

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018  
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2018-C050  
**TITLE:** Sanctuary  
**PROPOSER:** Province III  
**TOPIC:** Immigration

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2015-D057      Recommit to Giving Sanctuary to Immigrants  
2006-A017      Adopt the Principles of “The Alien Among You” as the Church Policy

**Indirectly Related:** (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

1985-B038      Support the Ministry of St. Michael's Chapel to Political Refugees

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.*

# C050 Sanctuary

<b>Proposer</b>	Province III
<b>Endorsed by</b>	
<b>Sponsored by</b>	
<b>Page numbers</b>	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
<b>HiA / Leg. Cttee</b>	HD / 04 - Governance and Structure
<b>Current Status</b>	Resolution Filed
<b>Version</b>	Original (as filed)
<b>Review Status</b>	Not yet reviewed

## RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church declares itself, while in session, to be a place of sanctuary; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That the Presiding Officers of the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops are hereby urged to appoint a Joint Sanctuary Committee which will attend to the needs of those who seek sanctuary on this holy ground.

## EXPLANATION

Based on the following resolution adopted by the Diocese of Delaware

RESOLVED, That the 233rd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware urges the Diocese of Delaware to become, after prayerful and appropriate study and preparation, a Sanctuary Diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, That, in obedience to the many biblical injunctions imploring us not to wrong or oppress the alien in our midst and Jesus' own mandate to extend care for the stranger, and in faithfulness to the sacred promises of Holy Baptism, the Diocese of Delaware, as people of faith and people of conscience will question and address any unjust immigration law, policy, or practice that is inconsistent with our biblical mandate to "not wrong or oppress a resident alien" (Exodus 22:21); and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Diocese of Delaware connect with The Episcopal Church, sister dioceses, and local and national sanctuary communities and institutions, immigrant rights groups and coalitions, and engage in educating, organizing, advocacy, and affirmative action, and other methods as deemed appropriate in each context, to ensure the safety and security of the undocumented community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Convention urge congregations of the Diocese of Delaware to consider becoming Sanctuary Congregations, serving as places of welcome, refuge, healing, and other forms of material and pastoral support for those targeted for deportation due to immigration status or some perceived status of difference, and that we work alongside our friends, families, and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Bishop and Council oversee the work of equipping congregations, clergy and lay leaders to engage in such work, appropriate to local contexts, capacity, and discernment and report on progress at the 234th Annual Convention.

Explanation: Delaware is home to thousands of people from all walks of life, of different races, religions, sexual orientations, and national and ethnic origins. Delawareans value and celebrate this diversity, which makes our community and our economy strong and vibrant.

As a people of faith committed to dismantling oppressive systems and building structures and communities that reflect God's compassion and justice, we must do nothing less than make straight a highway in the desert for our sisters and brothers. The bible has numerous injunctions that instruct us not to wrong or oppress the alien in our midst (Exodus 22:21 & 23:9, Leviticus 19:33, 23:22 & 24:22, Numbers 15:16, Deuteronomy 24:20-21 & 27:19, Jeremiah 7:6-7, Zechariah 7:10, and Malachi 3:5). Jesus is clear that the righteous inherit eternal life because "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35).

He also makes clear that our failure to address his need results in the condemnation of the unrighteous because "I was a stranger and you did not welcome me" (Matthew 25:43). Our baptismal vows require us to "seek and serve Christ in all persons" and to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being" (Book of Common Prayer p. 305).

It is our Christian duty to welcome those seeking refuge on our shores from war, civil strife, persecution, lawlessness, famine, or natural disaster, and to assist those in search of safety and a better life.

This resolution puts our faith into action by standing with the growing number of cities, colleges and communities of faith declaring themselves places of welcome, refuge, healing, for those targeted by hate due to immigration status or some perceived status of difference as we work alongside our friends, families, and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-D057  
**Title:** Recommit to Giving Sanctuary to Immigrants  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

***Resolved, That the 78th General Convention recommit to the spirit of the New Sanctuary Movement by supporting congregations so they can assist immigrant individuals, unaccompanied minors, families, and communities by being centers of information, services and accompaniment, and by supporting families facing separation in the absence of comprehensive, humane immigration reform.***

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 407.



**Resolution Number:** 2006-A017  
**Title:** Adopt the Principles of “The Alien Among You” as the Church Policy  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church receive “The Alien Among You” in the Blue Book Report of the Standing Commission on Anglican and International Peace with Justice Concerns; and, while recognizing the duty and right of a sovereign nation to protect and defend its borders, adopt the following fundamental principles included in “The Alien Among You” as the policy of The Episcopal Church.*

1. **Undocumented aliens should have reasonable opportunity to pursue permanent residency.**
2. **Legal workers should be allowed to enter the United States to respond to recognized labor force needs.**
3. **Close family members should be allowed to reunite without undue delay with individuals lawfully present in the United States.**
4. **Fundamental U.S. principles of legal due process should be granted all persons.**
5. **Enforcement of national borders and immigration policies should be proportional and humane; and be it further**

*Resolved, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church deplore any action by the Government of the United States which unduly emphasizes enforcement, including militarization of the border between the United States and Mexico, as the primary response to immigrants entering the United States to work; and be it further*

*Resolved, That The Episcopal Church undertake a campaign to educate Episcopalians as to the plight of refugees, immigrants, and migrants, which will include information about the root causes of migration; and be it further*

*Resolved, That this campaign call the Church to commit to welcoming strangers as a matter of Christian responsibility, to advocate for their well being and protection and to urge its members to resist legislation and actions which violate our fundamental beliefs as Christians, including the criminalization of persons providing humanitarian assistance to migrants.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 532-533.