

Do Something!

At a recent Adult Forum, many of you expressed an interest in DOING SOMETHING to support the millions of undocumented immigrants who have now been targeted for deportation, often without the opportunity to exercise their due process right to a hearing. An opportunity to put your faith into action has arrived.

The New Sanctuary Movement, an interfaith organization supported by St. Martin's and 32 other Philadelphia-area churches and synagogues, is looking for volunteers to accompany immigrants to judicial hearings. Though tagged as "undocumented," many of these immigrants have been given government permission to enter the country and are awaiting asylum hearings. Others were allowed into the U.S. on a temporary humanitarian basis when they fled persecution in their home countries. These immigrants now face deportation even though they have played by the rules and reported to immigration officials on a regular basis.

A two-hour training for volunteers who want to accompany immigrants to their hearings at immigration court in Center City will be held from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Friday, June 27, at the West Kensington Ministry, 2140 North Hancock St. in Philadelphia. No foreign language proficiency or legal expertise is required. Rather, you simply have to "be there" for an immigrant as you walk with them into court, a terrifying experience for many, especially in the current environment.

Advance sign-up for the training is required. To register, contact Tania Bonilla at the New Sanctuary Movement. You can email her at tania@sanctuaryphiladelphia.org or send a text message to her at 215 -279-7060. She will then email you a sign-up sheet. If you need more information, St. Martin's parishioner Huntly Collins, who serves on the Refugee Resettlement Ministry and is active in New Sanctuary, will be available to talk with you during coffee hour after the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, June 14. You can also reach her at huntlycollins@att.net or leave a text message at 267-226-8480.

The West Kensington Ministry, where the training will be held, is a ministry of the Presbytery of Philadelphia and part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).