



Presbyterian Policy on Immigration

The 220th General Assembly
(2012)

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) adopted policies and statements on a variety of immigration issues. This handout is a brief summary of five of the resolutions, for more information on all immigration related business acted upon by the General Assembly please visit www.pcusa.org/immigration.

On the plight of Indonesian immigrants and the passage of the Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act

220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) resolves to do the following with respect to refugees who are threatened with deportation to Indonesia:

1. Affirm the scriptural call to provide hospitality to others, and thus welcome immigrant people to this nation and this church as part of both the history and the future of this nation and church.

2. Educate and advocate for the passage of the bill introduced in the House of Representatives called the 'Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act', H.R. 3590, together with any bill introduced in the Senate to achieve the same ends, as well as for the signature of such act upon submission to the president.

3. Direct the Stated Clerk to write a pastoral letter to congregations about the plight of the Indonesian immigrants and the proposed Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act and calling congregations to support and advocate for passage of the proposed legislation and its enactment into law.

4. Direct the Presbyterian Office of Public Witness to advocate on Capitol Hill for passage of the proposed legislation and its enactment into law.

A resolution to recognize the commitment of PC(USA) to making just immigration a reality

Direct the Office of Immigration Issues and the Office of Theology, Worship and Education to collaborate in the development of accessible worship and study resources that will assist Presbyterians in understanding, engaging, and integrating an ecclesiology of 'Being Church Together.'

On beginning active exploration in communities to seek answers on how to be church together with immigrant communities

1. Call presbyteries and local congregations to a time of being church together with immigrant brothers and sisters. This call urges presbyteries and local congregations of all cultures and immigration statuses to actively connect with immigrants in their home communities, exploring how they can be church together through:

- a. Quarterly worship services centered on immigrant voices and experiences;
- b. Spiritual disciplines that grow our willingness to have our worship and fellowship transformed by the immigrant in our midst;
- c. Prayer meetings with immigrants;
- d. A deepening of relationship - from "Landlord/Tenant" to Spiritual Covenant—in churches hosting immigrant fellowships.
- e. Liturgy that shakes up and expands our vision of *who* is the church;
- f. Gatherings of prayer, worship, dreaming, and planning together among churches and presbyteries that are seeking to stand with immigrant communities; and
- g. Developing best practices that can be shared via a discussion board, blog, or other free social media.

2. Provide a space for an accounting of the shared experiences of churches engaged in ministry with immigrants by asking the Office of the General Assembly and the Moderator to craft a time of worship that lifts up the "on the ground" stories of this time of exploration during the 'Big Tent' August 1-3, 2013, and the 221st General Assembly (2014).

On urging congregation to commit two years to building relationships with refugees living in our neighborhoods and towns

This may include setting aside monies and beginning new initiatives that support refugees in the local area.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) further urges congregations to commit two years to building relationships with those who, after fleeing their homelands, now live in the United States, some of

whom worship among us. We encourage congregations to form relationships of mutuality, by offering hospitality, reaching out to the specific needs of our refugee neighbors, learning about the gifts they offer the community, and how we can be Christ for one another.

Concerning Safe Communities for Everyone

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), concerned about dangers to immigrant rights in the absence of meaningful immigration reform

1. requests the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries section, with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and other appropriate offices, to address the civil liberties, racial profiling, security, and due process concerns related to the arrest and detention of immigrants through the Secure Communities program;

2. directs the Stated Clerk and the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., to communicate to President Obama, Director of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, Director of Immigration, Customs and Enforcement John Morton, and the United States Congress, calling for the termination of the S-Comm program, detailing the detrimental impact of S-Comm on the security of our families and our communities (as instanced in the rationale below);

3. encourages the Stated Clerk, the Office on Immigration Issues, and the Advisory Committee on Litigation to consider participation in *amicus curiae* (friend of court) briefs in cases seeking to ameliorate or end S-Comm or other practices contrary to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policies on immigration; and

4. directs the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to inform our national ecumenical partners of this action and call upon them to join us in raising concern with our elected and appointed officials.

