

Radical Hospitality

RESPONDING TO THE ISSUE OF IMMIGRATION

A Bible study guide

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rad·i·cal
/radikəl/

adj. relating to or affecting fundamentals, *a radical change*

hos·pi·tal·i·ty
/həspitalitē/

noun. the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors or strangers

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Introduction

In February 2014, in response to a request by delegates at the Phoenix 2013 denominational convention, the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board released a revised [Churchwide Statement on Immigration](#), which names the complexities of today's immigration experience and calls congregations to faithfully respond, working toward socially just reform.

Specifically, "the Executive Board calls congregations and area conferences to engage at whatever level possible in *at least one educational action* and *one ministry action* in the next two years (2014–2016)." This **Radical Hospitality** Bible study guide is one of many rich resources that are available to support congregations and conferences in responding to this call.

Overview

Radical Hospitality was intentionally designed to be flexible, adaptable and accessible. Our prayer is that you would use this resource in a way that best supports whoever will be participating. It is ideal for adult Sunday school classes, a weekend adult Bible school, small groups/fellowship groups, and community outreach groups ... get creative!

All of the curriculum materials are available online at no cost: mennoniteusa.org/resource/radical-hospitality-core-curriculum/. If your congregation, conference or group does not have high-speed internet access, please contact us (info@MennoniteUSA.org) to explore alternative ways to access the materials.

There are two main formats you can follow:

Six-week Bible study

This is the “core” curriculum, which includes video segments and a Discussion Guide with questions for growing deeper. A robust appendix of additional resources can be used to expand the curriculum; see the 13-week option below.

Session 1

Immigration: Today’s Civil Dilemma and Theological Challenge—What Does the Bible Say? (Part 1)

M. Daniel Carroll R., Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Old Testament, Denver (Colo.) Seminary
(An excerpt from his keynote presentation to the Mennonite Church USA 2013 Delegate Assembly in Phoenix on July 2, 2013)

Provides history and examples of immigrant stories throughout the Bible and examines our identity as Christian “aliens” here on earth.

Session 2

Immigration: Today’s Civil Dilemma and Theological Challenge—What Does the Bible Say? (Part 2)

M. Daniel Carroll R., Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Old Testament, Denver (Colo.) Seminary
(An excerpt from his keynote presentation to the Mennonite Church USA 2013 Delegate Assembly in Phoenix on July 2, 2013)

Examines Old Testament laws pertaining to “strangers in the land” and biblical guidance for Christians practicing radical hospitality. Challenges Anabaptists to engage issues of immigration from Anabaptist theological and historical perspectives—a present-day response.

Session 3

Root Causes, NAFTA, Myths and Facts

Saulo Padilla, immigration education coordinator, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Office on Immigration Education

Unpacks the root causes of migration, with a focus on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the current economic pushes and pulls that cause migration flows to increase. Also provides a short overview of the current immigration system.

Session 4

Walls of Immigration

Kristina Schlabach, community minister, Tucson, Ariz.

Jeannette Pazos, director, Hogar de Esperanza y Paz (Home of Hope and Peace), Nogales, Sonora, Mexico

Cindy Schlosser, social services coordinator, The Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project in Arizona

Bryce Miller, pastor, Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, Tucson, Ariz.

Features on-site visits to various “walls” of immigration: the wall at the Arizona/Mexico border; the walls of The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Florence Processing Center in Florence, Ariz.; and the sanctuary walls of Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Tucson, Ariz. Hear firsthand stories of interactions around and within these walls.

Session 5

The Law and Advocacy

Tammy Alexander, senior legislative associate for domestic affairs, Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office in Washington, D.C.

Undocumented immigrants are breaking the law, aren't they? What about God's laws regarding hospitality and welcoming the stranger? Hear thoughts on these questions and learn about proposed changes to U.S. immigration policy. Also, get suggestions for concrete actions that congregations and groups can take to work for just immigration reform.

Session 6

Mennonite Church USA Churchwide Statement on Immigration

Ask participants to read through this information- and inspiration-packed statement, which undergirds the entire study. It's helpful to provide the statement at the end of Session 5 so that participants have ample time to absorb all that it offers and can come prepared to engage in discussion.

13-week Bible study

If your group or congregation would like to meet and study over a longer period of time, you can draw from the robust appendix of resources to create an extended curriculum. The advantage of this option is the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the complexities of immigration as well as to have more time for group action and response. See pp. 10–11 for an example of how a longer study could be designed.

Guidelines for a successful experience

Whether you are well-versed in the challenges of U.S. immigration or this is your first deep dive into the issue, you likely already know that whenever conversation involves immigration, emotions can run high. That's because this is truly a life-and-death topic! Below are some basic guidelines for facilitating a successful experience with the *Radical Hospitality* curriculum.

1. Who?

Decide whom you will be inviting to participate in this series. The curriculum was designed with adults in mind, but it could be adapted for junior high or high school youth depending on their readiness. You will also need to decide who will facilitate the series. Having two people co-facilitate can make this experience even richer for everyone involved. We recommend setting an enrollment limit so that the group doesn't become too large and hamper discussion. If you have two co-facilitators, a group of 20 to 25 is ideal. If you have 25 or more people who want to participate, consider starting a second group or offering a second run of the series. (This is a great problem to have!)

2. What?

Based on who will be participating, decide which curriculum format you will follow. Choose the "core" of six weeks or a variation for a longer series. Another option would be to offer an introductory session of six weeks, and then if the group wants to have a "part two," you could draw from the additional resources.

3. Where?

Again, consider whom you hope will participate and then choose an appropriate venue. Local churches, participants' homes, coffeehouses and community centers could all be great options. Many places will offer space for free for this type of event.

