



**Resolutions
2019 Session of
the Annual Conference Session
of the North Carolina Conference
of The United Methodist Church**



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INTRODUCTION

Every year, members of the North Carolina Annual Conference meet to fellowship and address the business of the Conference. Part of that business takes the form of considering resolutions. Resolutions deal with issues affecting the lives of members of the Conference, but also the lives of our neighbors. They also can consider the issues that relate to the global United Methodist Church. By passing a resolution, we are able to communicate to the media, elected leaders, and the General Conference the will of the majority of delegates from the churches of the North Carolina Annual Conference.¹

Resolutions give the Annual Conference members a chance to grow in awareness of important issues and to wrestle theologically with each other and God in a spirit of love and trust. When developing and considering resolutions, the Annual Conference expects to encounter God through the means of grace that is Holy Conferencing and claim the chance to work ever towards doing God's will on earth as it is in Heaven.

¹ <https://nccumc.org/ac2019/resolutions/>

1 – ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN CHURCHES

Whereas, The United Methodist Church affirms the significance of care for our environment:

“We will be models for energy conservation. United Methodists, including churches, annual conferences, general boards and agencies will model energy conservation by doing such things as: installing dampers in furnaces, insulating adequately all church properties, heating and lighting only rooms that are in use, using air circulation, purchasing energy-efficient appliances, and exploring alternative energy sources such as solar energy.” (*The Book of Resolutions* [2016] #1001.2);

and

Whereas, the Lord addresses his people in Numbers 35:34 (NRSV): “You shall not defile the land in which you live, in the midst of which I dwell, for I the LORD dwell in the midst of the people of Israel”; and

Whereas, many church buildings still run on less-efficient energy technologies and consume large amounts of energy throughout the week, even though they are not always in operation full-time; and

Whereas, “The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1 KJV), and we are therefore responsible for its care and protection; and

Whereas, many energy companies offer free, comprehensive energy audits that would allow churches to see more clearly if and when energy is being misused or misdirected in their operations; and

Whereas, churches that are more energy-efficient will also be more economically sufficient in the long run, and will save the church as a whole money on a year-to-year basis (Herro, 2017); and

Now, therefore be it resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, echo the Annual Conference Session of The United Methodist Church Youth, and encourage churches to put into place long-term plans to make their facilities more energy-efficient;

Be it further resolved, churches are encouraged to replace their lighting with LED fixtures to act with respect and care towards our environment; and

Be it further resolved, churches are encouraged to purchase thermostats that can operate on a pre-set schedule, and are encouraged to not heat, cool, or light parts of the church building not currently in use; and

Be it further resolved, churches are encouraged to seek out and take advantage of energy audit services available to them, and adjust their operations in any way they see fit to minimize energy usage; and

Be it further resolved, churches are encouraged to take steps of their own towards energy efficiency such as installing instant water heaters instead of boilers, installing solar panels, or installing motion-activated light fixtures as options and economic means arise; and

Be it further resolved, the Conference Secretary shall send this resolution to the chairperson of every Conference church’s board of trustees.

Adapted from the resolution passed by the 67th Annual Conference Session of The United Methodist Church Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, July 2018, Fayetteville, NC

**Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

Resolutions Passed at the 2019 Session of the Annual Conference Session
of the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church

2 – FAMILY OF OPIOID ADDICT ANONYMOUS

Whereas, according to the United Methodist Social Principles, “we affirm shared responsibility for parenting where there are two parents and encourage social, economic, and religious efforts to maintain and strengthen relationships within families in order that every member may be assisted toward complete personhood.” (*The Book of Discipline* [2016] ¶161.B); and

Whereas, the United Methodist Social Principles states:

“Drug-dependent persons and their family members, including those who are assessed or diagnosed as dependent on alcohol, are individuals of infinite human worth deserving of treatment, rehabilitation, and ongoing life-changing recovery... We commit ourselves to assisting those who suffer from abuse or dependence, and their families, in finding freedom through Jesus Christ and in finding good opportunities for treatment, for ongoing counseling, and for reintegration into society.” (*The Book of Discipline* [2016] ¶162.L);

and

Whereas, Luke 9:11 (NIV) says “but the crowds learned about it and followed [Jesus]. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.”; and

Whereas, “Nar-Anon Family Groups are primarily for those who know or have known a feeling of desperation concerning the addiction problem of someone very near to you”¹, and is offered at some churches, but is not available to many people due to lack of proximity; and

Whereas, providing accessibility to a support group for young adults and adults that are struggling or coping with an addict close to them not only brings comfort and supplies a safe space for the family involved but may open doors to other people in different congregations, or not a part of a congregation, that are near the area;

Now, therefore be it resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, echo the Annual Conference Session of The United Methodist Church Youth, and advocate for at least one United Methodist Church in every county in North Carolina to host an 18+ Nar-Anon group or session; and

Be it further resolved, churches and pastors are encouraged to educate through teaching, preaching, and other means, about substance use disorder and to help erase the stigma associated with it; and

Be it further resolved, churches are encouraged to assess the need for having naloxone available onsite as a first line of defense and for the preservation of life; and

Be it further resolved, this resolution be sent to Bishops Hope Morgan Ward of the North Carolina Conference and Paul L. Leeland of the Western North Carolina Conference, the North Carolina Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries, John Hall, Western North Carolina Conference Director of Missional Engagement and Connectional Ministries, Caroline Wood, and all District Superintendents in the North Carolina Conference and Western North Carolina Conference.

