

RS – 208 MIGRATION/BORDER ENFORCEMENT

(Submitted by Julie Todd)

(Adopted Friday Evening, June 9, 2006)

WHEREAS the implementation of low-intensity warfare strategies along the U.S.-Mexico border has closed safe migration routes and resulted in the deaths of over 3,000 persons (not counting those undiscovered in remote regions) since 1994, and;

WHEREAS the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border has not and cannot succeed in preventing migration from Latin America, and;

WHEREAS border enforcement and current immigration policy does not address the systemic economic causes and historical realities of migration patterns, and;

WHEREAS the billions of dollars spent on militarizing the border should be directed towards social and physical infrastructure on both sides of the border, and;

WHEREAS the gospel of Jesus Christ calls Christians to denounce the forces of death, transform unjust systems, oppose evil, stand in solidarity with the exploited and oppressed, announce good news to the poor, and welcome the stranger, and;

WHEREAS Scripture, as the primary source of authority for United Methodists, reflects the migrant experience, from the calling of Abraham and Sarah, the exodus, exile, and return of the Hebrew people, to the flight of the holy family and sending of the apostles to the ends of the earth; and prophetically commands love of neighbor and respect for the dignity and humanity of all God's children, regardless of race, nation, ethnicity, class, language, or any dividing border;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that as privileged residents of the first world who benefit from the labor of those who suffer exploitation and deprivation on both sides of the border as a result of discrimination and low wages, we repent of our ignorance and complicity in these unjust systems, our failure to recognize how we benefit from the oppression of others in order to support our extravagant lifestyles, our individual consumerism and corporate greed, as well as the dehumanization and demonization of the migrant in our midst.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves and our churches to study and prayer on local and global issues of migration and humane solutions to situations of economic injustice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church opposes any further militarization of the Mexico-U.S. border, including the building of walls and the deployment of troops.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the New England Annual Conference supports comprehensive immigration reform, which includes: provisions for safe passage, regularization of legalization of those undocumented migrants who already contribute to the well-being of our economy, support for family reunification, consideration of future migrant flows, and respect for the rights and dignity of all persons who migrate to find work and freedom.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, upon passage, the New England Annual Conference Secretary shall send this resolution to the federally elected officials within our geographic bounds, and ask them to oppose militarizing the border and to support comprehensive immigration legislation.