4. When?

This curriculum was designed with hour-long sessions in mind: a short welcome/introduction by the facilitator(s), 15-20 minutes to view the video segment, 35-40 minutes for discussion, and a closing prayer. Cutting this any shorter may prove frustrating for participants. You will want to leave ample time for discussion and may want to consider building in extra discussion sessions if participants are finding that they need more time. Remember to honor people's time by beginning and ending when you said you would. Also, people may be more likely to commit to the series if you start with the shorter option (six weeks) and then offer an additional session if there is interest.

5. How?

How will your group come together? To be effective, be sure to get the word out and build interest/excitement for the series at least three months before you begin (ideally advertising six months in advance). Use whatever avenues are appropriate: bulletin announcements, displaying Mennonite Central Committee's [People on the Move project](#), Facebook posts, a creative skit during worship announcements, personal invitations, community bulletin boards, etc.

Once you've figured out who, what, where and when, as a group it's good to establish **how** you will be together. In your first session, plan time to:

- Introduce and meet each other. Consider having participants answer the question, "Why did you sign up for this class?" This will give you, as the facilitator, a good gauge of what people are bringing to the course, including their motivations/reasons for participating.
- Name the fact that immigration can be an emotional topic with heated opinions, and with that in mind ...
 - o ... all participants must agree to remain respectful—even when they disagree. Remind them that conflict isn't "bad"; it can often be a catalyst for change. Agree to refrain from personal attacks.
 - o Agree as a group that one goal is to find common ground: What **can** everyone agree on? And how can you build from there?

For remaining sessions, it's helpful to open with a review of what was discussed the previous week. And remember, **you don't have to be an expert on immigration: you are facilitating a process.**

Be aware of group dynamics, making sure there aren't just a few who dominate the conversation while others sit quietly. One way to address this is to encourage those who have already spoken to listen, and those who have listened to speak up. Breaking into pairs or small groups also helps with discussion. Sharing around the circle (with the option to "pass") gives an opportunity for every voice to be heard.

Discussion Guide

Six-week core curriculum

We recommend that facilitators preview each video before the session and then revise the discussion questions as necessary to meet their group's needs. Also, keep in mind that the argument "We're *all* immigrants" may not hold true for everyone in your group; First Nations and Indigenous people of North America are not immigrants. (**Note:** View the videos at mennoniteusa.org/resource/radical-hospitality-core-curriculum/.)

Session 1

Immigration: Today's Civil Dilemma and Theological Challenge—What Does the Bible Say? (Part 1)

M. Daniel Carroll R., Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Old Testament, Denver (Colo.) Seminary
(An excerpt from his keynote presentation to the Mennonite Church USA 2013 Delegate Assembly in Phoenix on July 2, 2013)

Provides history and examples of immigrant stories throughout the Bible and examines our identity as Christian "aliens" here on earth.

Referenced Scriptures: 1 Peter 2:11, Genesis 1, the story of Abraham, the story of Joseph, Exodus 1

Discussion questions

1. What Bible verses have you heard used to argue that it's *not* Christians' responsibility to engage with issues of immigration and migrant people?
2. What Bible verses have you heard used to argue it *is* Christians' responsibility to engage with issues of immigration and migrant people?
3. As a group, revisit the story of Ruth and Naomi in the Book of Ruth. How does the immigration status of the women change in the story? What else stands out to you in reading this story with issues of immigration in mind?
4. If your family immigrated to the U.S., what memories of those experiences have been passed down? Was your family given any advantages or special preferences? How might these memories and stories guide you in the present and in your current interactions with immigrants?

Session 2

Immigration: Today's Civil Dilemma and Theological Challenge—What Does the Bible Say? (Part 2)

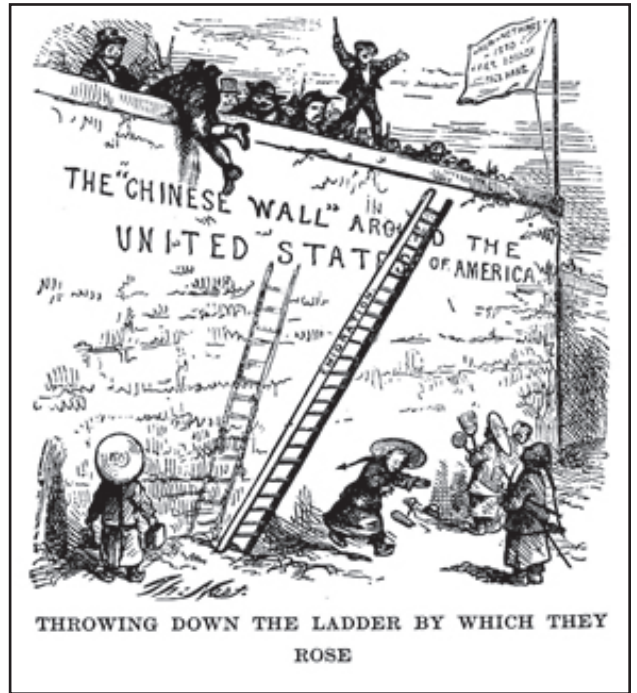
M. Daniel Carroll R., Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Old Testament, Denver (Colo.) Seminary
(An excerpt from his keynote presentation to the Mennonite Church USA 2013 Delegate Assembly in Phoenix on July 2, 2013)

Examines Old Testament laws pertaining to "strangers in the land" and biblical guidance for Christians practicing radical hospitality. Challenges Anabaptists to engage issues of immigration from Anabaptist theological and historical perspectives—a present-day response.

