

# JUSTICE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

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**Dallas Clinics:**

- April 14, 2009
- May 12, 2009
- June 16, 2009

**FTW Clinics:**

- April 3, 2009
- May 1, 2009
- June 12, 2009

For volunteer opportunities, contact us at:

214-381-0901 (Dallas)

817-534-3293 (FTW)

amyspaur@hotmail.com

## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: EDGAR BAZAN

It has been said that when God closes a door, somewhere He opens a window. Edgar Bazan's journey to the United States began just that way.

In 2004 as Edgar was finishing his studies at Juan Wesley Seminary in Monterrey, Mexico, he made a trip to Dallas to explore the possibility of attending Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. While Edgar did not meet the requirements to begin his studies at Perkins, his relationship with Enrique Gonzalez and Elmwood UMC opened a window that led to Casa Linda UMC in Garland, a congregation that was eager to start a Hispanic ministry. A few short months later, Edgar, along with his new wife Evelyn Garza, moved to the United States with an R-1 religious



Pastor Edgar Bazan with JFON attorney Mary Beth Garcia

worker visa. Edgar joined Casa Linda as a local pastor, leading their efforts to reach out to the Hispanic community through ESL classes, family events, festivals, Holy Week outreach, and a

variety of other activities.

After three years of working with Casa Linda UMC, God opened yet another door for Edgar and Evelyn, one that took him to Oak Cliff UMC

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## JFON CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF MINISTRY

Justice For Our Neighbors is thrilled to be celebrating 10 years in ministry in the Dallas/Fort Worth communities. The Dallas and Fort Worth clinics were chosen as two of the eleven original pilot sites for the United Methodist Committee on Relief's new immigration legal services

program in 1999. Today the clinics are part of a JFON network that includes 26 clinics in 9 states. In 10 years of ministry, JFON clinics in Dallas and Fort Worth have served thousands of immigrants and refugees in our churches and communities, extending Christian hospital-

ity and providing free, high-quality immigration legal services.

Please join us in celebrating the wonderful work of Justice For Our Neighbors. JFON Fort Worth will host a reception on Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>

*(Continued on page 2)*

## GET INVOLVED WITH JFON!

Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON) is a faith-driven ministry, welcoming immigrants into our churches and communities by providing free, high-quality immigration legal services, education, and advocacy. JFON relies on the assistance of devoted volunteers in order to sustain this vital ministry. Here are some ways you can support Justice For Our Neighbors:



Sally Vonner volunteers as an intake worker at the Dallas JFON clinic

*“JFON relies on the assistance of devoted volunteers in order to sustain this vital ministry.”*

1. Pray for our ministry!
2. Volunteer at our monthly clinic when we welcome new clients by:
  - Serving as a Spanish/English translator
  - Serving as a client intake worker
  - Providing light refreshments for clients
  - Providing lunch for staff and volunteers
3. Volunteer as our hospitality coordinator. This involves contacting and organizing volunteers to provide refreshments and lunch for monthly clinics
4. Volunteer as our childcare coordinator. Responsibilities include contacting and organizing childcare volunteers for monthly clinics
5. Serve on the local JFON task force, the group responsible for guiding and overseeing the operations of JFON
6. Teach citizenship classes to clients preparing for their naturalization exam
7. Assist with scanning and digitalizing client files
8. Invite a JFON representative to speak to your congregation, Sunday School class, UMW circle, Bible study, and other groups interested in hearing about the work of JFON, immigration and faith
9. Join the immigration advocacy network now forming (see page 4)
10. Join your conference or district refugee and im-

migration task force. In the Central Texas Conference, contact Bill Sargeant at bill-sarg@flash.net or 817-921-3383. In the North Texas Conference, contact Dawn McMullan at dmcmullan@sbcglobal.net

11. Support JFON’s ministry with your financial donations

--donations to the Dallas JFON site can be made payable to the Southeast Dallas Cooperative Parish, with JFON in the memo, and sent to 8301 Bruton Road, Dallas, TX 75217

--donations to the Fort Worth JFON site can be made to the Central Texas Conference, with JFON in the memo, and be sent to 464 Bailey Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 76107. Remember, Justice For Our Neighbors is a Fair Share Asking!

For more information on these and other ways to get involved with Justice For Our Neighbors, please contact: Amy Spaur

214-381-0901/817-534-3293  
amyspaur@hotmail.com

## CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF MINISTRY

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from 3 – 5 PM at Polytechnic United Methodist Church. JFON Dallas has planned their reception for the following Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 3 – 5 PM at Pleasant Mound United Methodist Church. Both receptions will include ethnic food, music, former

client testimony, photos from 10 years of ministry, and much more!

Have you ever volunteered with Justice For Our Neighbors? Attended a clinic? Served on the task force? Supported the ministry with your gifts or your prayers? Been a client of JFON or known someone

who was helped by JFON? Heard someone speak at your church or Sunday School class? Been interested in learning more about JFON? If so, join us for these special events on April 26<sup>th</sup> in Fort Worth and May 3<sup>rd</sup> in Dallas.

