organization, offering this program to more of your institution's members can help you to mobilize the institution as a whole. As more participants graduate from the program, you might consider creating an immigration justice team, perhaps using this program as a training or enrichment tool.

To maximize effectiveness, all participants should participate in coordinating and supporting the new group. Below are some questions to discuss with your current group during Session 8.

*Note: It will be very important that your current group coordinate a gathering with the new group after they have finished Session 8. The purpose of this gathering will be to determine the action steps you will take together to create effective and sustainable change.*

### Building a Community: Recruitment and Promotion

- For whom would you like to offer this program? For example, do you seek to offer the program within a particular church, organization, or other institution?
- Including facilitators, you will need 7-14 participants for an in-person group or 7-12 for a virtual group. Who would you like to invite into the group? **List specific names, and assign group members to reach out to them with personal invitations.**

A few notes:

- While making an announcement in a newsletter or from a pulpit can be helpful, personal invitations (face-to-face, over the phone, or through video conferencing) work best.
- If you are hoping to mobilize a church or organization, it might be helpful to include those in positions of influence — such as clergy or committee leaders — who can incorporate the principles they learn into institutional decision-making, as well as motivate others to participate in future program offerings.
- To the best of your abilities, seek out diverse voices, as well as those whose lives are personally affected by the injustices you seek to address. A diversity of backgrounds and perspectives can enrich the group's conversations and result in



more effective action planning. If your group consists of people of color, at least one facilitator should be a person of color, if possible.

- Would your group like to promote the new group through social media, a bulletin announcement, or newsletters? **If so, who are two people from your current group who can take the lead on promotion?**
  - JustFaith Ministries provides a promotion kit, which contains images and sample scripts you can use for social media, newsletters, and other promotional spaces. The promo kit can be found on the program page of the JustFaith Ministries website, [justfaith.org](http://justfaith.org).

## Facilitation

- Invite current co-facilitators to share about their own facilitation experience. Then discuss: Who in your group has the time and spiritual gifts needed to co-facilitate the new group? **Choose two people to be co-facilitators.**<sup>3</sup>
  - Co-facilitators should have the capacity to invest the following time each week:
    - 1 hour for weekly session preparation, plus additional time for coordinating a guest speaker and immersion experience
    - 1-1.5 hours to complete weekly assignments
    - 2 hours to facilitate each weekly session
  - Facilitator training and support is available from JustFaith Ministries.
- Will the new co-facilitators need assistance in running the technology during each session? If so, who is someone from your current group who can either show the co-facilitators how to use the necessary technology or attend each session to run the technological elements?

## Hospitality

- Who is someone from your current group who enjoys hospitality? **Choose one or two hospitality coordinators from your current group** to assist in welcoming the new group. This role can be creative: it may include securing a meeting location; setting up the meeting room with comfortable chairs and soft lighting; bringing coffee and refreshments the first or all weeks; or hosting a celebration gathering after the new group has finished Session 8.

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<sup>3</sup> Alternatively, you could choose one co-facilitator from your current group and one new co-facilitator from the new group.



## Immersion and Guest Speakers

- Who from your group has connections with a guest speaker or immersion organization?  
**Choose one to two people to help set up the guest speaker and immersion for the new group.**

## Loose Ends

What other details need to be decided before the group? Write them down, and assign participants to take the lead on coordinating each.



## Session 8 Attachment C: Continuing to Just Action

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*Just Action! How to Advocate and Mobilize for Justice* will walk your group step-by-step through creating and implementing an achievable immigration justice action plan. Along the way, it will introduce practical grassroots organizing and advocacy tools that can equip you for effective and sustainable action that aligns with your faith.

*Just Action* is especially great for groups who are serious about creating systemic change, and who can dedicate about four to six months to participating in *Just Action* and implementing their action plan.

If your group has chosen this option, follow the steps below.

### **Step 1: Ensure your group is on the same page about what *Just Action* is and what it requires of participants.**

Review the information about *Just Action* found on JustFaith Ministries' website. Note especially that *Just Action* is for groups that can commit to carrying out a 1-3 month action plan after the program is finished.

### **Step 2: Decide the following logistical details:**

- When will you begin *Just Action*?
  - Note: In addition to the eight regular sessions, *Just Action* contains a 3-hour discernment retreat and an immersion experience.
- If your group is meeting in-person, decide where your meetings will take place.