Referenced Scriptures: Deuteronomy 31, Deuteronomy 10:17-19, Romans 12, Romans 13

Discussion questions

1. The history of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882: Chinese immigrants were “tolerated” when they came to the U.S. to help mine for the Gold Rush and build the First Transcontinental Railroad. However, it was perceived that Chinese people had become too numerous, and lynchings began in California. The Exclusion Act passed in 1882 prohibited all immigration of Chinese laborers and wasn’t rescinded until 1943. This cartoon was a metaphor at the time, but now it’s a reality; the U.S. government is literally building a wall at the Mexico border. What happens when we forget our history? What are other examples of when we’ve forgotten our history?
2. Dr. Carroll mentions how a group of Lutherans processed issues of immigration in light of their particular theology, traditions and history. He then says, “My challenge to you is to process immigration as Mennonites.” What unique gifts, perspectives and approaches might we bring? Keep in mind our particular theology and history as well as our current-day reality of being a multicultural, multiracial church.
3. As a group, write down any New Testament stories or verses that can guide your time together as you engage with issues of immigration. Keep these posted somewhere visible as you work through the rest of the sessions.



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Session 3

Root Causes, NAFTA, Myths and Facts

Saulo Padilla, immigration education coordinator, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Office on Immigration Education

Unpacks the root causes of migration, with a focus on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the current economic pushes and pulls that cause migration flows to increase. Also provides a short overview of the current immigration system.

Discussion questions

1. During the last four decades, U.S. presidents have said that the immigration system is “broken” and needs to be fixed. What do you know about the “broken immigration system”? How is it broken?
2. What do you know about the process for becoming “legal” or entering the U.S. legally?

3. Why has there been an increase in migration from Mexico and Central America in the last 20 to 30 years?
4. What forces are pushing immigrants? What forces are pulling them?
5. What do you think about immigrants as a threat to your job, home, community or well-being?
6. Descriptive terms for people facing migration have changed over time. How do you think terminology affects what we think of people migrating?

At the end of this session, consider playing the song *Are My Hands Clean?* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ev733n-5r4g>) by Sweet Honey in the Rock. This is a thought-provoking song that speaks to over-all globalization but is also relevant for discussions of the NAFTA and its impact. This song also poignantly connects each of us to personal decisions that affect lives around the world.

Session 4

Walls of Immigration

Kristina Schlabach, community minister, Tucson, Ariz.

Jeannette Pazos, director, Hogar de Esperanza y Paz (Home of Hope and Peace), Nogales, Sonora, Mexico

Cindy Schlosser, social services coordinator, The Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project in Arizona

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Features on-site visits to various “walls” of immigration: the wall at the Arizona/Mexico border; the walls of The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Florence Processing Center in Florence, Ariz.; and the sanctuary walls of Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Tucson, Ariz. Hear firsthand stories of interactions around and within these walls.

Discussion questions

1. What are your feelings about the increased militarization of the U.S./Mexico border, which includes hundreds of miles of fencing and walls? Affirming that it is reasonable and necessary for countries to maintain their borders, what might be alternatives to this wall and to armed border patrols?
2. How do you feel about the increased criminalization of undocumented immigrants, including the detention of hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants each year in prisonlike conditions? More than half of immigrant detention centers are run by private, for-profit corporations, and many of these corporations give money to members of Congress. How do you think this impacts policy-making in Congress?
3. What have you learned about immigration issues from your neighbors’ immigration stories or from your own immigration story?
4. Where are the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or private subcontracted detention centers closest to your congregation? (See the U.S. map of all of the detention centers at www.detentionwatchnetwork.org.) Would you consider involvement in a letter-writing or visitation program to migrants held in detention?

Session 5

The Law and Advocacy

Tammy Alexander, senior legislative associate for domestic affairs, Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office in Washington, D.C.

Undocumented immigrants are breaking the law, aren't they? What about God's laws regarding hospitality and welcoming the stranger? Hear thoughts on these questions and learn about proposed changes to U.S. immigration policy. Also, get suggestions for concrete actions that congregations and groups can take to work for just immigration reform.

Discussion questions

1. How do we balance a desire to respect the rule of law with a desire to show immigrants hospitality and humane treatment?
2. Do you think the policy solutions proposed by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) (see note below) or in legislation such as the Senate immigration reform bill would move the U.S. toward a better immigration system? Why or why not? What's missing?
3. Does our responsibility to welcome immigrants extend to our speaking to policymakers and urging them to craft a fairer and more humane immigration system? What are you willing to commit to do—as individuals or as a congregation—to speak up on behalf of immigrants in your community?

Note: Please refer to the handout *MCC Washington Office Memo—Spring/Summer 2013* for facts about U.S. immigration as well as an outline of what should be included in reformed immigration policy. This handout is available at washingtonmemo.org/newsletter/spring2013/.

Note: Ask participants to read the [Churchwide Statement on Immigration](#) in preparation for Session 6.

Session 6

Mennonite Church USA Churchwide Statement on Immigration

(2014 Revision of 2003 Statement)

Ask participants to read through this information- and inspiration-packed statement, which undergirds the entire study. It's helpful to provide the statement at the end of Session 5 so that participants have ample time to absorb all that it offers and can come prepared to engage in discussion.

If time allows, consider reserving the last 30 minutes of the session to decide on next steps/actions that you could take as individuals and/or as a group. You could also plan for an action day (Session 7) for which you could facilitate a letter-writing campaign, plan a local learning tour, organize a prayer vigil, etc. If you opted to facilitate the six-week core curriculum, this would be a natural time to check in and see whether there would be interest in a Part Two, or in continuing with one of the optional sessions below.

