



Welcoming Sojourners

Justice for Our Neighbors Opens Doors in Twenty-One Communities Around the US

“ God comes to us in the form of the vulnerable person who lacks the benefit of status and protection in an alien land.”

From the 1986 United Methodist Bishops’ Statement on Undocumented Migration

UMCOR ADVANCE # 901285
Justice for Our Neighbors

A COMPASSIONATE RESPONSE

Justice for Our Neighbors, established by the United Methodist Church in 1999, helps people from all over the world. Our services are available to all without regard to race, gender, or religion.

We give clients thorough and impartial advice for immigration reviews, assistance to detainees, and representation in immigration court. We do not accept employment-based immigration cases.

Since its founding the Justice for Our Neighbors network has expanded to include congregations of many faiths; ecumenical and interfaith partners; and local communities. Clinics are located in 21 cities across the US.

FOLLOW UMCOR ONLINE

UMCOR’s website, umcor.org, has the latest information about hospitality for immigrants and refugees, emergency response, and other humanitarian aid in 81 countries around the world. See how your gifts go to work to deliver hope and new life for tens of thousands of vulnerable children, women and men.

CHURCH BASED, VOLUNTEER LED

Justice for Our Neighbors is a free legal clinic staffed with licensed attorneys who give professional guidance to qualifying immigrants and asylum seekers in a safe environment. Clinics meet at least monthly in

21 communities around the United States.

Immigrants and asylum seekers here in the US face a confusing web of rules. They may not be aware of their rights under the law

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or the documents needed to assure continuing residency. They face challenges in interpreting the rules governing their lives here. They dream of reuniting their families and of enjoying the right to work.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief is helping many in need—more than 3,000 a year.

JUST, COMPASSIONATE ADVOCACY

The attorneys, both volunteer and paid, are selected for their commitment to immigration services. Then they’re specially trained and resourced by UMCOR’s national office.

Our attorneys help qualifying clients review their immigration status. They help with preparation of application packages and represent clients at immigration interviews or before the immigration court. Both attorneys and volunteers advocate for just and compassionate immigration laws and public policy. They network with other advocacy groups where possible. And they provide legal advice and support for immigrants and asylum seekers.



VOLUNTEERS CAN HELP IN MANY WAYS

Volunteers with many different skills make a clinic succeed.

Coordinating the monthly intake, providing hospitality, performing or scheduling intake interviews, using bilingual skills, and providing cash gifts are all part of volunteer efforts at our free clinics.

WHO ARE WE HELPING?

Here are some examples of persons receiving assistance at Justice for Our Neighbors clinics.

- A Pakistani man was narrowly saved from deportation and long-term separation from his wife and children. He was able to obtain a green card when his wife's naturalization, pending for over a year, was completed with a JFON intervention.
- A Mexican woman, the wife of a US citizen, finally received her legal status after long and arduous efforts. She unknowingly missed an immigration interview after she had moved and did not receive the interview notice. Only with two years of intense advocacy by a JFON attorney, and with the assistance of Sen. Debbie Stabenow, she was able to obtain the green card and remain united with her family.

CLINICS FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

When we welcome sojourners it is as if we are receiving Christ, and our doing so becomes a sign of our faithfulness.

In the words of the 1986 United Methodist Bishops' Statement on Undocumented Migration, "God comes to us in the form of the vulnerable person who lacks the benefit of status and protection in an alien land. In the flesh of Jesus of Nazareth, God chose to sojourn in a particular way for the sake of all humankind...and restored the possibility of authentic community in which love and justice reign and peace prevails."

CONTACT US

UMCOR

475 Riverside Drive, Room 330

New York, NY 10015.

Telephone: 800-554-8583

Email: umcor@gbgm-umc.org

www.umcor.org