Adapted from the resolution passed by the 67th Annual Conference Session of The United Methodist Church Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, July 2018, Fayetteville, NC
*Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.

¹ “What’s Nar-Anon? – Nar-Anon Family Groups.” *Nar-Anon Family Groups*. Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc, 2019. <https://www.nar-anon.org/what-is-nar-anon>.

3 – DIVERSIFICATION OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS IN YOUTH EVENTS

Whereas, from the first disciples on, the Church has been a multilingual entity, as demonstrated in Acts 2:6 (NIV), where the story of Pentecost is told: the disciples were forced out of their closed, monolingual room into the streets, where passersby congregated, “because each one heard their own language being spoken”; and

Whereas, Galatians 3:28 (ESV) states: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus,” which encourages the Church to be together in community with no group being greater than another; and

Whereas, The United Methodist Church has already affirmed the importance of multicultural and multilingual worship in the 2015 report published by the General Commission on Race and Religion, “Building Holy Relationships: Best Practices for Multicultural Ministry in The United Methodist Church,” which stated, “With demographic projections in the United States reporting that the United States will become increasingly non-white, younger, non-English speaking, and non-Christian, the importance of relationships with those who differ from the average United Methodist cannot be emphasized enough”¹; and

Whereas, the majority of youth events within The United Methodist Church in North Carolina are carried out solely in English, with primarily Caucasian American worship styles; and

Whereas, the singular nature of youth ministry, in its ability to adapt to change and experiment with worship styles (in the fact that youth members from different churches and areas frequently interact and in the fact that youth ministry inherently builds up the new generation of church members and leaders) make it the ideal and easiest place to begin to introduce changes in worship styles into broader church life;

Now, therefore be it resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, echo the Annual Conference Session of The United Methodist Church Youth, and encourage youth groups within the North Carolina United Methodist Church, including but not limited to Conference Youth events such as Kaleidoscope, Breakaway, and Annual Conference Session for Youth, to begin to conduct worship in languages that mirror those of the international body of The United Methodist Church that they are a part of, guided by the General Commission on Religion and Race’s published guidelines; and

Be it further resolved, the youth members at the aforementioned conferences and in their individual youth groups are encouraged to make an effort to introduce various languages, including languages of those not currently present at youth events, into worship services with those events to honor the multicultural nature of the Church of which the youth are members and fulfill God’s call to the Church for multicultural and multilingual service and action; and

Be it further resolved, the Conference Secretary shall send this resolution to Bishop Hope Morgan Ward and CCYM Chairperson Suzanne Cobb.

Adapted from the resolution passed by the 67th Annual Conference Session of The United Methodist Church Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, July 2018, Fayetteville, NC

**Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

¹ Hidge, G. Derrick. “Building Holy Relationships: Best Practices for Multicultural Ministry.” *General Commission on Religion and Race*. The United Methodist Church, December 20, 2016. <http://www.gcorr.org/building-holy-relationships-best-practices/>, iv.

4 – SERVING OF FAIRTRADE COFFEE BY UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES

Whereas, many churches across the Conference provide coffee and tea during a fellowship hour and other social events; and

Whereas, studies show that in Honduras, 40% of coffee harvesters are children, and half of Guatemalan coffee workers are not paid a minimum wage, and even major coffee producer Nestle admits to purchasing coffee from plantations with known forced labor practices¹; and

Whereas, for any product to be certified as Fairtrade, the company must abide with regulations that prohibit forced labor, child labor, use safe environmental practices, and promote economic sustainability²; and

Whereas, the United Methodist Social Principles states: “World trade of agricultural products needs to be based on fair trade and prices, based on the costs of sustainable production methods” (*The Book of Discipline* [2016] ¶162.Q); and

Whereas, the Social Principles additionally states that “children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional, and sexual exploitation and abuse” (*The Book of Discipline* [2016] ¶162.C); and

Whereas, the price of Fairtrade coffee and tea products are equivalent or only slightly higher in price to their traditional counterparts;

Now, therefore be it resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, echoing the Annual Conference Session of The United Methodist Church Youth, promote the use of Fairtrade coffee and teas during fellowship hours and other social events in place of coffees and teas that are not certified as Fairtrade, and ask that all United Methodist Churches do the same; and

Be it further resolved, the conference secretary shall send copies of this resolution to Bishop Hope Morgan, every District Superintendent, and every pastor-in-charge in the North Carolina Conference by September 1, 2019 to share with each church’s Committee on Lay Leadership and youth ministry.

