



Materials Needed

Chalice

Butcher paper and markers

Computer and projector to watch the Last Dream documentary

Paper and pens/pencils for participants to write notes and advocacy letters

Printouts of TPS Letter Writing Guide "Write A Letter for TPS to Your U.S. Senator"

Printouts of Julio Perez's letter

Printouts of TPS fact sheets "August 2019: Enact a Path to Permanent Status for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) Holders"

Opening Reading/Chalice Lighting (5m)

Danos un corazon grande para amar

Danos un corazon fuerte para luchar.

Pueblos nuevos, creadores de la historia, constructores de nueva humanidad.

Pueblos nuevos que viven la existencia como riesgo de un largo caminar.

English translation:

Give us a heart large enough to love,

Give us a heart strong enough to struggle.

New people, creators of history, builders of a new humanity—

New people who live their existence

as though for the risk of a long journey.

—Juan Antonio Espinosa, in *Las Voces del Camino*, the Spanish language supplement to the UU hymnal, *Singing the Living Tradition*

Preliminary Exploration (10m)

Assign someone to take notes on butcher paper

Ask participants to share what they already know about the TPS program and why people have that status?

Ask participants what they think will happen if TPS protections are taken away?

Watch the Last Dream (20m)

<https://bit.ly/33rh7QF>

Reflection (5-10m)

Have individuals reflect on their own and write down their thoughts about the following questions (It is a good idea to have these written up somewhere during this section):

When you think of the film you have just seen, what are the first scenes that spring to mind?

What did you find most striking, revelatory, painful or inspiring about the film?

During the film, what emotional reactions did you have?

Discussion (20m)

Have people share their reflections broadly as a group. Then ask the following questions:

Did any of the moments of emotional intensity you identified change the way you perceive the problems and political struggles around TPS?

What seems to you the most important take-away from this film – that is, the insight, reminder, or new information that feels most crucial?



Stretch/Bio Break (10m)

Discussion II (20m)

As participants, "Looking back at the list made before the film, what do we want to add? How do you see this issue differently now that you have seen some of the families this affects?"

Give participants fact sheets about what countries and how many people TPS covers. Give them Julio's letter. Have them read it.

Discuss the magnitude of the problem once they know how many people this affects

Ask participants to connect this issue with our 7 UU principles? How can we talk about this issue in terms of our faith?

Letter Writing (20m)

Have participants write letters to their senators. You will need paper, envelopes, and stamps.

Closing (5m)

Prayer for Travelers

This is a prayer for all the travelers.

For the ones who start out in beauty,

who fall from grace,

who step gingerly,

looking for the way back.

And for those who are born into the margins,

who travel from one liminal space to another,

crossing boundaries in search of center.

This is a prayer for the ones whose births

are a passing from darkness to darkness,

who all their lives are drawn toward the light,

and keep moving,

and for those whose journeys

are a winding road that begins

and ends in the same place,

though only when the journey is completed

do they finally know where they are.

For all the travelers, young and old,

aching and joyful,

wearied and full of life;

the ones who are here, and the ones who are not here;

the ones who are like you (and they're all like you)

and the ones who are different (for in some ways, we each travel alone). This is a prayer for traveling mercies,

And sure-footedness,

for clear vision,

for bread

for your body and spirit,

for water,

for your safe arrival

and for everyone you see along the way.

— Angela Herrera

TPS holders and their families need a legislative solution. For now, court orders have placed several of the Trump administration's TPS cancellations on hold. This has offered short-term relief for many immigrants threatened with deportation and separation from their loved ones. However, this reprieve could end as soon as higher courts rule on the future of TPS. Moreover, only Congress can create a path to permanent residency.

Every day that Congress fails to find a solution, therefore, TPS holders and their families are at risk. In June 2019, the House of Representatives passed the Dream and Promise Act of 2019 (H.R. 6), a bill to create a pathway to permanent residency for beneficiaries of three programs: TPS, DACA, and DED. The Senate can and should take up equivalent legislation and pass it into law. Our senators need to hear that this issue matters to us as constituents and as people of faith and conscience.

Handwritten letters can be a particularly impactful way to contact your legislator. These letters show a constituent took time out of their day to address their legislator in their own words. Just remember to speak from the heart and appeal to the humanity of the letter's recipient. You can look up your senator here. Below are some specific points you can emphasize in your letter:

- Ending TPS is a form of family separation. More than 300,000 U.S. citizen children have a parent who's a TPS holder. More than 400,000 TPS holders have had their status cancelled by the Trump administration. If these cancellations go into effect, all these families risk being torn apart by deportation.*
- TPS holders are an integral part of our community. Many TPS holders have lived in the United States with legal permission for decades. They have contributed to our shared communities in countless ways, as parents, employers, workers, neighbors, and friends. According to a recent study, TPS and DED holders pay \$4.6 billion each year in federal and state taxes and contribute \$690 million a year to Social Security. As our partners at the TPS Alliance put it, "We paid our dues."*
- No one should be sent to a place that is not safe and is not their home. Since taking office, the Trump administration has tried to cancel TPS or DED for immigrants from Haiti, El Salvador, Nepal, Nicaragua, Honduras, Sudan, and Liberia. They have also failed to redesignate Syria, Yemen, and Somalia for TPS, meaning that immigrants recently arrived from those places are not able to apply for TPS. All these countries are experiencing violence, civil war, political instability, or protracted effects from natural disasters. None are safe places to deport people who have made their homes in the United States.*

Here are some questions you might want to consider in writing your letter:

What were some of the feelings you described during the film discussion? Are there ways you can bring these emotions into the letter?

How does this issue connect to your faith and moral beliefs? To your personal experiences?

Once your group has finished writing letters, you can collect them and mail them to:

Attn: Josh Leach
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
689 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139-3302

Alternatively, you can scan and email your letter to Josh Leach at jleach@uusc.org. Please include the subject line: "TPS Letter"