Discussion questions

1. How does the issue of race overlap with opinions and policies regarding immigration? (You could use *What does an immigrant look like?* by John D. Thiesen as an additional resource and conversation starter.) mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/TM_JohnThiesen_May2013_30.pdf

2. Has this series led you to think about the issue of immigration differently? If so, how?
3. The statement notes, "We lament the reality that injustice in how we treat each other happens not only outside the Church but also in our congregations." Identify ways in which your congregation may be perpetuating injustice to immigrants. How could this be addressed and changed?
4. What is one commitment you could make as an individual and/or group from the **Appendix A: Actions** list?
5. Considering that "for/against sides" have become increasingly polarized on the issue of immigration, what is one step that you as an individual could take to bridge the divide? What would be a step that your group/church could take?

When you have completed your study of *Radical Hospitality*, would you consider taking three minutes to complete this [simple evaluation](http://tinyurl.com/RHeval)? (<http://tinyurl.com/RHeval>) Thank you!

Extended curriculum

12-week option

Begin with Mennonite Central Committee's *Loving Strangers as Ourselves: Biblical Reflections* (mcc.org/media/resources/696) or Sojourners' *Strangers in the Land: A Six-Week Devotional Guide on Immigration, the Church and the Bible* (amzn.com/B00FL2VH40).

Follow with *Radical Hospitality's* six-week core curriculum above.

Seven- to 13-week option

Choosing from the resources below, build an extended curriculum that best meets your group's needs. We recommend beginning with the six-week core curriculum and adding additional sessions afterwards. This might look like:

Sessions 1–6

Radical Hospitality core curriculum

Session 7

Missio Dei: Immigration and the Bible, published by Mennonite Mission Network.

www.mennonitemission.net/Stories/News/Pages/NewMissioDeionimmigration.aspx

This free resource guides participants in diving even deeper into M. Daniel Carroll's biblical perspective on immigration. Ask participants to read the pamphlet during the week and come to the session ready to discuss the accompanying questions.

Session 8

Luke 24 in Three Parts: A Sermon Series

Isaac S. Villegas, pastor of Chapel Hill (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship

Ask participants to read Isaac Villegas's sermon series during the week and come ready to discuss it.

The series includes:

Part I: **Misrecognizing Strangers**

convention.mennoniteusa.org/isaac-villegas-misrecognizing-strangers-part-i/

Part II: **Stay with Us**

convention.mennoniteusa.org/isaac-villegas-stay-with-us-part-ii/

Part III: Hospitality and Power

convention.mennoniteusa.org/isaac-villegas-emmaus-hospitality-and-power/

Session 9

Open Your Arms: A reflection and invitation by Saulo Padilla

mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/ACP_12_Spring_SauloPadilla.pdf

The Mennonite: Immigration Special Section (August 2012, pp. 20–27, 44–46)

mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TM_Aug2012_20-27_44-46.pdf

Read about immigrants' firsthand experiences and the Church's response. Talk together about ways in which your congregation could support new immigrants and about barriers to hospitality.

Session 10

Borderland: National Public Radio (NPR) online feature segment

apps.npr.org/borderland/

Consider playing one (or more) of the excerpts and discussing it as a group, and/or setting up a projector to share the powerful stories in the photo series.

Note: This resource could span several sessions if you would like to feature multiple stories and/or could be used to promote your study of *Radical Hospitality* before it begins. Pictures could also be projected each week to welcome participants into the meeting space.

Session 11

How might a reformed immigration policy look?

Read together **Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Immigration Policy Principles (2009)**.

mcc.org/media/resources/664

What questions do these principles raise? Are they realistic? If so, how can we begin working to implement change (with legislators or via other creative avenues)?

Session 12

Next steps

As a group, look over the list in the **What you can do** section (p. 14) and discern how you are being called to engage. Consider committing your final session to implementing one of the next steps (i.e., hosting a letter-writing campaign for the rest of your congregation).

Session 13

Day of Action

Structure this not so much as your "last" session but more as an invitation to continue on the journey of working for socially just and morally rooted immigration reform. Consider organizing a Day of Action to implement one (or more) of your agreed-upon next steps from the previous session.

When you have completed your study of *Radical Hospitality*, would you consider taking three minutes to complete this [simple evaluation](http://tinyurl.com/RHeval)? (<http://tinyurl.com/RHeval>) Thank you!

Additional resources

Prayers and songs

Consider using one prayer or song to open and/or close each session to provide continuity from week to week.

The Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office offers several prayer and worship resources: washingtonmemo.org/immig/for-churches

See also **Appendix C: Resources** of the Mennonite Church USA **Churchwide Statement on Immigration** (2014 Revision) for a wide range of worship resources.

The album *Migration* by Peter Kater and R. Carlos Nakai could provide background welcome music and/or music for meditation and quiet reflection.
www.amazon.com/Migration-Peter-Kater/dp/B000000POD

Additional resources

Groups can draw from any of the following resources for the extended curriculum and/or for follow-up and deepening one's understanding:

- ***Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church and the Bible*** (2nd edition) by M. Daniel Carroll R. (Brazos Press: 2013):
www.bakerpublishinggroup.com/books/christians-at-the-border-2nd-edition/283513
- ***Our God is Undocumented: Biblical Faith and Immigrant Justice*** by Ched Myers and Matthew Colwell (Orbis Books: 2012):
www.chedmyers.org/books/our-god-undocumented-biblical-faith-and-immigrant-justice
- ***Loving Strangers as Ourselves: Biblical Reflections***, produced by Mennonite Central Committee (\$6.99). Seven lessons written by seven different Anabaptist authors address biblical texts in which God reminds his people about how to treat the strangers who live among us:
mcc.org/media/resources/696
- ***Missio Dei 19: Immigration and the Bible***, published by Mennonite Mission Network (2010) (free download):
www.mennonitemission.net/Stories/News/Pages/NewMissioDeionimmigration.aspx
Also available in Spanish:
www.mennonitemission.net/Resources/MissioDei/Pages/ImmigrationandtheBible.aspx
- ***Strangers in the Land: A Six-Week Devotional Guide on Immigration, the Church and the Bible***, published by Sojourners (2008) (\$9.95):
amzn.com/B00FL2VH40

