

Resolution (2) – Sanctuary

Resolution on Sanctuary

Presented to the Synod of Province III on May 7 – 8, 2018

If adopted, to be forwarded to the Secretary of General Convention

Resolved, That the Synod of Province III, meeting in Martinsburg, West Virginia on May 7 – 8, 2018, endorses the following resolution and hereby instructs the Provincial Secretary to forward it to the Secretary of General Convention by no later than May 25, 2018.

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That this 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church declares itself, while in session, to be a place of sanctuary; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presiding Officers of the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops are hereby urged to appoint a Joint Sanctuary Committee which will attend to the needs of those who seek sanctuary during this General Convention and on this holy ground; and be it further

Resolved, That the staff of the Episcopal Church and its Provinces be encouraged to support all congregations in their ministries of serving as places of welcome, refuge, healing, and other forms of material and pastoral support for those targeted for deportation due to immigration status or some perceived status of difference.



Based on the following resolution adopted by the Diocese of Delaware:

Resolved, That the 233rd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware urges the Diocese of Delaware to become, after prayerful and appropriate study and preparation, a Sanctuary Diocese; and be it further

Resolved, That, in obedience to the many biblical injunctions imploring us not to wrong or oppress the alien in our midst and Jesus' own mandate to extend care for the stranger, and in faithfulness to the sacred promises of Holy Baptism, the Diocese of Delaware, as people of faith and people of conscience will question and address any unjust immigration law, policy, or practice that is inconsistent with our biblical mandate to "not wrong or oppress a resident alien" (Exodus 22:21); and be it further

Resolved, That the Diocese of Delaware connect with The Episcopal Church, sister dioceses, and local and national sanctuary communities and institutions, immigrant rights groups and coalitions, and engage in educating, organizing, advocacy, and affirmative action, and other methods as deemed appropriate in each context, to ensure the safety and security of the undocumented community; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention urge congregations of the Diocese of Delaware to consider becoming Sanctuary Congregations, serving as places of welcome, refuge, healing, and other

forms of material and pastoral support for those targeted for deportation due to immigration status or some perceived status of difference, and that we work alongside our friends, families, and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people; and be it further

Resolved, That Bishop and Council oversee the work of equipping congregations, clergy and lay leaders to engage in such work, appropriate to local contexts, capacity, and discernment and report on progress at the 234th Annual Convention.

Explanation: Delaware is home to thousands of people from all walks of life, of different races, religions, sexual orientations, and national and ethnic origins. Delawareans value and celebrate this diversity, which makes our community and our economy strong and vibrant.

As a people of faith committed to dismantling oppressive systems and building structures and communities that reflect God's compassion and justice, we must do nothing less than make straight a highway in the desert for our sisters and brothers. The bible has numerous injunctions that instruct us not to wrong or oppress the alien in our midst (Exodus 22:21 & 23:9, Leviticus 19:33, 23:22 & 24:22, Numbers 15:16, Deuteronomy 24:20-21 & 27:19, Jeremiah 7:6-7, Zechariah 7:10, and Malachi 3:5). Jesus is clear that the righteous inherit eternal life because "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35).

He also makes clear that our failure to address his need results in the condemnation of the unrighteous because "I was a stranger and you did not welcome me" (Matthew 25:43). Our baptismal vows require us to "seek and serve Christ in all persons" and to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being" (Book of Common Prayer p. 305).

It is our Christian duty to welcome those seeking refuge on our shores from war, civil strife, persecution, lawlessness, famine, or natural disaster, and to assist those in search of safety and a better life.

This resolution puts our faith into action by standing with the growing number of cities, colleges and communities of faith declaring themselves places of welcome, refuge, healing, for those targeted by hate due to immigration status or some perceived status of difference as we work alongside our friends, families, and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people.