

On March 21, 2017 the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of New Haven unanimously approved the following statement and direct the Clerk of Session to send copies to President Donald J. Trump, Vice President Mike Pence, Speaker of the House of Representatives Paul Ryan, Majority Leader of the Senate Mitch McConnell, the members of the Connecticut congressional delegation and to the Reverend Dr. J. Herbert Nelson II, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Whereas, the President of the United States, by Executive Order on January 27th, 2017, has banned persons from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen from entering the United States,

Whereas, the President of the United States, by Executive Order on March 6th, 2017, once again sought to ban persons from Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen from entering the United States,

Whereas, these bans contradict both God's instructions in the Hebrew Scriptures (Exodus 22:21; Leviticus 19:34; Deuteronomy 10:19) to do no wrong or oppress the stranger or alien and to, in fact, love them, and Christ's teaching in the Christian Scriptures to welcome the stranger (Matthew 25:35); to love our neighbors (Matthew 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27); and to be neighbors to those in need (Luke 10:36-37),

Whereas, J. Herbert Nelson, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), speaking as its top ecclesial officer, has reviewed the Presbyterian Church's history of practicing welcome to aliens and strangers and has urged the President to reverse his Executive Order,

Whereas, the Presbytery of Southern New England, of which First Presbyterian Church of New Haven is a member, has responded to these commandments of our faith by supporting a ministry to strangers and aliens, who have been detained by the government,

Whereas, member churches of the Presbytery, also acting out of their biblical faith, are actively engaged in refugee resettlement of persons from these affected countries,

Be it resolved, the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of New Haven, meeting in a stated meeting on the 21st day of March 2017, decries any policy that discriminates against refugees by nationality, color or religion,

And further, opposes the administration's decision to prolong refugees' waits for a place to call home where they might know security and welcome,

And further, urges the President to rescind these Executive Orders and restore the integrity and values of compassion and hospitality to our identity as a nation.