



Our package filled with messages of love and hope for our friends and neighbors in Springfield, Ohio, arrived at the small but mighty First UCC congregation early last month. Upon its arrival, volunteers went straight to work. In addition to building relationships with members of the Haitian community who hold Sunday afternoon worship services at the church, members have been working to deepen their connections in other spaces. These include the Haitian Community Center, a local Haitian restaurant, a nearby grocery store, and St. Vincent De Paul. The latter is a place where many members of the Haitian community pass through each week in need of food and clothing. The volunteers from the church also pulled together some of the notes from Minnesota for a display to remind everyone to continue to **EMBRACE HOPE!**

Our point of contact in Springfield, Darla Perkins, shared that everyone has been so grateful for the inspiring messages of love and acceptance from Minnesota. Members of First UCC Springfield recently attended an afternoon worship service with their Haitian neighbors. Darla said that it was quickly evident that their community has great faith and trust that their future will be alright. Darla explained that to many it feels like a ripple has begun in the ocean, and the good that it brings will continue to go on and on. She also shared that the love and concern for the Haitian community in Springfield that our church expressed has helped her congregation stretch as a church body and for that they are grateful!

We will continue to keep our congregation updated on the wonderful work being done and relationships being built by our friends in Springfield. Thank you for spreading your messages of love, acceptance, support, and encouragement!



First UCC
Immigrant Welcoming Ministry



Sunday afternoon worship services led by members of the Haitian community, held at First UCC, Springfield.



The **LETTERS OF LOVE** Campaign at First UCC, Northfield, sent almost 100 cards filled with messages of love and welcome for members of the Haitian community in Springfield, Ohio. We also sent messages of support and encouragement to members of the First UCC in Springfield. In addition, the box was filled with over 100 packets of Penzeys French Thyme spice (used in Haitian cooking), and over 100 stickers from Penzeys that proclaim **EMBRACE HOPE!**

The notes, spices, and stickers are being shared throughout the Haitian community in Springfield.



