



Whereas, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessor denominations have consistently called the church to welcome refugees in the name of Jesus. [This call began when the 160th General Assembly (1948) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America called for the resettlement of persons made refugees and displaced by World War II and continued through the 222nd General Assembly (2016) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) statement calling the church to “respond to the ancient biblical directive to provide for the stranger and the sojourner.”ⁱ]; and

Whereas we are now witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record. (An unprecedented 65.3 million people around the world have been forced from their homes. Among them are nearly 21.3 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18.ⁱⁱ); and

Whereas some voices are calling us to abandon the very foundations of our biblical faith to welcome the stranger and to give safe haven to the refugee, and to set aside the values of compassion and hospitality that have marked our historic identity as a nation;

Be it resolved, the Session of University Presbyterian Church, meeting on this 16th day of February 2017, decries any policy that discriminates against refugees by nationality, race, ethnicity or religion,

And further, endorses the January 28, 2017 statement by the Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson II, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which states “We stand ready to welcome our new neighbors, friends, and family of all faiths and nations,”ⁱⁱⁱ

And further, accepts the December 1, 2015, challenge issued by the Rev. Gradye Parsons, former Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), asking congregations to take a photograph with a “We Choose Welcome” banner and send the photo to their public officials,^{iv}

And further, encourages the congregation to implore those elected officials to embrace the values of compassion and hospitality essential to our identity as a nation.

ⁱ <http://info.pcusa.org/t/ViewEmail/i/9306C40E14FECD27/18407EA0069C0D2B62AF25ACF5E3F0AC>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.pcusa.org/news/2017/1/28/stated-clerk-opposes-order-banning-refugees-entry/>

^{iv} <https://www.pcusa.org/blogs/stated-clerks-column/2015/12/1/choose-welcome/>