MIGRATION WITH DIGNITY (UPDATED)

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RESOLVED, That the 129th Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of Washington, as people of faith, honor the divine spark that animates all human beings. Therefore, we advocate for Migration with Dignity, a set of immigration policies that assure equal and respectful treatment of all people;[1] and be it further

RESOLVED, that, acknowledging that grave mistreatment of ethnic minorities, migrants and refugees is on the rise in the midst of record migration across international borders, the Diocese of Washington, consistent with resolutions of the General Conventions of The Episcopal Church, declare itself to be in support of Migration with Dignity for all migrants, including refugees, asylum seekers, displaced persons and those who cross borders in search of opportunity; and be it further

***RESOLVED*,** that the Episcopal Diocese of Washington call upon all Episcopalians in the diocese to advocate that local, state, national and international governing bodies promote Migration with Dignity by enforcing existing laws and policies on behalf of refugees, migrants, asylum seekers and displaced persons and by enacting new laws and policies guaranteeing their welcome, protection and integration into our common human journey; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Diocese of Washington petition the 81st General Convention of The Episcopal Church that, inasmuch as all people are created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), the Church advocate for "Migration with Dignity," a set of immigration principles and policies that

[1] McClain, Shanna, Bruch, Carl *et al.* "Migration With Dignity: a Legal and Policy Framework,: *Journal of Disaster Research,* Vol. 17, No.3, (2022).

assure equal and respectful treatment of all migrant peoples without regard to status or country of origin.

EXPLANATION:

Human rights specifically included within the Migration with Dignity framework of this resolution are:

- **A universal right of movement consistent with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR),** including freedom to leave and return to one's country of origin, freedom of movement within one's country of origin or country of settlement (Article 13).

- **The right to be secure:** from sexual violence including rape and sexual exploitation, human trafficking, slavery, forced labor and arbitrary and abusive detention.

- **The right of equality,** to include: 1) equal treatment with no discrimination under the law based on color, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, political affiliation, national origin; and 2) equal opportunity for upward mobility.

- **Rights to a basic quality of life**, including employment rights, housing rights and food rights.

- **The right to access services** such as health care, education and legal representation.

- **Civil and political rights** guaranteeing the right to identity, to use of one's language, and to freedom of speech and religion.

This resolution is needed as a positive general statement reaffirming and updating the Episcopal Church's overall, long-standing commitment to human rights as they pertain to just treatment of the world's refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants.

This resolution is deeply grounded in Scripture. The advocacy for which it calls follows directly from the teachings of Jesus, while aligning with the world's other great religions and principled humanism. No moral guidance is more clearly articulated in both Biblical testaments than the need to "welcome the stranger:"

> "Don't mistreat any foreigners who live in your land. Instead, treat them as well as you treat citizens and love them as much as you love yourself. Remember, you were once foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:33-34).
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> "Be sure to welcome strangers into your home. By doing this, some people have welcomed angels as guests, without even knowing it." (Hebrews 13:2)

All six key elements of the resolution align with, and can be derived from, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Episcopal Church strongly supported this landmark statement proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

The resolution accords with key positions of the Anglican Communion. As set forth in the Lambeth Human Dignity Call of 2022, actions against the human dignity of God's children, including those against migrants and refugees, are sin, and hospitality to all and faithfulness to each are key marks of a godly community (1 Pt. 4:8-10).

As a single, direct, positive statement of principle, the resolution reaffirms more than 50 General Convention and Executive Council resolutions over the years. Its concision and clarity communicate our diocese's stance effectively and encourage our work alongside other pro-migrant organizations toward a community in which fundamental human rights extend to all people.

The resolution defines a much-needed, innovative response to the increasing challenge of global migration. Grave and serious mistreatment of ethnic minorities, migrants and refugees is currently on the rise both in the United States and globally in the midst of record migration across international borders. The number of international migrants grew to 281 million in 2020, meaning that 3.6% of the world's people lived outside their country of birth that year, according to the United Nations International Organization for Migration (IOM). With nearly 50 million immigrants* currently living within our borders, the U.S. leads the world as a destination for migrants.

*Including documented and undocumented immigrants regardless of when they arrived.