## TEXAS CHURCHES PARTICIPATE IN NATIONWIDE PRAYER VIGIL MOVEMENT

Various Texas churches were among those to join in the national “Prayer, Renewal and Action on Immigration” campaign. More than 170 prayer vigils were held across the country from February 13 – 22, bringing together people of faith to pray for the protection of immigrants and humane immigration reform.

La Fundicion de Cristo (Christ’s Foundry UMC) was one of the participating churches. Christ’s Foundry UMC, a Spanish-speaking mission of the North Texas Conference, hosted a prayer



Rev. Owen Ross, pastor of Christ’s Foundry UMC, leads worship with Rev. Kalaba Chali and Christian Kakez-A-Kapend

service on February 13th from 8 PM until midnight. Many participants fasted throughout the day, then broke their fast at midnight

by sharing a meal together. It was a time of songs, prayers, scriptures, and personal testimonies.

Munger Place UMC also hosted a prayer vigil, organized by the North Texas Conference United Methodist Women, as part of the national campaign. On February 15<sup>th</sup>, over 80 people from 10 countries and from different faith traditions gathered to pray for the stranger in their midst and to call for immigration reform.

Yet another prayer vigil was held at First UMC Georgetown and was hosted by The Methodist Federation For Social Action. About 40 people, many from the community at large, attended and joined in a time of prayer, singing, readings in both English and Spanish, and quiet time. After the vigil, gatherers shared refreshments and distributed written materials about the issue.

The Servant Ministry class at St. John the Apostle in

Arlington not only participated in the movement by praying for immigrants,



The Rev. Charles Stovall, pastor of Munger Place UMC, welcomes participants to vigil (UMNS photo by Gail

they followed up with action by providing hospitality and refreshments at their local Justice For Our Neighbors clinic in Fort Worth. Many other churches in both the North Texas Conference and Central Texas Conference carved out time during their regular Sunday morning worship services and Sunday School classes to remember our immigrant brothers and sisters in prayer.

May we carry on the movement as we welcome the sojourner in our midst.

*“Justice For Our Neighbors is pleased to have collaborated with the North Texas Conference in support of Edgar Bazan and his ministry in our community.”*

## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: EDGAR BAZAN

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in Dallas, where he is currently serving.

In March of 2008, Justice For Our Neighbors, with the support of the North Texas Conference, helped Edgar and Evelyn do an I-360 application and eventually their green card applications. This process can be

quite difficult to maneuver without the assistance of experienced legal counsel. JFON attorney Mary Beth Garcia was able to provide this assistance, and in December 2008, both Edgar and Evelyn received notice that their green cards were approved! This was great news for Evelyn as well, as she was now eligible to

work in her profession.

Edgar is now a student at Perkins School of Theology, pursuing ordination as an elder of the United Methodist Church. Justice For Our Neighbors is pleased to have collaborated with the North Texas Conference in support of Edgar Bazan and his ministry in our community.

## STATEWIDE FAITH-BASED IMMIGRATION COALITION NOW FORMING

Building on the momentum of the prayer vigils held as part of the “Prayer, Renewal and Action on Immigration” movement, the Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC) is now calling on faith commu-

good neighbors to our newly arrived immigrant neighbors and then ask the Member how he/she can be a good neighbor to immigrants through their stance on immigration reform.”



Members of the state-wide network organize for immigration reform

nities to hold “Neighbor to Neighbor” in-district meetings with their Members of Congress. The IIC encourages faith communities to “discuss how they have been

Here in Texas, plans are now underway to form a network of people across the state to advocate for immigrant rights and immigration reform as part of the “Neighbor to Neighbor” campaign and beyond. Rev. Dean Reed, Pastor of First United Methodist Church in Stephenville, has graciously volunteered to spearhead this effort.

In the network’s immediate sights is a Neighbor to Neighbor meeting with Senator John Cornyn’s staff.

Senator Cornyn holds a key position as the Ranking Member of the Immigration Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee. The Senator has seven offices located throughout the state in: Austin, Dallas, Harlingen, Houston, Lubbock, San Antonio, and Tyler, and efforts are being made for delegations from the network to make a visit to each local office.

If you or someone you know is interested in joining the network, participating in an organizational conference call, making a visit to Senator Cornyn’s office, or would simply like more information about the network and its work, please contact Dean Read at [rdr17@me.com](mailto:rdr17@me.com) or 254-965-5046.

*“The Visitor is a heartfelt, humanistic drama that deftly explores identity, immigration, and other major post-9/11 issues.”*

## RECENT FILMS ADDRESS IMMIGRATION ISSUES

Two films that address the issue of immigration—*The Visitor* and *The Least of These*—have recently been released to the public.

*The Visitor* is a heartfelt, humanistic drama that deftly explores identity, immigration, and other major post-9/11 issues. It is a drama about a college professor, Walter Vale, who discovers a pair of undocumented immigrants who were the victims of a real-estate scam living in his New York apartment. After the mix-up is resolved, Avle invites the couple—a young, Syrian musician named Tarek and his Senegalese girlfriend, Zainab—to stay with him.