### **Step 3: Decide who will co-facilitate.**

While current co-facilitators can certainly continue in their roles, choosing new co-facilitators can prevent facilitator burnout and create opportunities for shared leadership. You will need two co-facilitators.

- Co-facilitators should have the capacity to invest the following time each week:
  - 1 hour for weekly session preparation, plus additional time for coordinating a guest speaker and immersion experience
  - 1-1.5 hours to complete weekly assignments



- 2 hours to facilitate each weekly session
- Facilitator training and support is available from JustFaith Ministries.

**Step 4: Reflect on the following questions:**

- Thinking back on your group's journey together so far, is there anything you would like to do differently as you embark on this new phase of your journey? (For example, groups may wish to convene before or after each session for extended conversation and fellowship, or perhaps there is a group guideline you would like to follow more closely)
- What are decisions you have made that you would like to continue in the next phase of your journey? Or, what are qualities of your group that you really appreciate?



## Session 8 Attachment D: Group Action Plan

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If your group feels ready to jump into action without further guidance from JustFaith Ministries, or if your group cannot commit to continuing with the racial justice series or taking *Just Action*, follow the steps below.

1. Review the “Now What?” list you have created together as a group. Decide on one action step you would like to take together.

If your group would like to take multiple action steps, that is great! For now, choose one action to start with. Once this action step has been achieved, you can move onto other action steps.

While it is important to always continue learning, for the purposes of this exercise choose an action step to dismantle systemic injustice rather than continue your education.

2. Turn your action step into a SMART goal and write it at the top of the Group Action Plan chart below.

A SMART goal takes the form of a single, short sentence that everyone can understand. It has the following qualities:

- Specific: Narrow it down as much as possible. For example, can your goal be refined to one particular geographic location, policy, or institution?
- Measurable: You should be able to measure your progress toward meeting your goal.
- Achievable: Choose a goal that is realistic for your group. Do not be afraid to start with a relatively easy win!<sup>4</sup> (If the group seems overwhelmed by the proposed goal, this may be a sign that your goal is not achievable enough).
- Relevant: Your goal should be relevant to everyone in your group.
- Time-bound: This goal should not be ongoing. Ideally, your group should be able to achieve your goal within 1-3 months after Session 8.

Examples of SMART goals include:

- Start an immigration justice team in our church/organization by January 1st.

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<sup>4</sup> An “easy win” can fuel energy for setting more ambitious goals in the future.



- Together as a group, participate in an immigration justice organization's action event. (Your group will need to specify the name of the event, date, and time).
  - By April 31st, set up a meeting with our representative to address a specific immigration injustice our group is concerned about (Obviously, this goal will need to be more specific. Your [Bread for the World regional organizer](#) may be able to help if you choose this option)
3. Fill in the chart below:
- Write your SMART goal at the top of your chart.
  - List each step you will need to take in order to reach your goal.
4. Plan a celebration and next steps: Once you have achieved your goal, plan to reconvene to celebrate your accomplishments!

At this gathering, you can also discuss whether your group would like to: 1. take on another action step, 2. participate in another JustFaith Ministries program, 3. offer this program for a new group, or 4. participate in *Just Action! How to Advocate and Mobilize for Justice*.



## Group Action Plan

**Our group's goal:**

<b>Steps</b> <i>List, one step at a time, the actions you will take to achieve your goal</i>	<b>By Whom?</b> <i>Who will be responsible for taking each step?</i>	<b>By When?</b> <i>Name a specific date that each step will be accomplished.</i>



<b>Steps</b> <i>List, one step at a time, the actions you will take to achieve your goal</i>	<b>By Whom?</b> <i>Who will be responsible for taking each step?</i>	<b>By When?</b> <i>Name a specific date that each step will be accomplished.</i>



## Session 8 Attachment E: Closing Prayer

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Facilitator 1: Holy One,

You call us beloved. We belong to you.  
You created us in your image; through your very breath you formed us.

Through your Son Jesus, our Teacher,  
You taught us to call one another *beloved*, because in belonging to you,  
we belong to each other.  
You told us to see your image in the faces of the forgotten and the  
oppressed.  
Through you we became one family; through your Spirit, we breathe the  
same breath.

