



## UMC Advocacy – January 2018 (1-4)

### ENFORCEMENT OF FEDERAL IMMIGRATION LAW

**SUMMARY OF POSITION:** We oppose state laws that limit the rights of state agencies, counties, or cities to determine the extent they will cooperate with federal authorities and provide information regarding immigrants in Iowa.



#### UNITED METHODIST SUPPORTIVE STATEMENTS

- The use of local law enforcement as immigration agents should be stopped. . . Migrants should be given due process and access to adequate legal representation. . . To refuse to welcome migrants to this country—and to stand by in silence while families are separated, individual freedoms are ignored, and the migrant community in the United States is demonized . . . is complicity to sin. [*Resolution 3281 “Welcoming the Migrant to the U.S.” The 2016 Book of Resolutions, pp. 289-90*]
- We urge the Church and society to recognize the gifts . . . of those who are immigrants and to advocate for justice for all. [*The Social Principles, Para. 162 H) Rights of Immigrants, The 2016 Book of Resolutions, p. 136*]
- The United Methodist Church commits itself to Advocacy [including] promotion of: defense of civil liberties and social protections regardless of the legal status of persons. [*Resolution 6028 “Global Migration,” The 2016 Book of Resolutions, p. 555*]
- On January 30, 2017, the following statement was released by the United Methodist Council of Bishops by their President, Bishop Bruce Ough: **“Whoever seeks to build a wall around their soul shall destroy it; whoever tears down the wall (around their soul) shall bring their soul to a living birth.” (Matthew 16:25)**  
*The very soul of our country is at stake. When we abandon strangers who are at risk of bigotry, xenophobia and violence we not only destroy their hope, we destroy our own souls. When we fail to assist the refugees fleeing danger, we not only place them in harm’s way, we do harm to our own souls. When we build walls of concrete, or walls of divisive rhetoric, or walls of fear, or walls of immoral immigration policies, we build a wall around our own souls. Christ calls us to tear down the walls around our souls that we might live fully and abundantly. . . . Say “no” to the walling off of our country and our hearts and say “yes” to their hope – our hope – for new life. Let us unite and work together to bring the soul of this country to a living birth!*

#### SUPPORTING CONSIDERATIONS

- 1 - Immigration laws are a FEDERAL responsibility, so forcing cooperation from cities and counties takes away resources for primary responsibilities locally.
- 2 – Additional costs to local police departments, communities, and counties are involved in complying with federal requests to house persons after they can legally be released.
- 3 – There are privacy concerns concerning collection and release of personal information about students and others without their permission.
- 4 - An atmosphere of fear and danger can be created in immigrant and refugee communities, impeding valuable cooperation with law enforcement in solving crimes as well as prevent positive relationships. [*Our 2016 Book of Resolutions #3281 “Welcoming the Migrant to the US,” states: “When law enforcement officials engage in immigration enforcement, migrants are often unwilling to report crimes and are forced to live in situations where they are exploited, abused, and victimized.” (p. 289)*]
- 5 - Negative impacts are created in schools when students are fearful of family separations from threats of deportation.

**The United Methodist Church joins other faiths in long-standing recognition of the valuable contributions that immigrants and refugees bring to our communities.**

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