An unlikely friendship develops between the retiring, quiet Vale and the vibrant Tarek, and the former begins to loosen up and respond to Tarek’s drumming lessons as if something in him waiting to be liberated has finally been unleashed. All goes well until Tarek is hauled in by immigration authorities and threatened with deportation. *The Visitor* is now available on DVD at your local video store.

*The Least of These* is a remarkable new documentary on immigration that premiered at the South by Southwest (SXSW) film festival in Austin, Texas.

By telling the poignant and powerful stories of imprisoned immigrants and their American advocates, it draws attention to one of the most controversial aspects of U.S. immigration policy: family detention. *The Least of These* provides an in-depth portrait of the controversial T. Don Hutto Residential Center—a former medium-security prison in Taylor, TX that houses immigrant children and their parents as they await asylum hearings or deportation proceedings. *The Least of These* can be purchased by visiting [www.indiepixfilms.com](http://www.indiepixfilms.com).

# PRINCIPLES FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

In 2007, the General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) advocated for comprehensive immigration reform that would address various issues. While comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) has not yet been re-introduced, many are hopeful that the Obama administration will remain committed to getting it passed. The following are some of the principles that GBCS has supported in the past:

1. **Provide a Path to Citizenship:** Opportunities with minimal obstacles should be provided for all those who want to settle in the United States and become eligible for permanent residence and citizenship.
2. **Protect Workers:** The nation needs a temporary worker visa program that adequately protects the wages and working conditions of U.S. and immigrant

workers and provides a path to permanent status for those who desire to remain.

3. **Reunite Families:** One of the driving factors of immigration, as well as America's most cherished values is family unity. Family backlogs should be cleared and those separated by migration and detention should be reunited.
4. **Restore the Rule of Law and Enhance Security:** The borders will be secured only the law is realistic and enforceable. This can best be achieved by a comprehensive overhaul that combines reform—a path to permanent status for immigrants here and wider channels for those coming in the future—with effective enforcement. Enforcement should be aimed at eliminating exploitation and traf-



Immigration advocates call for a moratorium on raids until immigration reform passes

ficking, as well as include smart inspections and screening practices, fair proceedings, efficient processing, as well as strategies that crack down on criminal smugglers, get tough with lawbreaking employers, and reduce illegality.

GBCS and immigration reform supporters advocate for fair, humane immigration reform in line with our country's needs. For more information, contact Bill Mefford at [bmefford@umc-gbcs.org](mailto:bmefford@umc-gbcs.org).

*“GBCS and immigration reform supporters advocate for fair, humane immigration reform in line with our country’s needs.”*

## INTERFAITH IMMIGRATION COALITION

The Interfaith Immigration Coalition is a partnership of faith-based organizations committed to enacting fair and humane immigration reform that reflects our mandate to welcome the stranger and treat all human beings with dignity and respect. Coalition members work together to advocate for just and equitable immigration policies, educate faith communities, and

serve immigrant populations around the country. Through this coalition, hundreds of national and local faith-based organizations and faith leaders have called on Congress and the Administration to

enact immigration reform consistent with these values.



Bishop Carcaño speaks at interfaith press conference. UMNS photos by Kathy L. Gilbert.

The Interfaith Immigration Coalition hosts a conference call on the first Monday of every month at 3 PM Central Time. For more information about the IIC or to join

the conference call, visit [interfaithimmigration.org](http://interfaithimmigration.org).



#### **NORTH-CENTRAL REGION**

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Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON) is a faith-driven ministry, welcoming immigrants into our churches and communities by providing free, high-quality immigration legal services, education, and advocacy.

Justice For Our Neighbors is housed at Polytechnic United Methodist Church in Fort Worth and at Pleasant Mound United Methodist Church in Dallas. JFON also partners with Refugee Services of Texas in both Dallas and Fort Worth.

For more information on how you or your church can become involved with Justice For Our Neighbors or to schedule a speaking engagement at your local church or community organization, please contact Amy Spaur, Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator, at 817-534-3293 (FTW), 214-381-0901 (Dallas), or by e-mail at [amyspaur@hotmail.com](mailto:amyspaur@hotmail.com).

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## **PRINT RESOURCES ON IMMIGRATION:**

- *Welcoming the Stranger: Justice, Compassion and Truth in the Immigration Debate* by Matthew Soerens and Jenny Hwang (InterVarsity Press)
- *Enrique's Journey* by Sonia Nazario (Random House)
- *God's Heart Has No Borders: How Religious Activists are Working for Immigration Rights* by Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (University of California Press)
- *Dying to Live: A Story of U.S. Immigration in an Age of Global Apartheid* by Joseph Nevins, with photos by Mizue Aizeki (City Lights Books)
- *Metropolitan Migrants: The Migration of Urban Mexicans to the United States* by Ruben Hernandez-Leon (University of California Press)
- *This Land is Their Land: Reports from a Divided Nation* by Barbara Ehrenreich (Metropolitan Books)