RESOLUTION 2017 - 25
RESOLUTION to 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION
Resolution relating to Fair, Humane Immigration Policies and Practices
May they know we are Christians by our love
Presented by the Eastern PA Conference Immigration Rapid Response Team, with
the support of the Latino Commission, CORR, the Urban Commission, RUMEP, and
the EPA United Methodist Women

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church affirms the inherent worth, dignity and human
rights of all people, regardless of their race, nationality or legal status; and

WHEREAS, Eastern Pennsylvania’s population comprises many immigrants—with and
without legal documents—who have migrated to our many communities fleeing war,
vigilance and starvation, and seeking freedom, security and survival in a safe place among
compassionate people; and

WHEREAS, many such immigrants and refugees are contributing members of our
communities and our churches, and many are now full members of The United Methodist
Church through baptism and profession of faith, who contribute their time, talents and
treasure to the work our connection; and

WHEREAS, these sisters and brothers have helped broaden our witness and mission to
make disciples of Jesus Christ, once a refugee himself, for the transformation of the world; and

WHEREAS, God commands us to love and embrace the immigrant, who “shall be to you
as the citizen among you.” (Leviticus 19:33-34); and

WHEREAS, careless, divisive, fear-baiting rhetoric and actions by U.S. government
leaders and others have ignited broad contempt and racist attitudes and actions against
many people of color here, both immigrant and non-immigrant; and

WHEREAS, many of our immigrant neighbors, coworkers, friends and church members,
especially those who are undocumented, are suffering from well-founded fears that they
may be forcibly separated from their families and loved ones by law enforcement as
hunted victims of our broken immigration system:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we in the Eastern PA Conference of The United
Methodist Church, as followers of Jesus, commit ourselves to work to eliminate racism
and violence directed toward immigrants from all parts of the world and to express our
opposition to any immigration policy that excludes refugees solely on the bases of their
race, religion or national origin; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Eastern PA Conference encourages all churches
to educate and equip their members to provide hospitality that welcomes immigrants and
refugees in their communities (including using the General Conference resolution
“Welcoming the Migrant to the United States” as an excellent resource) and to pray and advocate for just, humane immigration policies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Eastern PA Conference calls upon our political leaders and policymakers to ensure that our laws affirm the inherent worth, dignity and human rights of all immigrants; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Eastern PA Conference calls upon our political leaders and policymakers to continue to accept properly vetted refugees and to grant asylum based on the needs of those seeking our help, such as innocent victims of natural disaster, war, violence and political threats, and not based on how they can benefit the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Eastern PA Conference affirms and supports recent public statements and letters offered by justice advocacy groups in our conference and the Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops, which expressed concern for “law enforcement actions that threaten the peace and security of immigrant residents in our region” and which called on United Methodists to ‘welcome the foreigner’ and to “honor our historic Methodist legacy of commitment to justice and mercy for those who are poor and displaced” and

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Eastern PA Conference asks its Bishop and Conference Secretary to send letters to the President of the United States, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. Secretary of State, as well as members of the U.S. Congress representing the state of Pennsylvania, calling on all of them to lead the nation in legislating and adopting fair, humane, comprehensive laws and policies that reform the U.S. immigration system.

Person Responsible for Presenting Resolution: Ruth Daugherty