INDIANA AID
THE INSIDE VIEW
Feb 2026 | Vol 19

Light in the Darkness

The start of 2026 has been heavy, seeing our immigrant neighbors targeted and fearful across our nation. Immigration raids; families in hiding; increased anti-immigrant/migrant legislation; unlawful detentions; trampling of Constitutional rights - it's been an overwhelming flood. In our last newsletter, though, we talked about "looking for the helpers," and in the midst of such heaviness and darkness, there are so many bringing the light. It's been incredible to see communities across the state & across the country organizing, pushing back, and building up rapid response and mutual aid networks. We've seen judges rule against the administration and the DOJ more and more. We've seen states and large companies end contracts with ICE due to public pressure. In just how our small group has been impacted:

- A huge influx of volunteer interest; a flurry of small donations came in with messages of support; our social media doubled in just 48 hours; people were messaging about how to help; multiple fundraisers happened, spotlighting Indiana AID (more info below); multiple community presentations & tabling events; media requests; and more. We are grateful to each one of you.

Immigration Updates

National:

- As of February 7, 2026, ICE was holding 68,289 individuals in detention. Of these, 50,259 — or 73.6% — have no criminal conviction on record. (Source)
- The Trump administration is moving to arrest thousands of people already legally admitted to the US as refugees and detain them indefinitely for aggressive "rescreening" if they have not yet obtained permanent residence. (Source)
- A federal judge said the administration had violated her December ruling that found it was illegally denying many detained immigrants a chance for release. She ordered DHS to provide them with notice that they may be eligible for bond and then give them access to a phone to call an attorney within an hour. (Source)
- DHS states Operation Metro Surge is over and ICE is withdrawing from Minnesota, however, locals have reservations as ICE presence remains. (Source)
- The partial government shutdown continues as parties remain opposed on funding of DHS and immigration enforcement tactics. (Source)

Indiana:

- Senate Bill 76 is set to have its final vote early next week. The bill would require schools, universities, public hospitals, local governments, police and sheriff offices to comply with federal immigration enforcement (Source). Please contact your state senator daily until the final vote (find your legislators here).
- ICE announced a detainee from Cambodia died in ICE custody on Monday, Feb. 16, at Miami Correctional Facility in north-central Indiana. The man was found unresponsive in his cell. His cause of death is under investigation. (Source)

Program Expansion

- Indiana AID has been busy over the past couple months. We've been consistently supporting immigrants in detention at Clay County jail for years through our virtual visits and, for the last two years, going monthly in person to visit all of the blocks. Starting in March, we've been cleared to start going twice a month in person, along with our ongoing virtual visits and support.
- We shared in our November newsletter that we'd held a Community Stakeholder visit at the Marion County jail in Indianapolis. This resulted in us expanding our virtual visits and support to those detained there and moving forward in planning regular, in-person programming. The day before we were scheduled to begin the in-person support, the jail announced that they were reducing their ICE holds to <48 hours due to overcrowding across the jail. With this change, that has meant our in-person presence at Marion County has been tabled. If the jail returns to holding individuals in ICE detention for longer periods, we are committed to reopening this avenue of support.
- At the end of January, Indiana AID was approved for an on-site, two-day Community Stakeholder visit at the Miami Correctional Facility, a state prison that received an ICE contract to hold up to 1,000 detainees starting in October 2025. At the time of our visit, they had just under 600 detainees. A group of volunteers were able to interview ~80 individuals who signed up to speak with us, learning their stories, asking questions about their care, their immigration cases, and connecting to provide them support moving forward. Through discussions with the warden, other prison staff, and ICE representatives, Indiana AID is in development to hopefully provide regular, in-person support at Miami moving forward.

