

Welcoming the Migrant in our Midst – Resolution

Whereas, the State of Tennessee is home to over 400,000 migrants who have journeyed here seeking safety, security, and better financial opportunities, fleeing climate crises, gang violence, and severe poverty; and

Whereas, migrants and refugees worship in the pews and serve in the pulpits of churches across the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of The United Methodist Church, contribute essential labor that supports our cities and agriculture, sustain our local economies through hospitality and retail, and pay taxes while enriching the common good; and

Whereas, we know so well that the leadership of migrants has strengthened our shared witness for Christ and advanced the mission of the church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; and

Whereas, Scripture commands us to love the immigrant as ourselves, declaring in Leviticus 19:33-34 that the foreigner shall be treated as the native-born, and reminds us that Jesus himself was a refugee, forced to flee his homeland due to political persecution and finding refuge in Egypt (Matthew 2:13–15); and that Christ teaches nations will be judged by how they care for the most vulnerable—the hungry, the stranger, the sick, and the imprisoned (Matthew 25:31–46); and

Whereas, harmful rhetoric and policy have fueled xenophobic and racist attitudes in our communities, and many migrants have been targeted for arrest, detention, and deportation without due process, often enduring inhumane conditions while detained;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of The United Methodist Church (TWKUMC), as followers of Jesus, commits to opposing racism and violence directed toward migrants and refugees, regardless of national origin;

Be it further resolved, that we commit to standing in solidarity with migrants and refugees by supporting their families through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness, and by advocating for their dignity, safety, and human rights;

Be it further resolved, that we celebrate the ongoing ministry of the Hispanic/Latino Ministries Committee and support the work of the Conference’s Migrant Task Force in guiding churches in ministries of welcome and accompaniment;

Be it further resolved, that all congregations in the TWKUMC are encouraged to educate and equip their members to provide radical hospitality and protection to migrants and refugees, drawing upon the General Conference resolution “Welcoming the Migrant to the United States,” and to engage in prayerful advocacy, protest, and direct action for just immigration policies;

Be it further resolved, that the TWKUMC calls upon all clergy and churches to participate in educational events and advocacy opportunities provided by our Conference’s task forces and by the General Board of Church and Society;

Be it further resolved, that the Conference calls upon policymakers at every level to enact laws that affirm the worth, dignity, and rights of all migrants and refugees, who are deeply loved by Jesus Christ;

Be it further resolved, that our biblical witness calls for such laws to ensure due process, protect families from separation, provide pathways to legal residency and citizenship, and offer refuge to those fleeing violence, persecution, and climate disaster; for in advocating for justice, we live into our calling to love our neighbor, seek the common good, and proclaim the gospel with both word and deed.

Be it finally resolved, that we celebrate the faithful witness of our diverse communities who walk alongside migrants and ethnic communities in love, compassion, and advocacy, and we encourage the formation and continued support of a Migrant Ministry Task Force to further guide and support our churches in this holy work.

Signed by

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