

1 **Resolution 2017 - 03**
2 **Resolution to 2017 Annual Conference Session**
3 **Resolution Relating to Support of a Citizens Commission for Legislative and**
4 **Congressional Redistricting**
5 **Presented by the EPC Church and Society Work Team**
6

7 **WHEREAS**, the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church in the article on the
8 Political Community, section A) *Basic Freedoms and Human Rights* states, “We hold
9 governments responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to free and fair
10 elections...”; and
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12 **WHEREAS**, the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church in the article on the
13 Political Community, section B) *Political Responsibility* states, “The strength of a political
14 system depends upon the full and willing participation of its citizens. The church should
15 continually exert a strong ethical influence upon the state, supporting policies and
16 programs deemed to be just and opposing policies and programs that are unjust.” and,
17

18 **WHEREAS**, the members of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United
19 Methodist Church and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania deserve a fair, fully
20 transparent, impartial and depoliticized process of the decennial drawing of state
21 legislature and congressional districts of near equal population; and
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23 **WHEREAS**, legislative and congressional redistricting has often resulted in the
24 gerrymandering of districts to favor one political party or the other; and
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26 **WHEREAS**, such gerrymandering of legislative and congressional districts has worked
27 at times to the detriment of our representative democracy by impeding action on critical
28 issues of importance to the people; and
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30 **WHEREAS**, the creation of a truly independent citizens redistricting commission devoid
31 of political motivation or partisanship will help to ensure a fair and accurate redistricting
32 process that will allow for public input and will fully comply with the constitutional
33 requirement that “no county, city, incorporated town, borough, township or ward” be
34 divided “unless absolutely necessary”; and
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36 **WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 22 has been introduced in the current legislative session to
37 provide for legislative redistricting reform.
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39 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United
40 Methodist Church does hereby support efforts for legislative redistricting reform, and asks
41 church members to contact their legislators urging them to support redistricting reform.
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43 **Person responsible for presenting resolution:** Barbara Drake, Chairperson of Church
44 and Society Work Team.