

Indonesian UCC lay leader detained by ICE

Terry Rombot has faced religious persecution in his home country.

by [Anthony Moujaes](#) in the [September 27, 2017](#) issue



Terry Rombot. Photo courtesy of [United Church News](#).

Terry Rombot, a United Church of Christ lay leader who faces religious persecution if sent back to his native Indonesia, was detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials in August and threatened with deportation.

“With a quiet dedication, he has served his UCC church and community for many years,” said Sandra Pontoh, pastor of Maranatha Indonesian UCC, in Madbury, New Hampshire.

Rombot was part of a wave of Indonesians who came to the United States in the late 1990s when violence against Christians in Indonesia was at its worst. Many overstayed their visas and applied for asylum but never received it. Since then, about 70 undocumented people from Indonesia in New Hampshire have lived under supervision, checking in with ICE regularly.

Rombot is among 20 members of Maranatha UCC told by ICE officials at their August check-in that they must return to Indonesia. ICE would not say why it detained Rombot. He and his family are concerned for his safety in Jakarta, as well as for his health if he does not have access to medication for a heart condition.

Along with other religious leaders, congregation members held a vigil at an ICE office and have been advocating with members of Congress for [HR 2642, the Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act](#).

“Please pray for my friends,” Pontoh said. “They are scared, and . . . they want to stay here.”

A version of this article, which edited on September 8, appears in the September 27 print edition under the title “People: Terry Rombot.” It was adapted from [a longer story](#) published by United Church News.