

Affordable Housing is an Immigration Issue

By - Samantha Searls, Program Director

Over 100 people gathered outside City Hall on August 2 to ask the Cincinnati City Council to fast-track the Affordable Housing Trust Fund ballot measure. Even after 2.5 hours of compelling public testimony, the council claimed there wasn't enough time to follow procedure and pass the motion that was required.

Council members have had plenty of time to address the problem of funding the Trust Fund. The plan before them is to ask Cincinnati voters to approve a 0.3% earnings tax increase that

effectively returns our income tax rate to its 2020 levels. We've paid the tax before and we can pay it again to ensure that the most vulnerable in our community have access to quality affordable housing. For most Cincinnati households it'll cost less than \$11/month but will generate between \$40-\$50 million annually for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Recently, Ignite Peace has been working to launch a Fair Housing for Immigrants campaign because housing has been the number one issue raised in Immigrant Dignity Coalition meetings for over the past two years.

When many immigrants and refugees arrive, they don't have the money to pay \$1,750 for a two bedroom (plus a safety deposit!). Many families don't get government assistance to help pay rent and those that do can only get help for so long. Other families seeking asylum face delays in processing their work permits, forcing them to try and make ends meet until then.



Ignite Peace interns, Adeline Hatfield and Meredith Menius, join program director, Samantha Searls, at City Hall to support affordable housing. Samantha gave testimony about the impacts on local immigrants.

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Faith and the Death Penalty

By - Bekky Baker, Program Director

With only one year left in the legislative session, we're ready to make some noise around Ohio Senate Bill 101 and build some people power. People of faith are instrumental in the movement to end the death penalty and have often led grassroots efforts in other successful state campaigns. In 2021, over 80 faith communities across 18 counties participated in more than 220 actions during faith week. We're bringing faith week back again this year with some extra gusto to show the

strength of our interfaith movement and to tell the legislature we do not need the death penalty anymore. This year, we will culminate faith week with a 24-hour vigil at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus.

Faith Week will run October 2 through October 10. The culminating event, Day of Prayer, starts at 5 p.m. on October 9 and ends at 5 p.m. on October 10, which is also World Day Against the Death Penalty. We are inviting faith communities across the state to participate by hosting an educational event or letter writing party, making death penalty abolition part of your religious service, or joining the 24-hour Day of Prayer vigil at the statehouse in Columbus.

Day of Prayer will feature prayerful programming throughout the day and we invite you to register for a time slot to let us know when



Supporters from the Southern Ohio Regional Team gathered to carpool to Columbus for the first hearing of Senate Bill 101.

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A Letter from Allison Reynolds-Berry

It is exciting to be sending our first newsletter under our new name, Ignite Peace! In my eight years with the organization, I've been proud of the ways our staff and board have honored the legacy of our founders while remaining adaptable and looking forward. We hope that as Greater Cincinnati gets to know IJPC as Ignite Peace, that we remain known as an organization standing with those on the margins, challenging the status quo, and working toward a nonviolent future.

Our team has been hard at work developing opportunities for people in Greater Cincinnati to take action for peace. Be sure to check out the events section for details and to get involved. We know the work for peace takes each of us doing the individual and community level work to create a nonviolent society. Please consider a gift to support our work for peace as we continue the legacy of our founders in this new phase of justice seeking.



Be a spark for justice!

Visit give.classy.org/ignitepeace to make a generous gift towards our mission.

