

# JUSTICE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

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**Dallas Clinics:**

- January 13, 2009
- February 10, 2009
- March 10, 2009

**FTW Clinics:**

- January 9, 2009
- February 6, 2009
- March 6, 2009

For volunteer opportunities, contact us at:

214-381-0901 (Dallas)

817-534-3293 (FTW)

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## BISHOPS LOWRY AND BLEDSOE ATTEND JFON LUNCHEON

Justice For Our Neighbors' staff and supporters were blessed to share a meal with Bishop Mike Lowry of the Central Texas Conference and Bishop Earl Bledsoe of the North Texas Conference. Joining the bishops were members of both the Fort Worth and Dallas task forces, JFON staff, CTC assistant treasurer David Stinson, district superintendents Gary Lindley, Connally Dugger, and Milton Guttierrez, as well as Fred Durham, Assistant to the Bishop/Director of Connectional Ministries for the North Texas Conference. The luncheon, held on December 3rd at First United Methodist Church of Arlington, was a wonderful time of fellowship and gave Bishops Lowry and Bledsoe an opportunity to



Bishop Mike Lowry and Bishop Earl Bledsoe enjoy a meal with Justice For Our Neighbors supporters

hear more about the vital ministry that Justice For Our Neighbors carries out in our churches and communities throughout the Central and North Texas

Conferences.

JFON welcomes Bishop Lowry and Bishop Bledsoe and looks forward to partnering with them in continued service to immigrants and refugees in our midst.

## JFON FORT WORTH JOINS FIRST STREET METHODIST MISSION

Justice For Our Neighbors Fort Worth is pleased to announce that they will be joining First Street Methodist Mission beginning in January 2009. First Street Mission, an outreach of First United Methodist Church of Fort Worth, is devoted to serving people in need by

providing emergency food, clothing and infant formula in an atmosphere of respect and compassion. The organization is located at 801 W 1st Street in downtown Fort Worth. The first JFON clinic day at First Street Mission will be held on Friday, January 9th, 2009, from 10

AM to 4 PM, and then the first Friday of each month thereafter.

Volunteers can help on clinic day in a variety of ways. Intake volunteers are needed to work one-on-one with new clients to gather

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## CITIZENSHIP CLASSES A SUCCESS IN DALLAS

It was the Methodist connectional system at its best. Justice For Our Neighbors, thanks to the efforts of volunteer Julie Mobley, had offered its first citizenship classes in the fall of 2007.

The six-week class was such a success that clients were asking for another session. The students were ready. The space was reserved. The material was printed. The problem—no one to

teach the class. At a North Texas Conference staff meeting, JFON attorney Mary Beth Garcia expressed the need for a volunteer to teach the citizenship preparation classes, hoping that NTC staff members would collaborate in locating a volunteer. They found the volunteer that very day— Rev. Fred Durham, Assistant to the Bishop/ Director of Connectional Ministries. About 8 students participated in the citizenship classes, hosted by Pleasant Mound UMC. The class covered such topics as United States government and history, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, US geography, and other areas of knowledge that will be tested at their naturalization interview. JFON plans to offer the citizenship classes again next spring. Special thanks to Rev. Fred Durham for volunteering his time in service to immigrants in our community.



Fred Durham prepares Marco and Jaime for their citizenship test

At a North Texas Conference staff meeting, JFON attorney Mary Beth Garcia expressed the need for a volunteer to teach the citizenship preparation classes, hoping that NTC staff members would collaborate in locating a volunteer. They found the volunteer that very day—

*“A variety of other volunteer opportunities are available for those with a heart for serving our immigrant and refugee neighbors”*

## TEXAS JFON SITES HELP MORE THAN 100 PEOPLE RENEW TPS

Following the devastating earthquakes in El Salvador in 2001, President Bush granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for nationals of El Salvador residing in the United States since February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Then INS Commissioner Mary Ann Wyrsh explained, “The havoc caused by these

earthquakes makes it extremely difficult for Salvadorans to return home safely at this time. Given that reality, granting them temporary protected status is the humane thing to do.” Since 2001, TPS for nationals of El Salvador has continued to be extended for 18-months at a time.

