

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nebraska Faith Leaders Participate in National Celebration of a New Hope for Immigration Reform

Lincoln, Nebraska - A chorus of voices from faith leaders across the state gathered at First Christian Church across from the Capitol at 12:15pm today to celebrate "A New Day for Immigration Reform."

The beginning of a new Congress, Administration, and Nebraska legislative session provides renewed hope for a new approach to immigration that restores the country's values of community, dignity, and due process.

The group called on a new Congress to enact rational and humane immigration reform, on a new Administration to stop the immigration raids that continue to tear apart families and communities across the country, and on the Nebraska Legislature to use its voice to pressure for federal reform, rather than harmful and divisive state proposals.

"We come together from many faiths to speak with one voice to call for federal immigration reform - policies that welcome the stranger, respect human dignity and protect families," said Rev. Michael Ostrom of Fremont.

The more than a dozen faith leaders came from almost as many communities around the state and many different faiths - including Lutheran, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and others.

The Nebraska leaders joined others across the country and in Washington, D.C. to celebrate this new hope. The Nebraska event followed Washington, D.C., events on Jan. 21, where hundreds of faith and grassroots community leaders gathered at the national headquarters of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for a ceremony to begin a new era of sensible policies that recognize human dignity. Participants in the D.C. event later gathered for a community forum at Westminster Presbyterian Church.

"As we consider policies about immigration, I hope we remember that we are a country strong enough to be compassionate and courageous enough to be creative," said Rev. Jeff Hagaman of Crete. "Let's address the vexing questions of immigration by laying aside our fears and leading with our compassionate strength and creative courage to legislate policies that are not only economical, but humane."

For a link to statements and photos from today's event, please visit www.neappleseed.org/immigrants/new_hope.html

Please visit www.anewdayforimmigration.org for more information.

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Presbyterian

Rev. Laura Hollister, Schuyler, 320-203-7335

Rev. Paulo Riveira, Niobrara (Presbyterian and Methodist)

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Nebraska Appleseed is working with a coalition of more than 200 hundred grassroots organizations across the country in the "Campaign for Community Values," which seeks policies to make America work for all of us. During the first 100 days of the new Administration, the Campaign for Community Values partners are promoting fair and just immigration reform, adequate and accessible health care, and fair policies for workers.

Nebraska Appleseed, a nonprofit, nonpartisan public interest law project, is a national leader in addressing social problems facing vulnerable children without loving and permanent homes, low-income families working hard to make ends meet, and new immigrants seeking a better life. Nebraska Appleseed's current year action plan and description of its six program areas, significant litigation and policy reform successes, and broad-based accomplishments can be found at neappleseed.org.

Nebraska Appleseed is a part of the Appleseed network of independent state-based public interest law centers working to identify and address social injustices. The Appleseed network seeks to build a just society through education, legal advocacy, community activism and policy expertise by addressing root causes and producing practical, systemic solutions with broad implication. For more information visit appleseednetwork.org.

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