**SUBJECT:** Call For A Humane And Just Immigration System

RESOLVED, that the 183rd Convention of the Diocese of Michigan urge congregations to seek information in order to more fully understand the current immigration policies of the United States, the deportation policies affecting adults, children, refugees and others, as well as the Secure Communities program of the U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement agency (ICE); and be it further

RESOLVED, that Episcopalians urge lawmakers and local officials to commit to the principles of humane immigration enforcement; and be if further

RESOLVED, that Episcopalians in the Diocese of Michigan are urged to seek collaboration in study and action with other congregations and community groups regarding immigration and deportation policies, as well as meeting and communicating with their elected representatives.

**EXPLANATION/RATIONALE:**

In the fifth Baptismal Covenant in the Book of Common Prayer, we proclaim that we will “strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being”.

Some of the practices followed currently by ICE and some state and local law enforcement agencies have been found to be unjust, inhumane and disrespectful to the dignity of those arrested and detained. As people of faith in community, we are called to welcome the stranger and to love our neighbor.

Suggestions for ways to learn more about these issues include adult education forums, book study, and community workshops and other learning opportunities.

The Episcopal Migration Ministries of the national Church has as its mission to “live the call of welcome by supporting refugees, immigrants, and the communities that embrace them as they walk together in The Episcopal Church’s movement to create loving, liberating, and life-giving relationships rooted in compassion”. (www.episcopalmigrationministries.org)

The General Convention of the Episcopal Church has addressed immigration issues in the form of resolutions. The 77th General Convention of the Episcopal Church (2012) passed a resolution regarding immigration practices then in force. The resolution called for a halt to the Secure Communities program of ICE, which was suspended in 2014, and reinstated in January of 2017, and was described as a program “in which local jurisdictions send fingerprints of detainees suspected of immigration violations to federal authorities, which in practice leads to lengthy detention at the public expense of unrepresented immigrants who have no serious charges pending against them, and effectively discourages victims of various crimes, such as domestic violence, from reporting those crimes”. The resolution also urged the Episcopal Church “to decry the use of racial profiling or the use of race as a reason to question one’s immigration status”, and asked that the Church “oppose the use of identity checks for the purpose of determining immigration status”.

The 78th General Convention (2015) passed resolutions urging support of expanded immigration relief to keep families together (maintaining DACA – Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), urging Church-wide assistance to undocumented persons, forming partnerships with local agencies to provide assistance to immigrant families, and more.

More information and suggestions for action can be found on the Covenant 5 website: www.covenant5.org