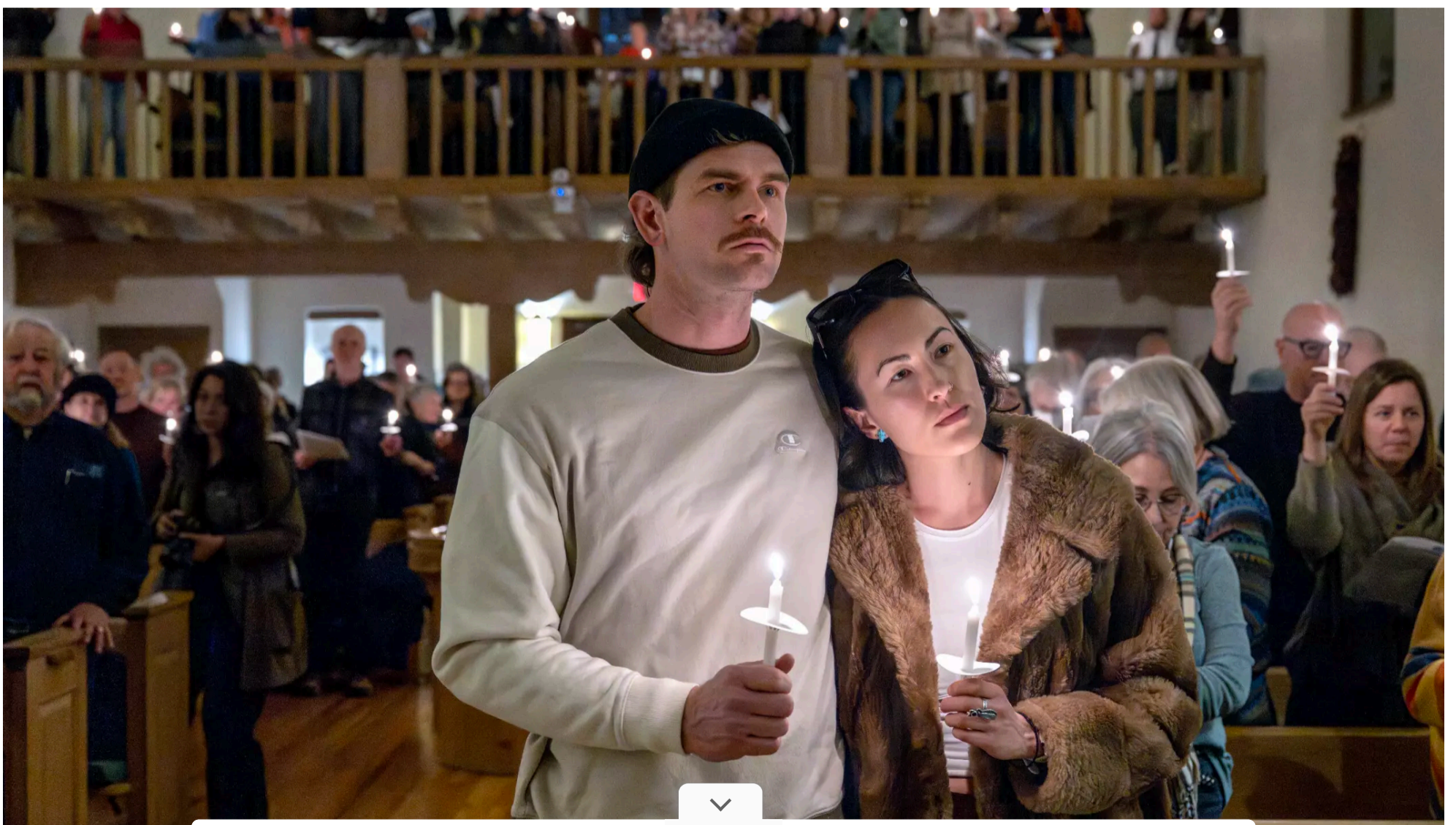




NEWS

More than 100 gather at Santa Fe vigil for immigration enforcement shootings

Senate, White House appear ready to make a deal on Homeland Security funding



Michael Prieur, from Albuquerque, and Rachel Kesler, from Santa Fe, take part in a candlelight vigil at First Presbyterian Church of Santa Fe on Thursday. The church was completely filled for the interfaith vigil to oppose the actions of ICE and the federal government's treatment of immigrants and their supporters. Eddie Moore/Journal



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SANTA FE — A few harmonies arose as a crowd of more than 100 sang "We Shall Overcome," and lifted candles high into the dark.