In October and November, Fort Worth and Dallas JFON clinics assisted more than 100 people re-register for Temporary Protected Status. JFON appreciates the hard work of caseworkers Imelda Esparza and Catalina Lizalde who organized and prepared the TPS clinic days.

## JFON FORT WORTH JOINS FIRST STREET METHODIST MISSION (CONTINUED)

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important background information before meeting with the attorney. Hospitality volunteers are needed to provide light refreshments and a warm welcome to incoming immigrants. Child-care workers are helpful in providing supervision to children while their parents

meet with the attorney. Bilingual volunteers are always needed to help with translation. A variety of other volunteer opportunities are available for those with a heart for serving our immigrant and refugee neighbors. For more information on volunteer opportunities,

please contact Amy Spaur at 817-534-3293 or at amyspaur@hotmail.com. Justice For Our Neighbors will continue to have a presence at Polytechnic United Methodist Church, and wishes to express its gratitude for their dedication and support of this ministry.

## JFON THANKS DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS

Justice For Our Neighbors wishes to express its deepest gratitude to the many dedicated volunteers who have supported this ministry throughout 2008. Volunteers have done client intake, provided childcare, brought snacks and refreshments for clients, cooked lunch for JFON staff and

volunteers, created a client database, assisted with digital scanning, taught citizenship classes, and helped with a variety of other tasks. JFON relies heavily on the dedication of these volunteers to continue in ministry with the immigrant community.

Thank you, volunteers!



Volunteers Cramer Goad and Traci McGrath do client intake at Fort Worth clinic

## NTC STAFF GIVES CHRISTMAS DONATION

The North Texas Conference staff gave a wonderful Christmas blessing to Justice For Our Neighbors when they chose Justice For Our Neighbors to be the recipient of their Christmas luncheon mission donation. Laity and clergypersons working at the North Texas Conference gathered on December

16<sup>th</sup>, 2008, for their annual Christmas luncheon, bringing with them generous donations of children's toys, markers, crayons, coloring books, and puzzles as well as a variety of snacks and numerous office supplies to help support the JFON ministry in Dallas.

In addition to providing high-quality immigration legal services, JFON aims to provide a warm welcome to immigrants in our communities. These contributions will go a long way in providing hospitality to the immigrants we serve.

Thank you, NTC staff!

## MEADOWBROOK UMC REACHES OUT TO IMMIGRANTS IN NEED

It started with a desire to minister among immigrants in their community. Meadowbrook UMC took a step of faith and began to offer citizenship classes. What began with one student and much patience on the part of dedicated volunteers is today a thriving ministry to immigrants that goes far beyond the classroom.

Karima Catif, a refugee from Afghanistan, came to Meadowbrook after JFON attorney Mary Beth Garcia helped fill out her citizenship application. Meadowbrook volunteers were able to provide the one-on-one attention that Karima needed as she prepared for her naturalization interview. Thanks to their dedication and Karima's hard-work, she

passed the citizenship test on her first attempt!

But the story doesn't end there. Bea Stiles and other citizenship class

teachers learned that Karima did not have a car. She was walking to her job at Jack In The Box and taking the bus to church for citizenship classes. When asked what she wanted to do if she passed the citizenship test, Karima responded that she would like to get a better job, but had no way to get out of her neighborhood as bus fare was expensive. When Rev. Jim Chandler heard about this, he con-



Rev. Jim Chandler and Bea Stiles hand Karima the keys to her car

nected Karima with Project 44, an organization that provides vehicles to those in need of reliable transportation. They provide these vehicles to those

who are unable to afford purchasing a vehicle on their own as a way of helping in their efforts to become self-sufficient.

Karima and Project 44 were a perfect fit. On a Sunday morning in November at Meadowbrook UMC, Karima was handed the keys to her very own car.

Meadowbrook holds citizenship classes on Wednesday nights from 6:15 to 7:30 PM.

*"What began with one student and much patience on the part of dedicated volunteers is today a thriving ministry to immigrants that goes far beyond the classroom."*



#### 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).

## THANKS JFON SUPPORTERS!

