

INDIANAPOLIS DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CLERGY JOIN WITH OTHER FAITH LEADERS IN VIGIL & CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN SUPPORT OF DREAMERS AND IMMIGRANT FAMILIES



(Above photos courtesy of Rev. Dawn Barnes. Rev. McCrae at l., Rev. Higginbotham 3rd from rt., Revs. Barnes at rt.)
3/6/2017 From Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries, Contact: Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea, sstanley@dhm.disciples.org

Today, seven Disciples affiliated clergy, Rev. Linda McCrae, Rev. Carolyn Higginbotham, Rev. Jim Higginbotham, Rev. Jon Barnes, Rev. Dawn Barnes, Rev. Sandra Gourdet, and Rev. Don McCord participated in a faith vigil of prayerful solidarity in support of passage of the Dream Act, and in opposition to excessive and enhanced enforcement which threatens to separate immigrant families. A Disciples clergy spouse and Methodist Pastor, Rev. Ronnie Bell, also joined the group. The vigil was led by Faith in Indiana partners, an affiliate of the PICO faith organizing network, and was held in the street between the locations of offices for Senator Joe Donnelly and Senator Todd Young in Indianapolis. Indianapolis is the location for the headquarters of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S. and Canada.

Rev. Jon Barnes serves with Disciples HELM (Higher Education and Leadership Ministries) and teaches at Christian Theological Seminary. Rev. Dawn Barnes serves as the Indiana Director for the Society of St. Andrew, and Rev. Gourdet previously served as the Africa Executive for Global Ministries and as mission personnel in Africa and Haiti for many years. Rev. Jim Higginbotham is an Associate Professor of Pastoral Care at Earlham School of Religion and a member of Central Christian. Rev. McCord is a retired seminary professor, and Rev. Bell serves as an Associate Pastor at North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis.

In addition to vigil participation, two Disciples clergy and Rev. Bell joined nineteen total leaders who were arrested in peaceful non-violent protest. Rev. McCrae was arrested in peaceful civil disobedience, viewable at the video time of 1:09:31 here: <https://www.facebook.com/WRTV6/videos/10155633856089092/> Linda McCrae is an ordained Disciples of Christ pastor, serving as the pastor of Central Christian Church in Indianapolis. Rev. McCrae previously served six years in Mexico and Guatemala. Prior to her arrest, Rev. McCrae provided the following statement of her faith convictions which led her to and undergirded her during today's actions:

“Along with millions of others, we who are part of Faith in Indiana have lifted our voices to advocate with our elected officials to fix our broken immigration system and allow immigrants in our country to live in dignity. Congress has failed us. There are moments when attention needs to be brought to a situation that is unacceptable. I am participating in this act of nonviolent civil disobedience because I believe this is one of those moments. I know love and justice to be at the heart of our faith, and at times they call us to speak and act in a different and riskier way. Our hope and belief is that our actions in Indianapolis, joined with the efforts of many others, will pressure Congress to act to end the current injustice our immigrant neighbors are suffering.”

Additionally, Rev. Carolyn Higginbotham was arrested in peaceful civil disobedience. See video time: 1:14:00. Carolyn is an ordained Disciples of Christ pastor, volunteers with Faith in Indiana, and was previously Dean at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. She is a member of Central Christian Church. Multiple other faith leaders also engaged in the peaceful civil disobedience action.