

Episcopal Diocese of Montana

Resolution

Welcome Immigrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers to Montana

Resolved,

That the people of the Diocese of Montana, at their 2024 Diocesan Convention, as disciples of Jesus Christ and persons of faith and conscience, take seriously the biblical mandate to “honor the immigrant in our midst as one of our own” (Lev. 19:34), and, in faithfulness to our baptismal covenant, seek to serve Christ in all persons, love our neighbor as ourselves, and respect the dignity of every human being. (BCP 2007, p. 305), and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Montana model a welcoming faith community by publicly advocating for the protection and rights of immigrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking people and families in Montana, and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Montana encourage congregations to learn about ways to welcome and serve immigrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking people and families by engaging with Episcopal Migration Ministries and their partnerships (e.g., the Asylum and Detention Ministry Network, the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program, the Rainbow Initiative, etc.), as is appropriate to local capacity and context, and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Montana encourage congregations to strengthen and expand the web of support for immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seeking people and families who choose to make their home in Montana by actively supporting the work of resettlement agencies such as:

Nations to Neighbors (Billings)

Soft Landing (Missoula)

International Rescue Committee (Missoula)

Gallatin Refugee Connections (Bozeman)

Explanation

As of May 2024, the U.S. has processed and approved tens of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers for admission, highlighting the pressing need for domestic capacity to welcome and provide essential services to these individuals. Episcopal Migration Ministries is calling on provinces, diocese, congregations, and groups of individual Episcopalians to provide ongoing support for integration of refugees and asylum seekers into local communities across the United States. With anti-immigrant rhetoric on the rise, resettlement agencies in Montana are struggling to develop and maintain the capacity to welcome and provide essential integration services. Working together, Montana Episcopalians can ease the burden of refugees and asylum seekers by publicly advocating for their protection and rights, and supporting their integration into our local communities.

Proposed by: Social Concerns Committee, Holy Spirit Episcopal Church, Missoula, MT

Endorsed by:

Rev. Terri Ann Grotzinger, Co-rector, Holy Spirit, Missoula

Rev. Gretchen Strohmaier, Co-rector, Holy Spirit, Missoula; Rector St. Paul's, Hamilton
Vestry, Holy Spirit, Missoula

Rev. Rowan Larson, Rector, St. James', Bozeman

Jessica Wilson, Convention Delegate, St. James', Bozeman

Rev. Steven C. Day, Rector, St. Stephen's, Billings

Vestry, St. Stephen's, Billings

Rev. Jean Collins, Rector, St. James, Lewistown

Vestry, St. James, Lewistown