

Dear Friends,

#WeAreEssential

## Faith Fast for Citizenship



On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the first 100 days of the Biden administration came and went without a pathway to citizenship for our undocumented community of over 11 million. An estimated five million of whom served on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic as essential workers. We owe them our gratitude and our solidarity. Our nation must create a pathway to citizenship for essential workers, dACA and TPS recipients, and their families.

Because we can wait no longer, the [We Are Home Campaign](#), [Faith in Action](#), the [Congregation Action Network](#), and faith partners, like LCWR, are planning a *Faith Fast* beginning on **June 7<sup>th</sup>** and ending on **July 4<sup>th</sup>**. We hope to shine a spotlight on our nation's moral obligation to include our immigrant neighbors in the American family —fully and finally. We must find a pathway to citizenship for as many of our 11 million undocumented community members as possible. The best tool available in the current environment is to utilize the jobs and infrastructure package now being prepared for the next round of budget reconciliation.

### D.C. Faith Fast

As part of the campaign, a core group of fasters will gather at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation on Capitol Hill (212 E. Capitol Street NE, Washington, DC) to hold the *Faith Fast* to amplify the moral claim of undocumented immigrants and their families on our nation. It is a call to each of us to respond with love, compassion and equity to those who have borne the brunt of the physical and economic loss wrought by the pandemic.

If you are able to **join the fasters in Washington D.C.**, [please sign up using this registration form](#) by **May 28**. If you have questions, please contact Omar Angel Perez at [oangelperez@faithinaction.org](mailto:oangelperez@faithinaction.org).

### Why a Fast

Fasting is an ancient spiritual practice within many cultures and faith traditions. In forgoing food, participants seek to purify their spirit and achieve a deeper level of mindfulness. From those roots, fasting has also evolved into a powerful form of witness and protest, and an expression of solidarity with oppressed groups. Through self-denial, those fasting demonstrate their mourning over and deep-seated opposition to injustices and their willingness to make physical sacrifices to compel new policies and practices that promote society's 'right relationship' with one another and our world.

### How Faith Communities can Support the D.C. *Faith Fast*

We hope you will support the DC-based fasters with your own actions. There many ways faith institutions and communities can stand in solidarity with the *Faith Fast* and with the call for immigrant justice and citizenship for 11 million undocumented immigrants. These are some avenues for engagement:

- Pledge your financial support to help cover the costs associated with hosting the fast (Contact [jfleming@faithinaction.org](mailto:jfleming@faithinaction.org) to make a donation).
- Identify a prominent Faith Leader to participate in the Faith Fast (email [jfleming@faithinaction.org](mailto:jfleming@faithinaction.org) to find out more.)
- Add your congregational, organizational or denominational endorsement of the Faith Fast for Families ([here](#)).
- Organize a Solidarity Action in your community with your local elected officials and Members of Congress to support the call for a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrant workers. ([Be sure to list your event here](#).)
- Hold a prayer service or vigil to support those fasting in Washington and to pray for a pathway to citizenship for immigrant workers. ([List your prayer service here](#).)
- Set up a meeting with your Members of Congress to advocate for a pathway to citizenship for immigrants. ([List your meeting here](#).)
- Organize a local Faith Fast for Citizenship with faith leaders in your own community. ([Share information about your collective fast here](#).)
- Invite individual members of your faith community to do their own fast at home for 1 or more days. ([Individual Fasters can sign up here](#))

All people of faith are called to love and welcome our neighbor. Welcoming guests, Hachnasat orchim, is an important principle in Judaism. In the Christian Bible, Jesus commands us to welcome the stranger, for "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). The Qur'an directs us to "do good to... those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer that you meet" (4:36). The Hindu Taitiriya Upanishad reminds us: "The guest is a representative of God" (1.11.2)

We hope that you will join us and encourage members of your congregation to take a stand for the rights and protections of our immigrant neighbors.

Blessings,  
Ann

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