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Living Our Love in the World: Accompaniment as Antidote to Fascism

10 ways we see fascism—and how we can fight it.



By UUSC Staff on May 28, 2025

February often conjures images of love, hearts, friendship, romance, chocolate, fighting fascism—well, maybe not that last one, but maybe it should!

Our world today is in desperate need of our radical love. Hostile, anti-trans and anti-immigrant legislation is being proposed and passed across the United States. There are

organized, well-resourced efforts to eliminate trans folx from public life. Leaders in multiple states and at the federal level are attempting to stop immigrants from seeking safety in our country. Fascism is on the rise.

As justice-loving, freedom-loving people, we must act to protect our trans and immigrant beloveds. UUSC's Congregational Accompaniment Project for Asylum-Seekers (**CAPAS**) supports congregations as they welcome those seeking asylum into their communities. The **Pink Haven Coalition** creates networks of safety and direct support for trans folx and their families who need to relocate, access healthcare across state lines, or stay as safe as possible where they are. By providing solidarity and support through accompaniment we can work together against this rising fascism.

Dr. Jason Stanley studies the roots of fascism and has **outlined 10 ways** that it works. Below, we've highlighted these ways, and provide an accompaniment-related antidote to each of these, inviting you to join us in this resistance as a powerful act of love:

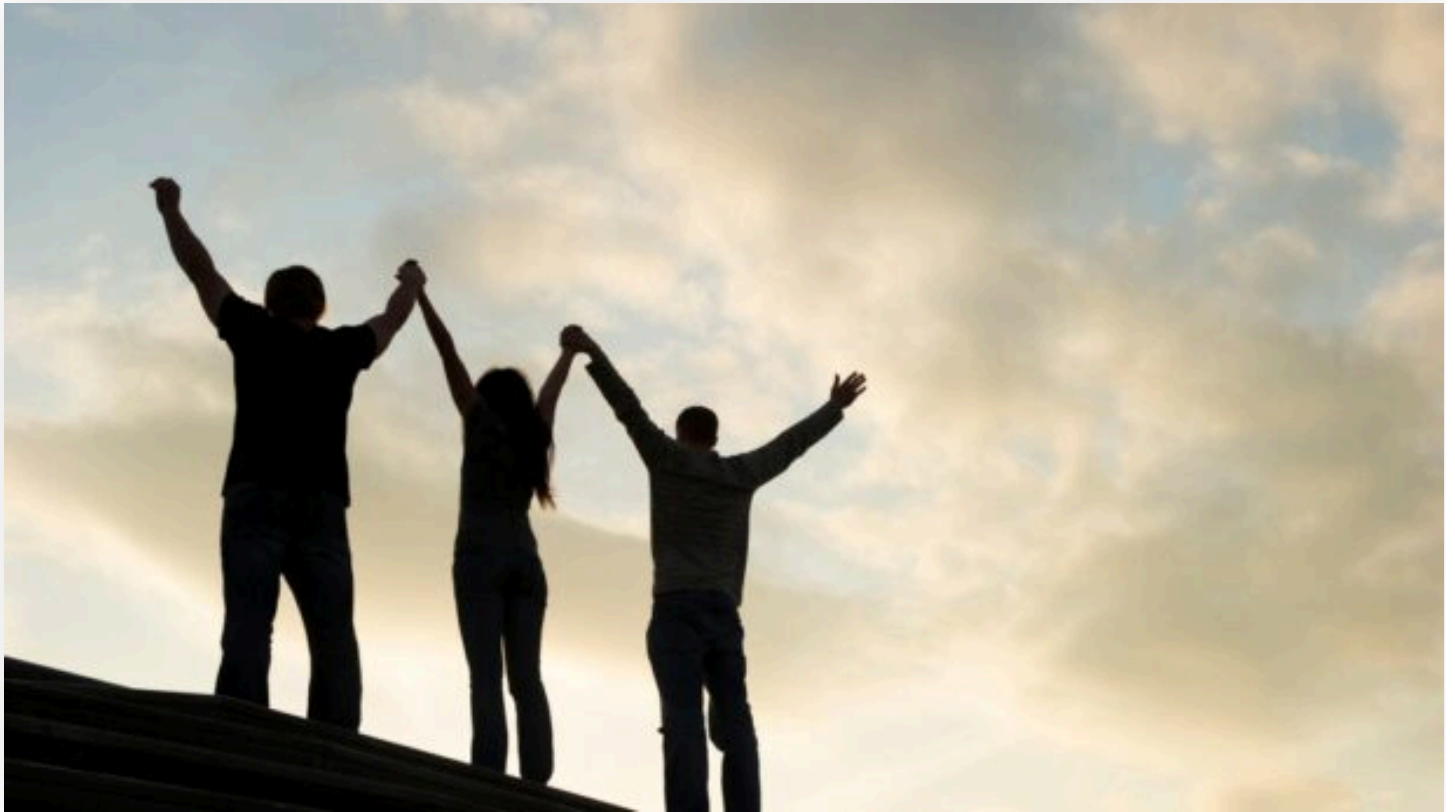
1. **A Mythic Past:** Fascists often glorify a militarized past led by dominant groups and vilify "others." Through accompaniment and **ethical storytelling**, we can share how all of our unique experiences and perspectives contribute to our vibrant communities and liberated futures.
2. **Propaganda:** Fascist leaders use propaganda to demonize the "other." By accompanying someone on their journey, whether that be through the legal asylum process, moving to a new community, or finding medical care, we can better relate to and communicate about the shared human struggle. We can share images and messages that center and value diverse experiences.
3. **Anti-Intellectualism:** Education is a direct threat to fascism. We can create educational opportunities about immigrant justice and trans liberation for our communities. **Contact** UUSC about setting up a screening of the **Seeking Asylum** documentary and other educational ideas.
4. **Unreality:** Fascism controls people and influences votes with lies. Stay up-to-date on immigrant and LGBTQ+ news by reading trusted and varied sources and distribute accurate voting information by joining **UU the Vote** efforts.
5. **Hierarchy:** Fascism concentrates power and spreads the narrative that one group is superior to others. By sharing resources of time, money, and expertise hosting an individual, we share privilege and power. Read the **CAPAS handbook** to learn more about becoming a host.

