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Suggested Title: Faithfulness to the Gospel in Response to the Critical Needs of Others

Book of Resolutions: New Resolution

General Church Budget Implications: None

Global Implications: None

We express our outmost concern for the passage of anti-immigrant laws, which adversely affect the wellbeing of citizens and residents of this country as they engage in providing humanitarian aid to undocumented persons in several States.

The United Methodist Church is an *open door* church, where every person is invited to come in, get closer to God and become a part of a community of faith. That community is totally committed to attaining the good for all people through social and spiritual transformation. Any policies and laws attempting to limit or restrain the church's work of responding to the needs of others, is contrary to its most fundamental beliefs as stated in the Gospel (John 3:16) *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son so whosoever believes in him*[regardless of color of skin or legal immigrant status] *should not perish but have eternal life*. Similarly, *the Parable of the Good Samaritan* incites us, as Christians, to do good to all people irrespective of their place of origin.

We want to issue a call to the United Methodist Church and all other members of the Christian community to renew their commitment and strengthen their resolve to be faithful to respond to the needs of others, particularly as we face laws, whose primary intent is to discourage Christians from fulfilling their Mission; to love and help the neighbor. We remember when the Apostles were faced by similar circumstances after the authorities wanted to impede the fulfillment of their mission, they firmly declared in Acts 5:29: *It is necessary to obey God before man*; hence the Christian mandate to engage in civil disobedience when laws and policies deem to be unjust.

We urge the General Conference of the United Methodist Church to request the U.S Federal Government to ensure the protection of the Freedom of Religion in the United States by stopping the promulgation of laws that penalize church members for helping immigrants in need; actions that aside from being congruent with Christian faith, are vivid examples of God's love for every person.

At the same time, we ask the various governmental entities in every community to respect, at all times, the places of worship as well as all religious activities within and outside our sanctuaries or other church property.

We bid the United States government to give due legislative recognition to the legal right of every human being to exercise his/her faith without the fear of persecution, particularly while coming together to give public expression of their faith.

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