



LUTHERAN OFFICE of PUBLIC POLICY -CALIFORNIA

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Faith leaders host nationwide candlelight vigil in solidarity with detained undocumented immigrants leading hunger strike and other actions to protest inhumane and unsafe conditions in ICE detention facilities

The Lutheran Office of Public Policy – California along with faith-based policy organizations across the country condemn deplorable conditions in ICE detention facilities and stand in solidarity with undocumented immigrants on hunger strike at the Yuba County Jail while a majority of those detained at Mesa Verde Detention Facility are currently infected with COVID-19.

CALIFORNIA -- The nationwide vigil, scheduled for Friday, August 21, will be held in solidarity with detained undocumented immigrants at the Yuba County Jail, who began a hunger strike on Wednesday morning in response to reprehensible conditions at the facility, including arbitrary restrictions and practices that ignore COVID-19 distancing restrictions and common sense practice--and now the Nevada City fire, one of hundreds of fires ravishing California, is just 30 minutes away from the jail.

The vigil will also support the demands of individuals held at the Mesa Verde Detention Facility in Bakersfield. These demands include an end to practices ignoring isolation measures as more than half of the detainees held at the facility tested positive for COVID-19.

The Lutheran Office of Public Policy - California, a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is spearheading the virtual vigil. Registration is open to all regardless of faith affiliation, and clergy from multiple traditions will be present. The candlelight vigil will begin at 7pm PDT / 10pm EDT on Friday, August 21. The Lord's Prayer, in different languages, will be at the center of the vigil. Register via bit.ly/2QhXKVf.

Regina Banks, Director of the Lutheran Office of Public Policy - California, stated: "This could force a local government to take a stand for immigrants and refuse to participate in what has been inhumane treatment." Faith advocates organizing the vigil seek to be a moral voice in the midst of state-sanctioned suffering and terror.

The vigil will take place simultaneously with **two rallies** in support of the strikers at each detention facility.

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