6. **Victimhood:** If dominant groups feel they deserve to be at the top of the hierarchy, they then see themselves as victims of efforts for equity. Accompaniment enables us to bear witness to the struggles of the people we accompany. This witness then enables us to speak out about harmful stereotypes such as “immigrants that are coming to steal our jobs.”
7. **Law and Order:** Fascism uses legal systems to de-legitimize certain groups of people. Through accompaniment, we help de-legitimized groups navigate and resist unjust laws and systems. We take on risk and use our privilege to help fight these systems of violence.
8. **Sexual and Gender Anxiety:** Fascist leaders create fear of difference by perpetuating the idea that anyone who is not cisgender and straight has malicious intentions and is unsafe. LGBTQ+ individuals who come to the United States seeking safety, often **experience new threats** when they arrive, and many trans and gender expansive individuals have become internally displaced people as they flee unsafe states. Contact **CAPAS** or **Pink Haven** to see how you can create safe and welcoming communities.
9. **Sodom and Gomorrah:** Fascism looks to pit rural “wholesome” communities against “sinful” urban environments with large concentrations of immigrants and LGBTQ+ folx. By hosting asylum-seekers and trans individuals, we demonstrate that they are important and holy parts of all communities.
10. **Work Shall Make You Free:** Fascist leaders depict non-dominant groups as lazy and unwilling to work. An example is the portrayal of immigrants as lazy criminals coming to use public benefits. This, of course, is the opposite of true. Asylum-seekers are eager to work and support themselves. You can support their desire to work by asking your member of Congress to pass the **Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act** (ASWA) and spreading the word about the **#letasylumseekerswork** campaign. The ASWA will reduce the wait time for work permits for asylum-seekers from six months to one month. Additionally, we affirm that all people have inherent worth not because of what they can produce, but by virtue of being human.

The world needs your love. We hope you consider expressing it through accompaniment, and we’d love to talk to you about how. To set up a time to talk about the Congregational Accompaniment Project for Asylum-Seekers or the Pink Haven Coalition, please contact us at capas@uusc.org.

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