The evening vigil at First Presbyterian Church of Santa Fe was meant to offer a moment to gather and grieve after deadly shootings by federal law enforcement agents in Minnesota garnered international attention and brought more scrutiny to federal immigration enforcement. The program titled "We are called for such a time as this," was also meant to encourage people to speak up "for justice, compassion and against ICE brutality."

"We are in a very dark moment in our nation's history," said Conroy Chino, a former investigative journalist and a traditional leader at Acoma Pueblo. Chino was one of six faith and advocacy leaders who offered reflections and prayers during the vigil, alongside New Mexico Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernández.

Santa Fe Archbishop John Wester urged attendees to speak out against ICE brutality and push for comprehensive immigration reform. Wester said he's been thinking often of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran pastor who was hanged in 1945 after vocally opposing the Nazi regime.





U.S. Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández, D-N.M., right, and Archbishop of Santa Fe John Wester take part in a candlelight vigil at the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Fe on Thursday. Eddie Moore/Journal

"Sadly, here in the United States in 2026, we are experiencing violence, human rights violations, political overreach and the dehumanization of vulnerable groups of people, and like Bonhoeffer, you and I have to choose to stand up and to speak out," Wester said.

On Saturday, protester 37-year-old Alex Pretti was shot and killed by Border Patrol agents in Minneapolis. Earlier in the month, another protester Renee Good, also 37, was fatally shot by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent in the same city. Both killings were captured on video and sparked widespread demonstrations, including in New Mexico.

"The shootings may be the tipping point, but remember that the shootings are just the most egregious action of what ICE and the Border Patrol is doing," Leger Fernández told the Journal. "They are terrorizing our communities."

Congress is renegotiating Department of Homeland Security funding because of the shootings. Senate Democrats do not want to pass the department's annual funding without more constraints on ICE activity.

President Donald Trump announced Thursday the two parties had reached a deal to separate Department of Homeland Security funding from the other five federal funding bills that still need to pass and avert a potential government shutdown. Homeland Security funding will be temporarily extended for two weeks, allowing time to debate Democratic demands for new regulations of federal agents.





From left, Otililo Riuz and Chuy Martinez, from Albuquerque, perform during a candlelight vigil that included the Rev. Talitha Arnold, at the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Fe on Thursday. Eddie Moore/Journal

“Republicans and Democrats have come together to get the vast majority of the government funded until September,” Trump said in a social media post.

Democrats are demanding an end to roving patrols of immigration enforcement agents, tightened rules for warrants, not allowing agents to mask when working and requiring them to wear body cameras that are on and operating, said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. He also called for a uniform code of conduct for ICE and all federal agents that they can be held accountable to, and for independent investigations of any misconduct.

Many Democrats in the House and Senate, as well as two Republican senators, have also called for DHS Secretary Kristi Noem to resign over her handling of Pretti’s killing. Trump called the two Republican senators “losers” in an ABC news interview.

The day Pretti was killed, Noem said he was “brandishing” a gun at agents, something videos of his death do not show. Agents appeared to disarm Pretti of a holstered gun before shooting him. Noem also claimed without evidence that Pretti was a “domestic terrorist.”

“The disconnect between the lies they tell us and what our eyes see is so huge that even Republicans cannot deny it anymore,” Leger Fernández told the Journal. “I am calling on all my Republican colleagues, I’m calling on Republicans who are citizens, who believe in morality and believe in the rule of law, to say this is wrong.”

Articles of impeachment were filed against Noem in the House shortly after Good was killed. The articles allege a pattern of willful misconduct by Noem that undermines congressional authority, constitutional rights, federal law and public trust. All three of New Mexico’s House representatives signed on to that impeachment effort. The number of House Democrats cosponsoring the articles has risen to 162.

Twice during the vigil, speakers read the names of everyone who died in Customs and Border Protection detention facilities in January or in recent fatal shootings with ICE and CBP.

“The government certainly has the right and even the duty to manage immigration and to keep citizens and immigrants safe, but it does not have the right to trample on God-given rights that are shared by every human being, regardless of their origin or legal st



Over 100 people take part in a candlelight vigil at the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Fe on Thursday. Eddie Moore/Journal

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