- **The Mennonite: Immigration Special Section** (August 2012 issue; pp. 20–27, 44–46)
Three immigrant stories are highlighted (*Back to South Africa* by Wil LaVeist, *A Living Testimony of the Almighty God* by Anonymous Author, and *A Selective Welcome* by Anna Groff) as well as an excellent news analysis on the history and current reality of U.S. immigration (*The debate about U.S. immigration policy* by Steven M. Nolt):
mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TM_Aug2012_20-27_44-46.pdf
- **On the Way: Immigration Justice**, online newsletter produced by Mennonite Church USA Executive Board staff (Vol. 2, No. 1: March 2014). See the congregational examples in the Call to Congregational Action section:
mennoniteusa.org/resource/immigration-justice/
- **Open your arms: A reflection and invitation** by Saulo Padilla, immigration education coordinator, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Office on Immigration Education:
mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/ACP_12_Spring_SauloPadilla.pdf
- **Borderland:** National Public Radio (NPR) online feature segment:
apps.npr.org/borderland/
- **Sojourners: Faith in Action for Social Justice: Immigration Resources:**
sojo.net/get-involved/campaigns/immigration
- **The Stranger: Immigration, Scripture and the American Dream:** A 45-minute documentary film commissioned by the Evangelical Immigration Table and produced by Emmy-award winning producer Linda Midgett. *The Stranger* profiles three immigrant stories and includes interviews with local and national Christian leaders. By highlighting biblical teaching related to immigrants, sharing compelling stories of immigrants who are evangelical Christians, and addressing some common economic and political misconceptions, *The Stranger* seeks to mobilize evangelical Christians to respond to immigrants and to immigration policy in ways that are consistent with biblical principles:
www.thestrangerfilm.org
- **9500 Liberty:** Documents the first time in U.S. history that an Arizona-style immigration law was actually implemented—and the surprising grassroots opposition that led to its repeal:
www.9500liberty.com/index.html
- **Advocacy resources** from the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Washington Office. Includes information about current legislation, sample letters and other resources:
washingtonmemo.org/immig/take-action/

What you can do

The following are suggestions for congregations on how to get involved and continue to grow in understanding the realities of immigration.

- **Organize a letter-writing campaign.** Check current Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Action Alerts and learn about current legislation pending in the U.S. Congress:
washingtonmemo.org/immig/take-action/
mcc.org/learn/what/migration
washingtonmemo.org/immig/current-leg/
- **Sign the pledge to Drop the I-Word** and educate others in your congregation/community about this initiative and its importance:
www.raceforward.org/practice/tools/drop-i-word-campaign
- **Learn about the 34,000-bed mandate/quota.** The petition has been closed, but you can learn the facts behind this mandate and educate others (see the website for a downloadable fact sheet):
www.change.org/petitions/end-the-quota
- **Join or start a visitation program at a nearby detention center.** The Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office provides great resources.
washingtonmemo.org/immig/take-action/
You can also visit www.endisolation.org for a plethora of ideas and links; the site was created by Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC), a national immigration detention visitation network.
- **Host a community movie night** and show the films *The Stranger* or *9500 Liberty* (see links above), followed by a discussion time. Provide fact sheets that participants can take home and/or a letter-writing station on site.
- **Invite people from your church or your community** to share their immigration story and/or about how they have experienced the brokenness of our current immigration system. Consider inviting a variety of guests: young people who are eligible for deferred action, asylum seekers, refugees, migrant workers, etc.

It is crucial that the facilitator ensure that this will be a safe space for guests to share with your group. Keep in mind that you are asking your guest(s) to be very vulnerable—especially if they are currently undocumented. It is important that guests know they can change their names, speak behind a screen or have someone read their story, depending on what kinds of risks they feel comfortable taking. Make sure your guests know the context of **Radical Hospitality**, and provide guidelines for their sharing time (i.e., how much time is allotted, if there will be a Q&A time, etc.). Remember to leave time for translation if necessary. Also, be sure to prepare participants to be ready to listen and respect the stories of your guests.

For resources on hosting a larger scale event, see the Breaking Bread and Building Bridges model from the Interfaith Immigration Coalition: www.interfaithimmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Breaking-Bread-Events-How-to-and-Program-Template-FINAL.pdf

- **Support Mennonite Education Agency's (MEA) Hispanic Pastoral and Leadership Education (HPLE) Office and the Instituto Bíblico Anabautista (IBA, or Anabaptist Biblical Institute):**
www.mennoniteeducation.org/Schools/HPLE/Pages/default.aspx
www.bit.ly/donateMEA
- The **Mennonite Church USA Churchwide Statement on Immigration** (2014 Revision) offers a robust list of ways in which your congregation/group can respond and get involved. Resources are organized under the topics of Pray, Learn, Advocate for justice, Teach and Engage. (See p. 6: **Appendix C: Resource list**)
- **Donate to Mennonite Church USA's DREAMer Fund**, which was established in 2012 to help undocumented Mennonites who qualify for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program pay the required application fee. (DACA is a U.S. administrative policy change that went into effect on Aug. 15, 2012; it allows undocumented immigrants who are under the age of 31, came to the U.S. before the age of 16 and have resided in the U.S. for at least five years to legally obtain work permits and gain protection from deportation.)
Funds are also available to help undocumented immigrant young adult students apply for scholarships of \$500 to \$1500 to go toward college/university or trade school tuition. Applicants must be members of a Mennonite Church USA congregation or members of an other-than-Mennonite congregation who are attending a Mennonite college or university. Requests for scholarship funds should be received by Jan. 30, March 30, Sept. 30 and June 30.
Contributions may be sent to Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, DREAMer Fund, Iris de León-Hartshorn, 718 N Main Street, Newton, KS 67114.
Do you know anyone who qualifies for DACA or would be eligible for a scholarship? The DREAMer Fund guidelines, covenant and application are available at mennoniteusa.org/resource/dreamer-fund.

