

Inter-Church Council of Greater New Bedford to host 'A Conversation on Immigration'

The Inter-Church Council of Greater New Bedford will hold its 78th Annual Meeting at the New Bedford Whaling Museum's Harbor View Gallery, this Thursday, June 1/2017 at 5:30pm, delegate registration starts at 5:00pm. After the business meeting, which will include brief ministry reports and election of the board of directors there will be a free public forum, "A Conversation on Immigration" which will begin at 6:30pm.

Rev. David A. Lima, Executive Minister of the ICC explains why the need for the forum is so important. "Currently we are being fragmented by anger and rhetoric, with people in support or opposition of just about every major issue in this country and around the world. Immigration has become one of the biggest hot button issues of our day. There are those who believe borders should be open, sanctuaries should exist and every support should be given. The opposite view is that we must protect our own, build a wall to prevent intruders and push anyone without proper documentation back over it."

"What we do not have these days are true statesmen, from all views who will sit, talk and listen. To come up with plans to help resolve the issues. Our hope for the forum is to be a safe place to learn and discuss how we both protect, encourage and care for others. That has always been one of the primary mission of the people of Faith."

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Joining us that night for a panel discussion will be; Helena DaSilva Hughes, Executive Director of the Immigrant's Assistance Center. The purpose of the IAC is to assist, promote, develop and coordinate with organizations and firms to advocate, upgrade and organize in the interests of persons immigrating to the United States, particularly to Southeastern Massachusetts.

Frederick Q. Watt is a partner at Watt & Sylvia Attorneys and Counselors at Law, has been involved in Immigration law since 1990, and has practiced exclusively in the area of immigration law since that time. His office is located in New Bedford with a small satellite in Providence. For many years, focused on problems of the Portuguese and Cape Verdean communities, and has represented the Portuguese Consulates in the United States on immigration issues for the last 15 years.

Timothy Paicopolos is a staff attorney in Catholic Social Services (CSS) of Fall River's Immigration law department. Attorney Paicopolos specializes in the representation of immigrant children including unaccompanied minors. His work includes pursuing legal residency for immigrant children who are victims of persecution, abuse and exploitation.