

+ Los Samaritanos +



*A healing presence along the border*



### **International Migrants Day Celebrated at Tucson Cemetery Candlelight Vigil**

Southern Arizona humanitarian, religious and Native American leaders will host a public sundown candlelight vigil beginning at **4 p.m. on International Migrants Day, Dec. 18** at the Tucson cemetery where the remains of hundreds of migrants discovered in the Sonoran Desert in Southern Arizona have been buried after attempts to identify many of them were exhausted.

Pima County Medical Examiner Dr. Gregory Hess and leaders with [Tucson Samaritans](#), the [Colibrí Center for Human Rights](#), [No More Deaths](#), [Humane Borders](#), [Derechos Humanos](#), Tucson-area churches, synagogues and mosques and the [Tohono O'odham Nation](#) and [Pascua Yaqui Tribe](#) will offer remembrances and prayers during the vigil at [Evergreen Cemetery](#), 3015 N Oracle Rd, Tucson, AZ.

"Our vigil is both a remembrance and a reminder of the horrific toll on people desperately seeking a better life or asylum in this country," said Rev. John Fife, retired Minister of Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson and co-founder of the humanitarian groups Tucson Samaritans and No More Deaths. "This season of hope and love for all the world's religions reminds us that humane, common-sense immigration reform, not militaristic cruelty, is urgently needed to end this humanitarian catastrophe."

During the service, participants will light 123 candles while reciting the names, if known, of 123 migrants whose remains were discovered in Southern Arizona so far in 2018. "We will come together as a community to remember and say the names of just some of those lost due to a heavily militarized border," said Robin Reineke, Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Tucson-based Colibrí Center for Human Rights. "They are unique, irreplaceable human lives, and we refuse to forget them."

Desconocido, Spanish for unknown, will be recited for each unidentified migrant. "A cross will be planted in memory of all the unidentified migrants," said artist Alvaro Enciso whose Tucson Samaritan project "Where Dreams Die" includes the planting of crosses where remains are found.

The remains of more than 2,700 migrants have been recovered since 2001 in Arizona's Sonoran Desert within the jurisdictional area of the Pima County Office of Medical Examiner.

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