



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Tuesday, June 12, 2018**

### **United Methodists Pass Resolution to End Immigrant Family Separation at Annual Gathering**



*Dionisio Salazar presented the resolution to 1500 members of the UMC at the American Bank Center.*

**CORPUS CHRISTI (Tuesday, June 12, 2018)** – The Rio Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church passed a resolution on June 9 to formally request the US Department of Justice to cease the separation of immigrant children from their families. Robert Schnase, Bishop of the Rio Texas Annual Conference, presided over the motion during the Annual Conference to address the humanitarian crisis affecting children held in detention centers located across South Texas.

Rio Texas Transforming Communities Vision Team Chair Dionisio Salazar (of Emmanuel UMC; Austin) presented the “Resolution to End Family Separation” before the conference:

“Whereas the United States government recently implemented a coercive ‘zero tolerance policy’ resulting in the traumatic separation of children from immigrant parents and the subsequent incarceration of children in secretive detention centers;

Whereas several of the detention facilities are operated within the geographical boundaries of the Rio Texas Conference;

Whereas this practice constitutes a violation of international law, child abuse, harassment and discrimination;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Río Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church, in the name and Spirit of Jesus Christ, shall respectfully request the US Department of Justice immediately discontinue separating children from their families due to the ‘zero tolerance policy.’”

1500 lay delegates and clergy voted overwhelmingly to support the resolution to end family separation.

The Rio Texas Annual Conference meets every June at the American Bank Center in Corpus Christi, Texas to conduct the business of the United Methodist Church for the Rio Texas region that spreads from north of San Angelo to the Rio Grande Valley in the south. This is the fourth gathering since the former Southwest Texas Conference and Rio Grande Conference merged to become the Rio Texas Annual Conference in 2015.

###

(Cont'd on Next Page)

**ABOUT:**

The Rio Texas Annual Conference aims to reach out to people of South and Central Texas. Some of our churches are located in some of the fastest-growing areas of the country. Others are located in areas where people are struggling with issues of poverty, lack of affordable housing, and a loss of hope. We are committed to providing vital missions, vital congregations, and strong leaders to connect our churches to the people. Our churches are in large cities and small towns from Austin to McAllen, from San Angelo to Victoria in vibrant cities, historic small towns and struggling communities. Our Bishop is Robert C. Schnase. He was assigned to Rio Texas in 2016 after 12 years in the Missouri Annual Conference. For more information about the conference or our bishop, please visit <http://riotexas.org> and follow us on Twitter @RioTxAC.

**CONTACT:**

Rev. Will Rice  
210-408-4500 Ext. 505  
[wrice@riotexas.org](mailto:wrice@riotexas.org)  
16400 Huebner Road  
San Antonio, Texas 78248