

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

8
9 **WHEREAS**, The United Methodist Church affirms the inherent worth, dignity and human
10 rights of all people, regardless of their race, nationality or legal status; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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44 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Eastern PA Conference encourages all churches
45 to educate and equip their members to provide hospitality that welcomes immigrants and
46 refugees in their communities (including using the General Conference resolution

47 “Welcoming the Migrant to the United States” as an excellent resource) and to pray and
48 advocate for just, humane immigration policies; and

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

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

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

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

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75 **Person Responsible for Presenting Resolution:** Ruth Daugherty