

Resolution Calling on the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ and its members, congregations, Associations, and Conferences to Covenant as Immigrant Welcoming Congregations

WHEREAS the International Association for Refugees has stated, "The world is in the midst of a long-term refugee crisis;" and

WHEREAS thousands of refugees and migrants come from throughout the world to the United States seeking safety, security, freedom, and opportunity; and

WHEREAS the Jewish and Christian traditions honor this text: "When an immigrant resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the immigrant. The immigrant who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the immigrant as yourself, for you were immigrants in the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 19:33-34, adapted from NRSV); and

WHEREAS, Jesus says, "'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:31, NRSV); and

WHEREAS migrants bring us as offerings their stories and experiences, dreams and hopes, energy and skills; and

WHEREAS our new neighbors experience difficulties adjusting to life in a new country, difficulties such as language barriers, culture shock, a sense of loss, and isolation; and

WHEREAS the welcome and support immigrants receive helps in the building of safe communities and future prosperity; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ (UCC) declares "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcomed here;" and

WHEREAS an example of living a covenant of immigrant welcome is offered in the following UCC resource: "Becoming an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation - The Journey is Made by Walking"

(<http://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/Becoming%20an%20immigrant%20welcoming%20congregation%20updated%20Nov%201%202012.pdf>)

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ declares itself an "Immigrant Welcoming Synod" and that it encourages the development of policies dedicated to facilitating the respectful welcome and inclusion of all immigrants into the United States.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on its members, congregations, associations and conferences to become active "Immigrant Welcoming Congregations and Communities" and that it assist this process by making available the example resources cited in this resolution along with other resources developed and identified by the Justice and Witness Ministries of the United Church of Christ, UCC members, associations, and conferences who are the United Church of Christ.

FUNDING

The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries and other entities of the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.