

MISSION MOMENT

OPERATION CACTI

*The desert and the parched land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus, it will burst into bloom;
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;
they will see the glory of the Lord,
the splendor of our God.*

*Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;
say to those with fearful hearts,
"Be strong, do not fear; your God will come..."*

+ Isaiah 35:1-4a

United States government policy changes in 2025 and ensuing law enforcement actions around immigrant and refugee populations have left communities across the country desperate for safety, and congregations across the Disciples church committed to compassionate response.

The Operation Cacti Compassion Care Project was created in partnership between Obra Hispana (the Disciples' central pastoral office for Hispanic ministries) and Week of Compassion. This educational and biblical resource is designed for families, pastors, and churches that are directly affected by current immigration policies, and for those who seek to be in solidarity with them.



Cacti are resilient plants able to grow in desert places – places that are often dangerous, dry, yet filled with beauty, life, growth, and possibility. The desert is terrain that people, communities, and nations have traversed for centuries in search of safety and a better life. Our shared history of faith tells us that it is also a place where God is actively present,



guiding, protecting, and providing for people in unexpected ways. With this idea in mind, in the current national climate, the partners behind Operation Cacti want children and families to be encouraged in this struggle, have hope, and be empowered to grow in strength and resiliency like the cacti.

Operation Cacti is a theologically resonant and scripturally focused resource kit (bible study materials, leaders manuals, and comfort items for children) that families can receive through their churches, starting in the Pacific Southwest Region. It is designed for a family home setting but can be adapted for church gatherings.

EACH KIT INCLUDES:

- a storybook for children, featuring four bible stories about individuals and communities who faced danger, and how together they overcame with God's help.
- a manual for parents and teachers with lesson outlines for each of the four bible stories.
- a special comfort item (stuffed animal or soft toy) and a prayerful blessing for the night.

While the physical kits are being piloted in the Pacific Southwest, churches across the country are encouraged to download the storytelling and study resources for use in their own congregations. While the kits were designed with immigrant children in mind, these educational resources can be used in any congregation.

In a season of high anxiety and ever-shifting need, Operation Cacti is **A NEW WAY** to partner. Insights and leadership from two significant Disciples ministries engage faithfulness and compassion to supply deeply meaningful resources for churches and communities caring for immigrant and refugee neighbors in the ways Christ has called, and as faith intends.

For more about this immigrant-focused bible study resource created with congregations in mind, including downloads of materials, information on receiving kits for churches and children in your area, and ways to support the ministry, visit WeekOfCompassion.org/OperationCacti.