



# One Family Under God: Immigration Politics and Progressive Religion in America

*Grace Yukich*

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Behind the walls of a church, Liliana and her baby eat, sleep, and wait. Outside, protestors shout "Go back to Mexico!" and "Even heaven has a gate!" They demand that the U.S. government deport Liliana, which would separate her from her husband and children. Who is Liliana? A criminal? A hero? And why does the church protect her?

In *One Family Under God*, Grace Yukich draws on extensive field observation and interviews to reveal how immigration is changing religious activism in the U.S. In the face of nationwide immigration raids and public hostility toward "illegal" immigration, the New Sanctuary Movement emerged in 2007 as a religious force seeking to humanize the image of undocumented immigrants. Building coalitions between religious and ethnic groups that had rarely worked together in the past, activists revived and adapted sanctuary, the tradition of providing shelter for fugitives in houses of worship. Through sanctuary, they called on Americans to support legislation that would keep immigrant families together. But they sought more than political change: they also pursued religious transformation, challenging the religious nationalism in America's faith communities by portraying undocumented immigrants as fellow children of God. Yukich shows progressive religious activists struggling with the competing goals of newly diverse coalitions, fighting to expand the meaning of "family values" in a diversifying nation. Through these struggles, the activists are both challenging the public dominance of the religious right and creating conflicts that could doom their chances of impacting immigration reform.

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