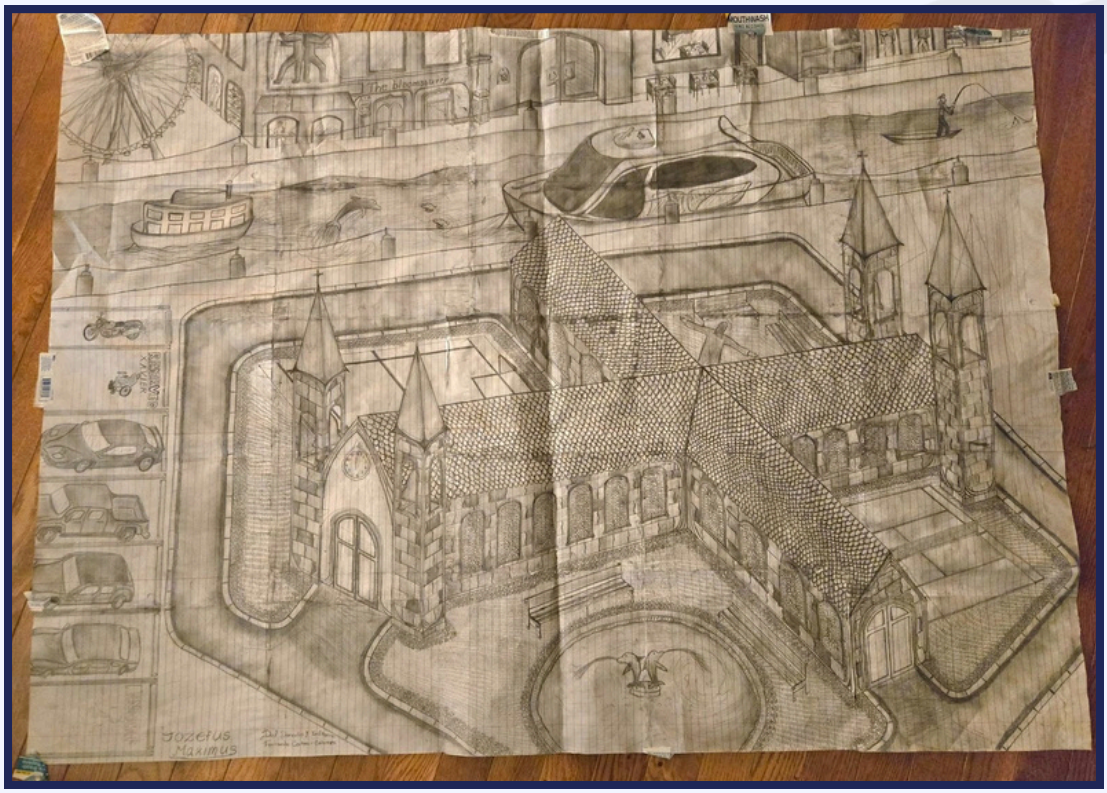
Creating Cross-State Connections

Much of Indiana AID's growth has come as a necessary response to the next presenting need, as the circumstances around immigration enforcement and detention are ever-changing. Over the last few months, volunteers from the group have attended multi-state meetings focused on building out transportation networks for individuals released from detention to get back home to their loved ones. Though the administration has continued to push for individuals to remain in detention for the length of their case, we are seeing some increase in releases due to a few bonds, habeas cases, and some lawsuits.

Picture a person, detained in a t-shirt and shorts - they learn they can finally get out on bond, they are released in the middle of winter, their phone has been dead for months, and they are states away from their home with no way to get there. For majority of the facilities in Indiana, there's no public transportation anywhere near where a detainee would be released. This is where Indiana AID is stepping up. Many Indiana AID volunteers have signed up to help if an individual is released from ICE detention. We are also building collaboration with similar groups based in neighboring states to help transport an individual where they need to go. It was through these connections that an Indiana AID volunteer recently picked up an individual who'd been released from Clay County jail with very little notice, drove him a few hours, met up with a volunteer from another group who drove him the next leg, and the gentleman was able to get home to be with his family that night.

There is a lot of growth and organization yet to happen around transportation needs, but it has been beautiful to see community come together in such tangible ways and we are grateful to be a part of it.

Creating Beauty Where There is None



A volunteer with Indiana AID, as a separate undertaking, was cleared with her priest to go weekly to Clay County jail to provide Catholic communion services to the individuals in detention. She shares her experience of receiving the artwork above:

"This beautiful sketch of a Church was gifted to me last night. It is 48"×35" and was created from 25 pieces of notebook paper that were carefully taped together. The artist had to purchase each piece of paper, the tape, and the golf pencil from the commissary at the jail.

