



Southwest Conference Resolution

Approved 5/6/2017

1 **LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS WITH SANCTUARY:**

2 **A RESOLUTION CALLING THE SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE AND COVENANT PARTNERS TO** 3 **ADVOCATE FOR IMMIGRATION JUSTICE AND TO OFFER SANCTUARY TO IMMIGRANTS**

4
5 WHEREAS, Scripture calls God's people care "*for the widow, the orphan, and the alien living*
6 *among you*" (Deuteronomy 24:17-21); and

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8 WHEREAS, Scripture declares "*God is a God of Justice*" (Isaiah 30:18), and we believe God's
9 grace and judgment are active in all life; and

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11 WHEREAS, we believe God requires us to act for and *with justice, mercy, and humility before*
12 *God* (Micah 6:8); and

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14 WHEREAS, Jesus called disciples to "*care for those that Society considers the least*" among them
15 (Matthew 25:31-46); and

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17 WHEREAS, in times of crises people of faith have returned to ancient traditions. Refugees in the
18 Roman Empire found sanctuary in Christian churches. Slaves in pre-civil war United States
19 found sanctuary in the Underground Railroad and congregations across the country. Political
20 refugees from the civil wars in Central America found sanctuary in over 500 churches in the
21 United States when our federal government failed to offer asylum or refuge under existing
22 laws; and

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24 WHEREAS, the United States government for thirty years has failed to address immigration
25 reform by enacting legislation to protect families and those fleeing persecution and poverty;
26 and

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28 WHEREAS, on January 25th, 2017, President Trump issued two Executive Orders related to
29 immigration. As part of the orders, all jurisdictions that attempt to ensure family unity within
30 immigrant communities now risk losing federal funds; and

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32 WHEREAS, the federal government already has stepped up detention and deportation of
33 ordinary people – not dangerous criminals – resulting in cruel injustice, extreme hardship and
34 family separation; and

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36 WHEREAS, Shadow Rock United Church of Christ and First Congregational United Church of
37 Christ, Phoenix have already declared themselves sanctuary churches, openly offering
38 sanctuary as a means to facilitating negotiations between immigrants facing detention and/or
39 deportation and the federal government; and

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41 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates assembled for the 2017 Annual Meeting
42 of the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ declare their full support for
43 offering sanctuary to immigrants in need; and

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45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ will
46 investigate preparing space within its offices to offer sanctuary to appropriate persons; and
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48 BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the covenant partners of the Southwest Conference
49 to prayerfully organize, advocate, act prophetically, preach and teach about immigration
50 justice, including local, state and national legislation; and
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52 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the covenant partners of the Southwest
53 Conference to prayerfully and timely discern if they too should offer sanctuary to appropriate
54 persons; and
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56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the covenant partners of the Southwest
57 Conference to prayerfully support those partners who are offering sanctuary support, which
58 can be done in many different ways.

59 THIS RESOLUTION IS OFFERED by Shadow Rock United Church of Christ and First Congregational
60 United Church of Christ, Phoenix.