

ACTION ITEM #207

A Resolution to the Iowa Annual Conference in Response to the Postville Raids

WHEREAS: Jesus called his disciples and followers to “strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” (Matthew 6:33, New Revised Standard Version) and we are called, as disciples, to embody a new order of love and justice, and

WHEREAS: Raids on undocumented immigrants represent governmental failures in addressing complex national and international dynamics which close legal avenues and force immigrants into the shadows where they are subject to exploitation as we have a workforce, vital to our economy, without advocacy or voice, and

WHEREAS: Some employers knowingly hire undocumented immigrants, even to the point of providing false social security numbers or documents, and

WHEREAS: Raids, indefinite detention, and deportation tear families apart and create anguish and terror that is contrary to the Kingdom Jesus describes, and

WHEREAS: The United Methodist Church “affirms the worth, dignity, and rights of every person regardless of their nationality or legal status;” (*Welcoming the Migrant to the United States* adopted by the 2008 General Conference of the United Methodist Church), and

WHEREAS: The United Methodist Church believes in a process of holy conferencing that can model the sort of conversation that needs to occur in our nation;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church calls upon President Bush, the Presidential candidates, and Congress to put an immediate stop to these raids and to work for a just and humane comprehensive immigration reform;

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Iowa Annual Conference calls upon the federal government to hold accountable the ownership and management of Agriprocessors for knowingly violating current immigration laws for financial gain;

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church urge government officials to hold employers accountable in the hiring and documenting process of immigrants;

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED: That employers be liable to chargeable offenses if found to be part of the illegal process of hiring undocumented immigrants;

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED: That until immigration reform is enacted on a federal level, the Iowa Annual Conference urges Governor Culver and our State legislators to refrain from creating and enforcing legislation that would cause further disruption of the immigrant population in Iowa and to encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ to individually reach out to government officials to urge just immigration reform;

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Iowa Annual Conference urges all its churches to pray for the people whose lives have been torn apart by the Postville raid, to practice holy conferencing in our local communities, and on the county and state level, to receive a special offering for their families to be sent through the Conference Treasurer to St. Bridget’s Hispanic Ministries in Postville and to encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ to individually reach out to government officials to urge just immigration reform.

Submitted by: Trinity (Des Moines) UMC, and Comunidad de Fe Las Americas.