Originally I'd simply admired the beautiful sketch of a Church that was adhered to the wall with labels from products the men bought through the commissary (like mouthwash bottle stickers). When the young man who created this work of art found out that I also volunteer with Indiana AID, he insisted on giving this beautiful sketch to me because of all the work Indiana AID does for ICE detainees and how deeply they appreciate our efforts.

The artist and his companions carefully started taking down this huge sketch that had been proudly displayed in the common area of the block - and I began to weep. I was so overwhelmed by the power of art, the goodness of the people all around me, and the graciousness of this beautiful gift. The men in detention are allowed no outside time, they have no view of outside, they have nothing to do to pass the time, and absolutely no beauty around them. The young man who created this beautiful artwork could have kept it near his own bed, but he shared it with the men in his block so it could be a piece of beauty on display for everyone. The artist who created it then insisted on gifting it to me, in thanks for my advocacy, in thanks for the advocacy of Indiana AID, and so I could share this picture with people on the outside. Please reflect on the detail and care of his work, and continue lifting up these individuals held in ICE detention."

Community Fundraisers for Indiana AID

Over the last two months, we saw a surge of support from local artists and small businesses through various fundraising efforts. We are thankful for each one of these supporters and we encourage you all to support them, too. Whether through a purchase or a social media "like" or "share," you can spread the word to support these immigrant-supporting initiatives. Tag us on social media if we missed you or if you hold a fundraiser in the future!

Apparel + Stickers
by Oliver Upside Down
100% of profits donated to Indiana AID
IG: @oliverupsidedown

"Kindness is Radical"
Zipper Scrunchies by Starsign Collective
100% of profits donated to Indiana AID
IG: @starsign_collective

Stickers by Olivia Childress
100% of profits donated to Indiana AID
+ 20% of other website sales donated
IG: @occhildressdesign

12-Pack Button Set by Latinos Indy
February–March 2026 fundraiser
100% of profits support Indiana AID
IG: @somoslatinosindy

Recent Fundraiser Shoutouts

These small businesses also recently donated a portion of their sales to Indiana AID.
We are grateful and humbled by the outpouring of support!

"Freedom Flock"
Needle-Felted Birds by Wool & Whimsy

A portion of profits donated to Indiana AID

Every one of the handmade, needle-felted birds in the flock bears the name of a person currently in ICE detention and represents a bird from their country of origin

IG: @wool_and_whimsy_studio

IG: @didfitstudio

IG: @nativebread

IG: @root31

IG: @CleverFitnessCoach

IG: @CattailCurations

IG: @Flipside_Estates

Follow Us

Website: IndianaAID.org
Facebook: Facebook.com/IndianaAID1
Instagram: Instagram.com/IndianaAID

Contact Us

Email: IndianaAID.contact@gmail.com
Phone: (voicemail only): 317-721-4044

Volunteer with Us

Currently our greatest needs are for:

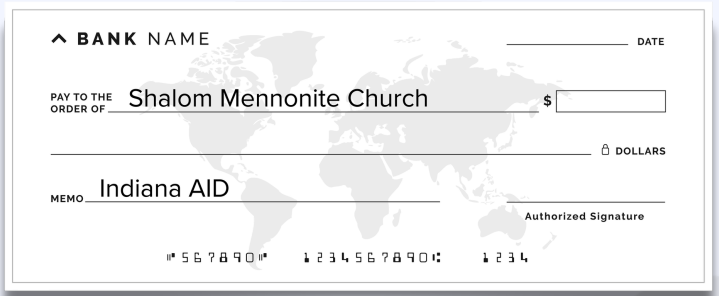
1. Spanish-speaking virtual visitation partners
2. Virtual visitation partners in other various languages
3. Volunteer coordination experience
4. Financial support & fundraising experience
5. Social media support and data input

Donate

IndianaAID.org/donate

Indiana AID is a volunteer group funded 100% on donations. Please consider a tax-deductible donation via the QR code or link above.

Shalom Mennonite Church is our fiscal sponsor - none of the money donated to the Indiana AID fund goes to the church's budget.



Donate by Check

Pay to: Shalom Mennonite Church
Memo: Indiana AID
Mail to: 6100 E 32nd Street, Indianapolis, IN 46226