



## **Recommendation: Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) Strategy**

### **Background**

The word “amparo” in Spanish means the protection of a living creature from suffering or damage. The ELCA’s strategy to Accompany Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) was envisioned after witnessing the plight of children who are forced to flee their communities because of complex and interrelated reasons, including chronic violence, poverty, environmental displacement and lack of opportunities in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. Due to this church’s connection to companion churches in the region, including companion synod relationships, and existing ministries in the United States, the ELCA is positioned to help ensure that these vulnerable children are protected.

amparo ~ protection, refuge

Through a series of reports and updates, the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director of the Domestic Mission unit, and the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of the Global Mission unit, kept the Church Council informed of this church’s accompaniment of vulnerable children migrating through Mexico to the United States. They presented the AMMPARO strategy to the Church Council at its April 2016 and spoke about the need for the strategy and its commitments.

Ms. Suyapa Ucles, program coordinator, Comision Accion Social Menonita (CASM), Honduras, described the situations in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras that youth and their families were fleeing, as well as solutions the ELCA was pursuing with companion churches there.

Pastor Malpica invited Church Council members to view a video on the Guardian Angel program, a court-watch and advocacy program started by the Southwest California Synod.

The AMMPARO strategy is meant to help bring people together in new ways to walk with hundreds of migrant children and families on each step of their journey. It will involve companion churches and organizations in the countries of origin and in transit as well as ELCA synods, congregations, social ministry organizations, agencies, institutions and other ecumenical partners in the United States.

<http://www.ELCA.org/AMMPARO>

### **Recommended for Assembly Action**

**To express gratitude to this church’s members, congregations, synods and churchwide organization as well as to our companion churches and partners for the work to accompany migrant children and families fleeing the humanitarian crisis in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala;**

**To approve the Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) strategy as a whole church response to the migration of children and their families around protection, advocacy, representation and opportunities; and**

**To encourage this church’s members, congregations, synods and churchwide organization to continue their work in advocating for migrant children and their families.**