Free us from that which keeps us from perfect love of our neighbors,  
Because loving our neighbors is the same as loving you. Help us to recognize  
your image in the faces of others, just as the disciples on the road to Emmaus  
recognized Christ in the breaking of the bread.

We now lay before you the following intentions.  
We will take turns around the circle, naming aloud our commitments to more  
perfect love, starting with the person to my right.

*Participants name aloud their action items.*

Facilitator 2: Redeeming God,

We commit to you these intentions as acts of praise and worship. We unite our  
commitments with those working for justice across the country, that we may work  
together to participate with you in building your Kingdom here on earth.  
Strengthen all of us, that through the power of your Spirit, we might have the courage  
to love you, others, and ourselves, with all of our hearts, minds, and strength.  
In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we pray,  
Amen.



## Hispanic Creed/Credo Hispano

**We believe in God the Father Almighty**

*Creemos en Dios Padre todopoderoso*

**Creator of the heavens and the earth;**

*Creador de los cielos y de la tierra;*

**Creator of the all peoples and all cultures;**

*Creador de los pueblos y las culturas;*

**Creator of all tongues and races.**

*Creador de los idiomas y de las razas.*

**We believe in Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord,**

*Creemos en Jesucristo, su Hijo, nuestro Señor,*

**God made flesh in a person for all humanity,**

*Dios hecho carne en un ser humano para todos los humanos,*

**God made flesh in an age for all the ages,**

*Dios hecho carne en un momento para todas las edades,*

**God made flesh in one culture for all cultures,**

*Dios hecho carne en una cultura para todas las culturas,*

**God made flesh in love and grace for all creation.**

*Dios hecho carne en amor y gracia para toda la creación.*

**We believe in the Holy Spirit**

*Creemos en el Espíritu Santo*

**Through whom God incarnate in Jesus Christ**

*por quien el Dios encarnado en Jesucristo*

**Makes his presence known in our peoples and our cultures;**

*se hace presente en nuestro pueblo y nuestra cultura;*

**Through whom, God Creator of all that exists,**

*por quien el Dios creador de todo cuanto existe,*

**Gives us power to become new creatures;**

*nos da poder para ser nuevas criaturas;*

**Whose infinite gifts make us one people: the body of Christ.**

*quien con sus infinitos dones, nos hace un solo pueblo: el cuerpo de Jesucristo.*

**We believe in the Church,**

*Creemos en la Iglesia,*

**Universal because it is a sign of God's Reign,**

*que es universal porque es señal del reino venidero,*

**Whose faithfulness is shown in its many hues**

*que es más fiel mientras más se viste de colores*



**Where all the colors paint a single landscape,**  
*donde todos los colores pintan un mismo paisaje,*  
**Where all tongues sing the same praise.**  
*donde todos los idiomas cantan una misma alabanza.*

**We believe in the Reign of God – the day of the Great Fiesta**  
*Creemos en el reino venidero, día de la gran fiesta,*  
**When all the colors of creation will form a harmonious rainbow,**  
*cuando todos los colores de la creación se unirán en un arco iris de armonía*  
**When all peoples will join in joyful banquet,**  
*cuando todos los pueblos de la tierra se unirán en un banquete de alegría,*  
**When all tongues of the universe will sing the same song.**  
*cuando todas la lenguas del universo se unirán en un coro de alabanza.*

**And because we believe, we commit ourselves:**

*Y porque creemos, nos comprometemos*

**To believe for those who do not believe,**

*a creer por los que no creen,*

**To love for those who do not love,**

*a amar por los que no aman,*

**To dream for those who do not dream,**

*a soñar por los que no sueñan,*

**Until the day when hope becomes reality.**

*hasta que lo que esperamos se torne realidad.*

Amen.

— Justo González

### **Reminder: We Want to Hear from You!**

We want to get this program right, and we hope that you will help us continually revise this program so that it can be the best it can be. JustFaith has a survey for you to complete – it should not take more than fifteen minutes. Thank you in advance for your time!

Session 8 survey for **participants**:

<https://justfaith.org/participant-post-program-survey/>



Session 8 survey for **facilitators**:

<https://justfaith.org/facilitator-post-program-survey/>

