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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATEMENT BY BISHOPS OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
ON NEWS PRESIDENT OBAMA
WILL TAKE UP IMMIGRATION REFORM IN 2009

We join other religious leaders in thanking President Obama for placing immigration reform on his political agenda for 2009. As United Methodists we believe that immigration is a human rights issue that needs serious attention. We stand firmly in believing that the inherent value of all immigrants means that all of their civil liberties should be respected and maintained regardless of their legal status. We believe, however, that our present immigration policies violate these basic rights.

We encourage President Obama to work for comprehensive immigration reform that would...

- Provide a pathway to citizenship for immigrants;
- Reunify immigrant families that have been separated by immigration itself or due to work place raids and ensuing indefinite detentions and deportations;
- Increase the number of visas for short-term workers to come into the United States to work in a safe, legal, and orderly way.
- Extend legal protection to all workers who come to stay for a certain period of time as well as for those who stay permanently including the right to bargain for higher wages, to protest against poor working conditions, and to preserve their human rights as workers, be they documented or undocumented;
- Eliminate privately-operated detention centers, which are not regulated by the federal or state governments, and end all indiscriminate raids.

We stand ready to assist President Obama in this mighty work of comprehensive immigration reform that would truly serve the common good.

Bishop Gregory Palmer
President of the Council of Bishops
of The United Methodist Church
and Bishop of the Illinois Area

Bishop Minerva G. Carcaño
Bishop of the Phoenix Area
of The United Methodist Church
and Chair of the United Methodist
Task Force on Immigration

Bishop Kenneth L. Carder
Professor of the Practice of Christian
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Bishop Jane Allen Middleton
Bishop of the Harrisburg Area
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Bishop Elaine J.W. Stanovsky
Bishop of the Denver Area
of The United Methodist Church

Bishop Judith Craig, Retired
The United Methodist Church

Bishop Hope Morgan Ward
Bishop of the Mississippi Area
of The United Methodist Church

Bishop Joe A. Wilson, Retired
The United Methodist Church

Bishop Roy I. Sano, Retired
The United Methodist Church

Bishop Peter D. Weaver
Bishop of the Boston Area
of The United Methodist Church

Bishop C. Joseph Sprague, Retired
The United Methodist Church

Bishop George W. Bashore, Retired
The United Methodist Church

Bishop Elías G. Galván, Retired
The United Methodist Church

Bishop Joel N. Martinez, Retired
The United Methodist Church

Bishop S. Clifton Ives, Retired
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Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata
Bishop of the Portland Area
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Bishop Susan Murch Morrison, Retired
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Bishop Richard J. Wills, Jr.
Bishop of the Nashville Area
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Bishop William Boyd Grove, Retired
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Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt, Retired
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Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar
Bishop of the New Jersey Area
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Bishop Felton Edwin May, Retired
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Bishop Julius C. Trimble
Bishop of the Iowa Area
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Bishop Sharon Zimmerman Rader,
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Bishop Warner H. Brown, Jr.
Bishop of the San Francisco Area
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Bishop Grant Hagiya
Bishop of the Seattle Area
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Bishop Jeremiah Park
Bishop of the New York Area
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Bishop Marshall L. Meadors, Jr., Retired
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Bishop Hee-Soo Jung
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Bishop Sally Dyck
Bishop of the Minnesota Area
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Bishop Kenneth W. Hicks, Retired
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Bishop Linda Lee
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Bishop of the Richmond Area
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Bishop William W. Morris, Retired
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