

To the Deputies and Bishops of The Episcopal Church assembled at the 79<sup>th</sup> General Convention:

The current political climate can be described as tumultuous, at best. Tumultuous for the immigrant and migrant families that are being torn apart, for the women whose reproductive rights and health benefits are being strategically stripped away, and for the exploited, harassed, and abused women within the workplace. So much upheaval can make it seem easier to remain silent rather than speak up. But as members of the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement, we do not have the luxury of turning a blind eye. Our call as Christians extends outside of our church walls because we interact and live within the systems and institutions of the greater society. It is our responsibility to call out injustices when we see them, to advocate for people who are most vulnerable, and to support and create policies that align with our values.

In particular, we call your attention to four resolutions: *Reducing Sexual Harassment, Assault, and Exploitation in the Workplace; Recognizing and Ending Domestic Violence in our Congregations; Halt the Intensification and Implementation of Immigration Policies and Practices that are Harmful to Migrant Women and Children; and Equal Access to Health Care Regardless of Gender.* As you review and deliberate resolutions, we ask that space be held for honoring the particularities of identity that make us whole. To remember that the richness of our humanity is fluid, and consists of blurred lines that intersect race, class, gender, and all the other ways that we identify ourselves. Right now, women of color, low-income women, transgender women, and immigrant women are most susceptible to abuse, harassment, and exploitation in every space that they occupy. It is imperative to remember that we are our most vulnerable. We are them, and they are us—there is no Other. Our humanity is dependent upon our embodiment of this.

We can remember that Jesus healed others not when it was convenient or even when it was lawful. Jesus healed in the moment that healing was called for. This is our moment to offer healing and to bring our laws closer to the justice and equity that God envisions for us.

Respectfully submitted,

Social Justice for Women Subcommittee members of the Special Committee on Sexual Harassment and Exploitation

Submitted by Lindsey Ardrey, Diocese of Louisiana and endorsed by Laura Russell, Diocese of Newark and Jennifer Allen, Diocese of Kansas.