



# Fact Sheets

## Migration and the Episcopal Church

### General Council Resolution 2006-A017—Part I

#### Adopt the Fundamental Principles Included in “The Alien Among You” as the Policy of the Episcopal Church

*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

Based on the resolutions passed at General Convention and Executive Council, the public policy positions of The Episcopal Church regarding immigrants and refugees are based on our faith tradition of welcoming the stranger and serving the “least among us.” While recognizing legitimate security concerns, we need not abandon our national tradition of hospitality to the persecuted and marginalized. We will encourage Congress, when considering comprehensive immigration reform, to extend full recognition to the rights of immigrant workers, including the possibility of permanent status and eventual U.S. citizenship; address family immigration in a realistic way; employ effective workplace and border enforcement strategies; create channels for workers to enter the country legally for jobs; reduce the family reunification backlogs; and create workable incentives for the approximately 12 million undocumented immigrants already here to come forward and register with the government.

We are particularly concerned that a restructured system permit immigrant workers to enter the U.S. through an orderly, legal process tied to real employment possibilities for new workers and protect the rights of workers to avoid exploitation by unscrupulous employers. Family unity is an imperative of any reformed system. The United States needs an immigration system that would allow workers to enter the U.S. legally with a path toward permanent residence and citizenship, offer protection under laws and regulations that pertain to U.S. workers, and re-unite families that have been kept apart due to the family backlog.

#### BACKGROUND

The Episcopal Church has been resettling and advocating for refugees for 60 years—first under the auspices of Church World Service, then as a program of the Presiding Bishop’s Fund for World Relief, and since 1988 through Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM). EMM is one of ten agencies that work with the U.S. Department of State to resettle refugees from around the world. EMM receives federal funding, but relies upon the support of individual parishes and its affiliate network to provide direct services to refugees.

The Episcopal Church has been a forceful advocate on behalf of refugees, immigrants, and other at-risk groups. Our goal is to serve the least of those among us and to welcome the stranger by carrying forth the voice of refugees, immigrants, and other at-risk uprooted groups for whom protection through better public policy is needed.