Bios and credits

Presenters' bios

Tammy Alexander is senior legislative associate for domestic affairs at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. Washington Office. Her focus is on immigration, the environment and health care. Tammy's immigration work focuses primarily on policies affecting families, border militarization and the root causes of migration. Prior to joining the MCC Washington Office in 2007, Tammy worked for several years as an engineer with the Space Shuttle program. She has a degree in international development from American University, Washington, D.C., and engineering degrees from the University of Tennessee Space Institute, Tullahoma, Tenn., and Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.

Dr. M. Daniel Carroll R. celebrates his heritage from both Guatemala and the United States. He is the Distinguished Professor of Old Testament at Denver (Colo.) Seminary. He is affiliated with the Evangelical Theological Society, Institute of Biblical Research, Society of Biblical Literature, Society for Old Testament Study (Great Britain), Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, and Evangelicals for Social Action. He serves on the international editorial boards of *Religion & Theology* (South Africa) and *DavarLogos* (Argentina), is a contributing editor to *Prism* (the journal of Evangelicals for Social Action), and is an editorial consultant for *Ex Auditu*. Dr. Carroll has authored numerous works, including the best-selling *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church and the Bible*. Read Dr. Carroll's full bio: www.denverseminary.edu/about/faculty/member/118093/

Bryce Miller is the pastor of Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Tucson, Ariz. A graduate of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., he has served Shalom since 2006. Shalom is a congregation committed to opening opportunities for making peace in the border context by supporting education, hospitality to those who want to learn and to those who are here for the first time, and building capacity for healing and hope on both sides of the border.

Saulo Padilla was born in Guatemala and lived there for the first 15 years of his life. In 1986, he immigrated with his mother and siblings to Calgary, Alberta, Canada, to reunite with his father, who left Guatemala as a political refugee in 1980. For 16 years, Saulo lived in Calgary, where he became a Canadian citizen. As a newcomer to Canada, he experienced radical hospitality from the First Hispanic Mennonite Church in Calgary—a congregation of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers—where he became a Mennonite. In 2001 he moved with his family to Goshen, Ind., where he graduated from Goshen College with degrees in history and theology and earned a Master of Arts in Theology and Ethics from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. Since January 2008 he has been working for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. as immigration education coordinator for the Office on Immigration Education. Saulo enjoys traveling, biking, playing music (guitar, bass, ukulele, piano and charango) and singing.

Jeannette Pazos is director of Hogar de Esperanza y Paz (Home of Hope and Peace) (HEPAC) in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. She has lived her whole life in Nogales, Mexico. HEPAC offers a hot noon meal to neighborhood children whose parents work in the local *maquilas* (assembly-line factories); adult high school equivalency study classes; and a women's cooperative whose members make copper medals honoring Antonia, a woman who died crossing the desert. HEPAC welcomes many guests and has become an eye-opening

community of multicultural reflection for many groups and delegations who travel to Nogales to learn more about the complex issues of the border. Jeannette is passionate about her work, articulate in her storytelling, and inspirational in her Christian vision of building a culture of peace.

Kristina (Tina) Stoltzfus Schlabach is an ordained Mennonite minister in Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference working in community ministry. She lives with her husband and son in Tucson, Ariz. Tina is a pastoral visitor to undocumented women held in Eloy Corporate Corrections of America Detention Center, Eloy, Ariz., and is involved with assistance to migrants and justice work through the community of Casa Mari-rosa. She offers spiritual companionship and pastoral counseling out of her home. Tina and Jay, her husband, are members of Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Tucson and enjoy friendships, hiking and hosting guests who come to explore the Southwest.

Cindy Schlosser grew up on a farm in North Dakota and attended Valley City (N.D.) State College. A former high school Spanish teacher, Cindy has also worked at the Annunciation House in El Paso, Texas. She has been with The Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project in Arizona since June 2009, transitioning from the legal assistant position to social services coordinator in July 2010. In her spare time, she can be found mountain climbing in the Southwest, sleeping under the stars and attending potluck dinners.

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Credits

Radical Hospitality was made possible in large part because of funding from the Clemens Family Corporation.

Radical Hospitality Planning Committee

Tammy Alexander
Iris de León-Hartshorn
Saulo Padilla
Kristina Schlabach
Brenda Zook Friesen

Video editing

Wayne Gehman, Mennonite Media

Music

"Holy Water" from VideoBlocks

Editing

Annette Brill Bergstresser, Mennonite Church USA Communications Team

Graphic design

Ken Gingerich, Mennonite Church USA Communications Team

Spanish translation

Alex Naula, Zulma Prieto

VIDEOS 1 and 2

Many thanks to **M. Daniel Carroll R., Ph.D.**, for his original presentation to the Delegate Assembly of the 2013 Mennonite Church USA convention in Phoenix, Ariz., on July 2, 2013. Excerpts of his keynote address have been included in this video with permission. All cartoon images in these videos have been used with permission.

VIDEO 3

Presenter: Saulo Padilla, immigration education coordinator, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Office on Immigration Education.

