

WHEREAS the Department of Homeland Security has introduced a ‘zero tolerance’ policy calling for the prosecution of all who illegally enter the country, and

WHEREAS the tactics to enforce this policy have included traumatic separation of children from immigrant parents and the subsequent incarceration of those children in secretive detention centers; and

WHEREAS this practice contradicts Biblical mandates like Leviticus 19:34 “Any immigrant who lives with you must be treated as if they were one of your citizens. You must love them as yourself, because you were immigrants in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God;” and

WHEREAS Jesus instructs the disciples in Matthew 25:31-40 to give food to the hungry, water to the thirsty, and clothes to the naked, to welcome the stranger, to take care of the sick, and to visit those in prison, and

WHEREAS this practice is also against the Book of Discipline (Social Principles ¶162.H) in which our Church states, “We oppose immigration policies that separate family members from each other or that include detention of families with children, and we call on local churches to be in ministry with immigrant families,” and

WHEREAS the President of the Council of Bishops, Bishop Kenneth H. Carter, Jr., co-signed the ecumenical *Faith Leaders’ Statement on Family Separation* declaring, “Tearing children away from parents who have made a dangerous journey to provide a safe and sufficient life for them is unnecessarily cruel and detrimental to the well-being of parents and children,” and

WHEREAS there is no law that mandates separating children from their parents, and prior to the new policy families were typically detained together, sent back immediately, or paroled into the country;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall call upon the US Department of Justice immediately to end the practice of separating children from their families due to the ‘zero tolerance policy.’

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to Wisconsin Senators Tammy Baldwin and Ron Johnson, members of the House of Representatives from Wisconsin, as well as to the US Departments of Justice and Homeland Security.