



## **Guide for Interfaith Prayer Service**

### **Prep work:**

- Connect with nearby faith communities (featuring a diverse array of beliefs and members; those with large immigrant populations would be ideal)
- Invite local clergy/faith leaders to speak
- Invite immigrants (or others with lived experience) to share their testimony
- Coordinate a date, time, and location (perhaps a place of worship or a park)
- Revise and review the outline before the day
- Invite a choir (or two) to sing at the event (consider language accessibility in music)
- Send invitations/advertise the event within the broader community (e.g. flyers, congregational newsletters, social media)
- Print event programs (if there will be non-English speakers in attendance, make sure they are accessible to all language groups!)

### **Outline for service** *(full sample agenda below)*

- Welcome attendees and explain interfaith nature of the service
- If you are offering multi-lingual interpretation, explain how that will work
- Offer scripture from different traditions, followed by brief remarks from clergy or faith leaders of those traditions explaining the faith roots of welcoming immigrants
- Interspersed with the scripture, offer personal testimonies from people touched by immigration (some ideas below)
- Consider a time for sharing, perhaps through a responsive prayer
- Offer a way for attendees to take action supporting immigrants (through advocacy or donation). Have resources in printed program or handouts.

### **Suggested scriptures (can be expanded for each faith tradition):**

- Christian - Mark 12:30-31 [the greatest commandment]
- Christian/ Jewish - Proverbs 31:8-9 [speak up for those in need]
- Jewish - Deuteronomy 10:18-19 [care for the foreigners in your midst]
- Muslim - Qur'an 4:99-100 [those who migrate will find refuge]
- Hindu – Taittiriya Upanishad, 1.11.2 [the guest is a divine representative]
- Buddhist - (Dhammapada, Chapter 10 [do not harm others])



**Suggested testimonies:**

- DACA recipient
- A person without documentation (can be read by another community member)
- Refugee
- Asylum applicant
- Child of an immigrant

**VICPP Sample Interfaith Immigration Prayer:**

*English:*

Creator of all, you have formed every human with love and intrinsic dignity. Be with your children throughout our nation. Grant our immigrant neighbors your, especially those who are overwhelmed with fear. Grant our policy-makers your compassion toward those who come to our country seeking safety and justice. Grant our congregations your courage to stand up for those on the margins of our society.

Lord, who is continually moving, migrating toward justice, help our community to see your face in our immigrant neighbors. Give us all the grace to be your presence in this world.

*Spanish:*

Creador de todo, has formado a cada ser humano con amor y dignidad intrínseca. Esté con tus hijos en toda nuestra nación. Concede a nuestros vecinos inmigrantes tu paz, especialmente a aquellos que están abrumados por el miedo. Concede a nuestros legisladores su compasión hacia aquellos que vienen a nuestro país en busca de seguridad y justicia. Concede a nuestras congregaciones tu coraje para defender a los que están en los márgenes de nuestra sociedad.

Señor, que estás continuamente moviéndote, migrando hacia la justicia, ayuda a nuestra comunidad a ver tu rostro en nuestros vecinos inmigrantes. Danos a todos la gracia de ser tu presencia en este mundo.

**Additional prayer resources:**

- Prayer for Migrants and Refugees- USCCB
- [Remembering the Immigrant](#)- Social Justice Resource Center
- Liturgy for Migrants and Refugees- The Methodist Church



## Sample agenda for Interfaith Immigration Prayer Service

*[Note: this is one example of how someone put together a service. You don't have to follow this outline! Feel free to expand or contract the faith statements, or the testimonies, based on your local context or the make-up of your planning committee]*

- Welcome and Opening prayer (host pastor)
  - Explain the nature of interfaith work
  - Give context for language access (*readings printed in Spanish will be read out loud in English, and vice versa; for testimonies, we will have an interpreter repeating the speaker's words in the opposite language*)
  - Prayer: VICPP sample prayer in both languages
- Opening song – This little light of mine (bilingual)
- Muslim Scripture
- Faith statement – local Imam
- First testimony – DACA recipient
- Moment of silence
- Christian Scripture
- Faith statement – local Pastor
- Second testimony – Son of immigrant (Polish)
- Moment of silence
- Song – (reflective; choir's choice)
- Third testimony -
- Jewish Scripture
- Faith statement – Cantor from synagogue
- Call to action
- Closing prayer – Responsive prayer based on Social Justice Resource Center
- Closing song – Solidarity Forever (bilingual)

Snacks in the social hall, with opportunity for relationship building.