Videographer: Chris Rahe, Mennonite Church USA Communications Team

Thanks to Mennonite Central Committee U.S. for contributing to the creation of this video.

VIDEO 4

Many thanks to the presenters in this video (in order of appearance):

Kristina Schlabach, community minister, Tucson, Ariz.

Jeannette Pazos, director, Hogar de Esperanza y Paz (Home of Hope and Peace) (HEPAC), Nogales, Sonora, Mexico

Cindy Schlosser, social services coordinator, The Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project in Arizona

Bryce Miller, pastor, Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, Tucson, Ariz.

Videographer: Steev Hise, Liminal Communications

Still photography: Bryce Miller; Ken Krehbiel, ImageWorks Photography

VIDEO 5

Presenter: Tammy Alexander, senior legislative associate for domestic affairs, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office

Videographer: Wayne Gehman, Mennonite Media

Thanks to Mennonite Central Committee U.S. for contributing to the creation of this video.

Thank you to all who have supported the creation of this project.

Mennonite Church USA

3145 Benham Ave., Suite 1
Elkhart, IN 46517

718 N. Main St.
Newton, KS 67114-1819

1251 Virginia Ave.
Harrisonburg, VA 22802-2434

Toll-free: 1-866-866-2872

Llamada gratis, operadora en
español: 1-877-665-6662

MennoniteUSA.org

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Handout 1

Session 1

Immigration: Today's Civil Dilemma and Theological Challenge—What Does the Bible Say? (Part 1)

M. Daniel Carroll R., Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Old Testament, Denver (Colo.) Seminary
(An excerpt from his keynote presentation to the Mennonite Church USA 2013 Delegate Assembly in Phoenix on July 2, 2013)

(**Note:** View the videos at mennoniteusa.org/resource/radical-hospitality-core-curriculum/.)

Provides history and examples of immigrant stories throughout the Bible and examines our identity as Christian "aliens" here on earth.

Referenced Scriptures: 1 Peter 2:11, Genesis 1, the story of Abraham, the story of Joseph, Exodus 1

Discussion questions

1. What Bible verses have you heard used to argue that it's *not* Christians' responsibility to engage with issues of immigration and migrant people?
2. What Bible verses have you heard used to argue it *is* Christians' responsibility to engage with issues of immigration and migrant people?
3. As a group, revisit the story of Ruth and Naomi in the Book of Ruth. How does the immigration status of the women change in the story? What else stands out to you in reading this story with issues of immigration in mind?
4. If your family immigrated to the U.S., what memories of those experiences have been passed down? Was your family given any advantages or special preferences? How might these memories and stories guide you in the present and in your current interactions with immigrants?

Handout 2

Session 2

Immigration: Today's Civil Dilemma and Theological Challenge—What Does the Bible Say? (Part 2)

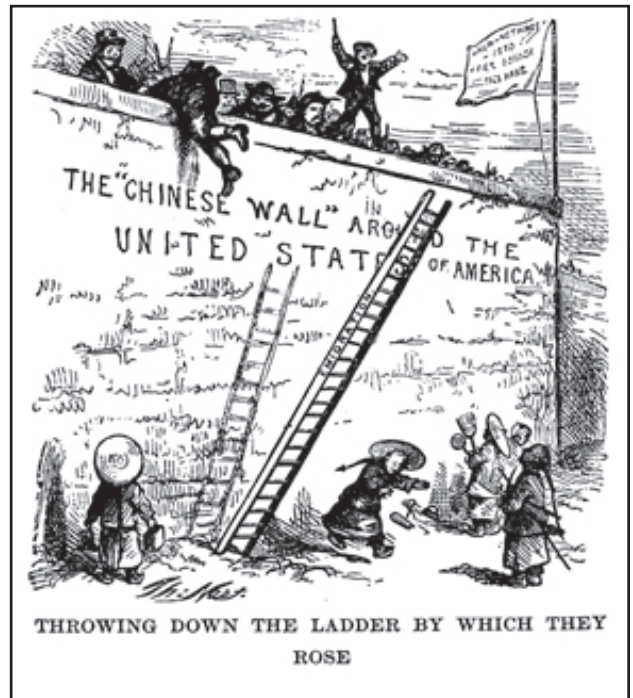
M. Daniel Carroll R., Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Old Testament, Denver (Colo.) Seminary
(An excerpt from his keynote presentation to the Mennonite Church USA 2013 Delegate Assembly in Phoenix on July 2, 2013)

Examines Old Testament laws pertaining to “strangers in the land” and biblical guidance for Christians practicing radical hospitality. Challenges Anabaptists to engage issues of immigration from Anabaptist theological and historical perspectives—a present-day response.

Referenced Scriptures: Deuteronomy 31, Deuteronomy 10:17-19, Romans 12, Romans 13

Discussion questions

1. The history of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882: Chinese immigrants were “tolerated” when they came to the U.S. to help mine for the Gold Rush and build the First Transcontinental Railroad. However, it was perceived that Chinese people had become too numerous, and lynchings began in California. The Exclusion Act passed in 1882 prohibited all immigration of Chinese laborers and wasn’t rescinded until 1943. This cartoon was a metaphor at the time, but now it’s a reality; the U.S. government is literally building a wall at the Mexico border. What happens when we forget our history? What are other examples of when we’ve forgotten our history?



2. Dr. Carroll mentions how a group of Lutherans processed issues of immigration in light of their particular theology, traditions and history. He then says, “My challenge to you is to process immigration as Mennonites.” What unique gifts, perspectives and approaches might we bring? Keep in mind our particular theology and history as well as our current-day reality of being a multicultural, multiracial church.
3. As a group, write down any New Testament stories or verses that can guide your time together as you engage with issues of immigration. Keep these posted somewhere visible as you work through the rest of the sessions.