Announcements

- Have you attended the Race and Racism in Cincinnati Docuseries and wondered, *what's next?* Join us for an **action-focused conversation** on October 24 to answer the question, "How can I dismantle systemic racism in Greater Cincinnati?"
- Looking for a way to support Ignite Peace and promote your business or organization? **Become a sponsor of our Annual Gathering: Forward Together** on October 4. Visit give.classy.org/forward-together or email Hayley@IgnitePeace.org for more details.
- Do you have skills or connections to share? Are you looking to make an impact? Ignite Peace is looking for new **Board Leaders** and committee members with a background in development, finance, communications, or marketing. Want to learn more? Email Allison@IgnitePeace.org.
- Going green? **Help reduce paper waste by subscribing to our e-mail list.** Email Hayley@IgnitePeace.org to make the switch and be removed from our paper newsletter mailing list.
- **Have you heard about Little Amal?** Little Amal is a 12-foot puppet of a 10 year old Syrian refugee girl who travels to promote hope for immigrants, refugees, and displaced persons. She's coming to Cincinnati on Friday, September 22! Email Samantha@IgnitePeace.org for more information or get involved.

Founding Partners:

Congregation of St. Joseph
Sisters of Charity
Sisters of Mercy
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur
Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg

Partners:

Anawim Community
Bellarmine Chapel
Cincinnati Friends Meeting
Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship
Comboni Missionaries
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Dominican Sisters of Hope
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Hundreds of asylum seekers from the West African country of Mauritania have moved to the Greater Cincinnati area over the past few months. They've walked thousands of miles, subjected to harsh conditions after fleeing human trafficking, slavery, and genocide. Now that they've arrived safely, they've had to sleep on floors and in spare rooms because there simply isn't anywhere affordable for them to live.

Even though city council didn't take action, we did. Together with our partners we turned in over 12,000 signatures to put the Affordable Housing Trust Fund on the ballot.

Mark your calendars to vote YES on November 7 to affirm our support of affordable housing.



Patty Muhleman and Linda Ford from Mount Auburn Presbyterian Church show their signs at the City Council meeting.

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you will be there. If you are interested but have some questions we will be hosting an informational session on September 12 at noon. Check our website for more details.

Faith communities have continued to show up in big ways for this campaign by hosting exoneree speakers, sharing information with their network, and engaging faith leadership to take a stand. We know that many of you who are committed to ending the death penalty are motivated because your faith compels you to stand alongside the vulnerable, support the dignity of life, and believe that no person is defined by the worst thing they have done. This is a week to make our voices heard, to let the legislature know that we do not need the death penalty to keep our communities safe. Please join us.



Interfaith supporters gathered at Xavier University in 2021 for a vigil opposing the death penalty. You can plan a similar event for your community this year.

Upcoming Events

For more information and to register visit www.IJPCincinnati.org/events

Anti-Death Penalty Regional Meeting

Monday, September 4

6:00 - 7:00 PM

Virtual - Zoom

Seeking Safety in Cincinnati: An Introduction to Immigration Issues

Thursday, September 21 &

Saturday, September 23

6:30 - 8:00 PM

Various Locations - see details online

Strategic Nonviolence Intensive

Saturday, September 23

9:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Peaslee Neighborhood Center

Immigrant Dignity Coalition

Wednesday, September 27 &

Wednesday, October 25

6:30 - 8:00 PM

Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church

Faith Week to End the Death Penalty

October 2 - 10

Annual Gathering: Forward Together

Thursday, October 4

6:00 - 8:00 PM

Xavier University Cintas Center

Race and Racism in Cincinnati Docuseries

Friday, October 6, 13, & 20

12:00 - 2:00 PM

Virtual - Zoom

Day of Prayer to End the Death Penalty, 24-Hour Vigil

Monday, October 9, 5:00 PM -

Tuesday, October 10, 5:00 PM

Ohio Statehouse in Columbus

Racism in Cincinnati: An Action-Focused Conversation

Tuesday, October 24

6:00 - 8:00 PM

First Unitarian Church



Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
Paid
Cincinnati, OH
#6207

Formerly Intercommunity
Justice and Peace Center
215 E 14th Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202



Help us to reduce our paper consumption.

Contact: info@ignitepeace.org to join our e-mail list to receive this newsletter online instead.

Contact us: info@ignitepeace.org | www.ignitepeace.org | 513.579.8547

FORWARD TOGETHER

2023 ANNUAL GATHERING OF IGNITE PEACE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4
6:00 - 8:00 PM