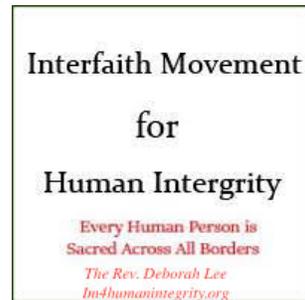




**University Lutheran Chapel of Berkeley**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's Work. Our Hands.



July 11, 2016

**\*\*MEDIA ADVISORY \*\***

## **Religious Communities Pledge Protection from Deportations: ULC Renews Commitment to Sanctuary**

**When:** July 13, 2016, at 10:30 am.

**Where:** University Lutheran Chapel, 2425 College Avenue, Berkeley, CA.

**What: Ritual Blessing and Press conference** attended by over a dozen Bay Area congregations supporting Sanctuary for those facing deportations. One church, University Lutheran Chapel, will be blessed as they are prepared to physically offer sanctuary for Bay Area residents seeking refuge from deportation that would separate families or deport people across borders back to violence and persecution. There will be speakers from religious leaders and the City of Berkeley, which just recently passed a resolution and recently arrived immigrant families and youth. After brief statements, all will be invited to join in the blessing of the sanctuary apartment that has been created in the basement of the church.

Press is welcome to view the office space in the basement of the church that has been transformed into a sanctuary apartment for this purpose.

### **Speakers:**

Reverend Jeff Johnson of University Lutheran Chapel  
Reverend Deborah Lee of the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity & East Bay Interfaith Immigration Coalition (EBIIC)  
Berkeley City Councilmember Kriss Worthington  
Pastor Max Lynn of St. John's Presbyterian Church  
Recently Arrived Migrant Families in deportation proceedings

Other congregational leaders supporting these sanctuary efforts who will also be in attendance, including: Dominican Sisters of San Rafael and Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose, Kehilla Community Synagogue, Hope Lutheran Church of El Sobrante, All Soul's Episcopal Church, Newman Holy Spirit Catholic Church Non-Violent Peacemakers Group, Faith Alliance for a Moral Economy, Lake Merritt United Methodist Church, Pittsburgh-Antioch Community Church, Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County, Episcopal Diocese of California and Oakland Catholic Worker and Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana Hispana.

### **Background:**

This declaration of sanctuary comes on the heels of the Supreme Court's ruling in the case of *U.S. v. Texas*, which put on hold President Obama's executive actions that could have helped millions of people work and live without fear of being torn from their families. Exactly 30 years ago, the city of Berkeley declared itself a city of sanctuary and many East Bay Congregations were involved in the Sanctuary movement of the 1980s, however, the ongoing failure of immigration reform and the federal government's failure to protect families from being deported is a great injustice. The recent increase in enforcement and raids, faith communities and the City of Berkeley have renewed their pledge to offer sanctuary from unjust deportations. In partnership with the East Bay Interfaith Immigration Coalition (EBIIC) and with the support of the city of Berkeley, this congregation is reigniting that legacy and living up to its promise of protection at a time when our neighbors need it most. Says, Rev. Jeff Johnson of University Lutheran Chapel, "As a faith community, we are doing what Congress has refused to do: protect immigrants from an immigration system that is separating families and deporting people who are woven into the fabric of their communities and congregations."

Over the last two years, the Sanctuary Movement has had 16 Sanctuary cases, winning relief from deportation for 13 people in 9 cities throughout the country, building a growing network of over 350 congregations in 30 states.

**Visuals:** Blessing ritual for the sanctuary apartment, including sprinkling water and swinging incense around the door, while the community sings and prays for protection. Brightly colored prayer ribbons will be displayed and hung as symbols of the community's commitment to stand in solidarity with the resident outside the doors of the church. Signs and banners from the various congregations supporting Sanctuary.

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