Handout 3

Session 3

Root Causes, NAFTA, Myths and Facts

Saulo Padilla, immigration education coordinator, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Office on Immigration Education

Unpacks the root causes of migration, with a focus on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the current economic pushes and pulls that cause migration flows to increase. Also provides a short overview of the current immigration system.

Discussion questions

1. During the last four decades, U.S. presidents have said that the immigration system is “broken” and needs to be fixed. What do you know about the “broken immigration system”? How is it broken?
2. What do you know about the process for becoming “legal” or entering the U.S. legally?
3. Why has there been an increase in migration from Mexico and Central America in the last 20 to 30 years?
4. What forces are pushing immigrants? What forces are pulling them?
5. What do you think about immigrants as a threat to your job, home, community or well-being?
6. Descriptive terms for people facing migration have changed over time. How do you think terminology affects what we think of people migrating?

At the end of this session, consider playing the song *Are My Hands Clean?* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ev733n-5r4g>) by Sweet Honey in the Rock. This is a thought-provoking song that speaks to overall globalization but is also relevant for discussions of the NAFTA and its impact. This song also poignantly connects each of us to personal decisions that affect lives around the world.

Handout 4

Session 4

Walls of Immigration

Kristina Schlabach, community minister, Tucson, Ariz.

Jeannette Pazos, director, Hogar de Esperanza y Paz (Home of Hope and Peace), Nogales, Sonora, Mexico

Cindy Schlosser, social services coordinator, The Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project in Arizona

Bryce Miller, pastor, Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, Tucson, Ariz.

Features on-site visits to various “walls” of immigration: the wall at the Arizona/Mexico border; the walls of The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Florence Processing Center in Florence, Ariz.; and the sanctuary walls of Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Tucson, Ariz. Hear firsthand stories of interactions around and within these walls.

Discussion questions

1. What are your feelings about the increased militarization of the U.S./Mexico border, which includes hundreds of miles of fencing and walls? Affirming that it is reasonable and necessary for countries to maintain their borders, what might be alternatives to this wall and to armed border patrols?
2. How do you feel about the increased criminalization of undocumented immigrants, including the detention of hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants each year in prisonlike conditions? More than half of immigrant detention centers are run by private, for-profit corporations, and many of these corporations give money to members of Congress. How do you think this impacts policy-making in Congress?
3. What have you learned about immigration issues from your neighbors’ immigration stories or from your own immigration story?
4. Where are the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or private subcontracted detention centers closest to your congregation? (See the U.S. map of all of the detention centers at www.detentionwatchnetwork.org.) Would you consider involvement in a letter-writing or visitation program to migrants held in detention

Handout 5

Session 5

The Law and Advocacy

Tammy Alexander, senior legislative associate for domestic affairs, Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office in Washington, D.C.

Undocumented immigrants are breaking the law, aren't they? What about God's laws regarding hospitality and welcoming the stranger? Hear thoughts on these questions and learn about proposed changes to U.S. immigration policy. Also, get suggestions for concrete actions that congregations and groups can take to work for just immigration reform.

Discussion questions

1. How do we balance a desire to respect the rule of law with a desire to show immigrants hospitality and humane treatment?
2. Do you think the policy solutions proposed by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) (see note below) or in legislation such as the Senate immigration reform bill would move the U.S. toward a better immigration system? Why or why not? What's missing?
3. Does our responsibility to welcome immigrants extend to our speaking to policymakers and urging them to craft a fairer and more humane immigration system? What are you willing to commit to do—as individuals or as a congregation—to speak up on behalf of immigrants in your community?

Note: Please refer to the handout *MCC Washington Office Memo—Spring/Summer 2013* for facts about U.S. immigration as well as an outline of what should be included in reformed immigration policy. This handout is available at washingtonmemo.org/newsletter/spring2013/.

Note: Read the [Churchwide Statement on Immigration](#) in preparation for Session 6.

Handout 6

Session 6

Mennonite Church USA Churchwide Statement on Immigration

(2014 Revision of 2003 Statement)

Ask participants to read through this information- and inspiration-packed statement, which undergirds the entire study. It's helpful to provide the statement at the end of Session 5 so that participants have ample time to absorb all that it offers and can come prepared to engage in discussion.

If time allows, consider reserving the last 30 minutes of the session to decide on next steps/actions that you could take as individuals and/or as a group. You could also plan for an action day (Session 7) for which you could facilitate a letter-writing campaign, plan a local learning tour, organize a prayer vigil, etc. If you opted to facilitate the six-week core curriculum, this would be a natural time to check in and see whether there would be interest in a Part Two, or in continuing with one of the optional sessions below.

Discussion questions

1. How does the issue of race overlap with opinions and policies regarding immigration? (You could use *What does an immigrant look like?* by John D. Thiesen as an additional resource and conversation starter.) mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/TM_JohnThiesen_May2013_30.pdf
2. Has this series led you to think about the issue of immigration differently? If so, how?
3. The statement notes, "We lament the reality that injustice in how we treat each other happens not only outside the Church but also in our congregations." Identify ways in which your congregation may be perpetuating injustice to immigrants. How could this be addressed and changed?
4. What is one commitment you could make as an individual and/or group from the **Appendix A: Actions** list?
5. Considering that "for/against sides" have become increasingly polarized on the issue of immigration, what is one step that you as an individual could take to bridge the divide? What would be a step that your group/church could take?

When you have completed your study of *Radical Hospitality*, would you consider taking three minutes to complete this [simple evaluation](http://tinyurl.com/RHeval)? (<http://tinyurl.com/RHeval>) Thank you!