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*****Media Advisory*****

press conference on Friday, November 2, 2018, 1:00 p.m.

Ann Arbor Friends Meeting House (Quakers), 1420 Hill St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Local Congregations to House Man facing Deportation

Through Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary, faith communities step forward in a humanitarian crisis to provide safe refuge in midst of threatened deportation.

Ann Arbor, MI- Ann Arbor Friends Meeting House (Quakers), together with Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary, is hosting a press conference to announce that they have taken in the first person in Washtenaw County to seek refuge in a place of worship from the Trump administration's inhumane deportation policies that are devastating our communities. The 44-year-old West African man, who has been living and working here for fifteen years, has a serious health condition that would put his life at risk if he were deported, a clear illustration of the immoral nature of our broken immigration system.

Since the 1980's, the Sanctuary Movement has answered the call to welcome the stranger by providing safe haven to immigrants and refugees in need. Since President Trump's election, family separations and arbitrary deportations are ruining lives and wreaking havoc in our communities. People of faith and conscience have taken a strong stand to oppose cruel enforcement by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Nationwide, there are over 800 congregations participating in the New Sanctuary Movement, with at least 42 people living in sanctuary in 28 cities, according to Church World Service's Immigration and Refugee Program.

Locally, Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary (WCS) is a coalition including the Interfaith Council for Peace & Justice (ICPJ), the Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights (WICIR), and many congregations in Washtenaw County. So far, twelve local congregations are participating as hosting or supporting communities, opening their doors and their hearts to provide refuge for immigrants facing detention and deportation, and uniting around love, respect, and dignity for all. Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary invites those willing to support Sanctuary, affiliated and unaffiliated alike, to join us in this effort.

At this press conference the man in sanctuary will share his story, and faith leaders partnered with immigrants' rights organizations will reaffirm their commitment to create sacred space of Sanctuary wherever it is needed.

What: Press conference featuring immigrant man in local sanctuary, and faith and community leaders

When: Friday, November 2, 2018, 1:00 p.m.

Where: Ann Arbor Friends Meeting House, 1420 Hill St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Who: Ann Arbor Friends Meeting (Quakers) and Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary

Speakers:

Mary Anne Perrone - Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary (WCS) – introduction

Mohamed, sanctuary guest – personal story

Johanna Kowitz, Ann Arbor Friends Meeting (Quakers) – statement of welcome

Jennifer Blackwell, Church of the Good Shepherd – a faith perspective

Rabbi Josh Whinston,* Temple Beth Emeth – a faith perspective

Chuck Warpehoski, ICPJ – how to support immigration justice

For more information on Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary (WCS), to volunteer, or to make a donation:
<https://www.icpj.org/blog/program-areas/one-human-family/washtenaw-congregational-sanctuary/>