Adapted from the resolution passed by the 67th Annual Conference Session of The United Methodist Church Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, July 2018, Fayetteville, NC

**Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

¹ “Bitter Brew: The Stirring Reality of Coffee.” Food Empowerment Project. Accessed May 9, 2019. <https://foodispower.org/our-food-choices/coffee/>.

² “Why Get Certified.” Fairtrade America. Accessed May 9, 2019. <http://www.fairtradeamerica.org/for-business//Why-Get-Certified>.

5 – CARE OF CREATION

Whereas, the Bible is clear, from Genesis to Revelation, that included in our job description as humans made in the image of God and as disciples of Jesus Christ is a responsibility to love and care for all that God has made, not just humanity. God instructed humanity to “till and keep” the garden (Genesis 2:15 NRSV). God made a covenant with the earth itself (Genesis 9:13). Creation belongs to God: “The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof” (Psalm 24:1-2 KJV). The sabbath and gleaning texts make it clear that care for the poor and care for the earth go hand in hand (Exodus 23:10-12, Leviticus 19:9-10, 25:1-17). Humanity’s disobedience of God has negative consequences to the earth (Hosea 4:1-3, Deuteronomy 11:13-17). Jesus Christ is the redeemer not just of humanity but of all creation (Romans 8:18-23, Colossians 1:19-20); and

Whereas, in the past two years, the disastrous repercussions of climate change have escalated at an alarming rate, with much greater frequency and intensity. Storms classified as 100- and 500-year events now occur only a few years apart^{1 2}, such as Hurricane Florence in North Carolina (35 killed)³, California wildfires (42 killed), Tropical Storm Michael in Florida (6 killed), and Cyclone Idai in Africa (820 killed). Such record-breaking storms have devastated millions of acres of land and displaced millions of people; and

Whereas, degradation of the environment continues at an extremely rapid pace. In just one example, plastic is dumped into the oceans at the rate of a truckload a minute, resulting in a patch of plastic the size of Texas in the Pacific Ocean⁴. By 2050, there will be more tons of plastic in the oceans than fish⁵; and

Whereas, Bishop Ward has commissioned a Conference-level Creation Care Committee whose mission is to inform, equip, lead and inspire the church to care for God’s creation. Our approach is to foster action and accountability on all levels: individual, family, congregational, and in the world: corporate, local, state, national, and international. We promote balanced, bipartisan, and evidence-based environmental justice; and

Whereas, the United Methodist Social Principles states: “All creation is the Lord’s, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it...God has granted us stewardship of creation. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect” (*The Book of Discipline* [2016] ¶162); and

Whereas, many beneficial actions for climate and the environment have been taken, but have fallen woefully short of the comprehensive response needed. Jesus calls on us to care for “the least of these,” yet our tepid response goes beyond failure to care for them. Because climate change inordinately afflicts the poor⁶, our inadequate response contributes to the devastation of their homelands and to their unnecessary deaths;

Now, therefore be it resolved, the North Carolina Conference recognizes climate change and its repercussions as a biblical and moral issue, and one that requires political action. We must not allow the political aspect of this

¹ “The 100-Year Flood.” USGS: Science for a Changing World. United States Geological Survey. Accessed May 11, 2019. <https://www.usgs.gov/special-topic/water-science-school/science/100-year-flood>.

² “Exceedance Probability Analysis for Selected Storm Events.” Hydrometeorological Design Studies Center. US Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service, April 21, 2017. https://www.nws.noaa.gov/oh/hdsc/aep_storm_analysis/.

³ “Hurricane Florence, 13 - 18 September 2018 Annual Exceedance Probabilities (AEPs) for the Worst Case 72-Hour Rainfall.” Hydrometeorological Design Studies Center. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, September 19, 2018. ftp://hdsc.nws.noaa.gov/pub/hdsc/data/aep/201809_Florence/201809_Florence_72h.pdf.

⁴ Earl, Jennifer. “Great Pacific Garbage Patch, Floating 'Island' of Trash in Ocean, Is Now Twice the Size of Texas.” Fox News. FOX News Network, March 23, 2018. <https://www.foxnews.com/science/great-pacific-garbage-patch-floating-island-of-trash-in-ocean-is-now-twice-the-size-of-texas>.

⁵ “Fact Sheet: Plastics in the Ocean.” Earth Day Network, April 5, 2018. <https://www.earthday.org/2018/04/05/fact-sheet-plastics-in-the-ocean/>.

⁶ Chappell, Carmin. “Climate Change in the US Will Hurt Poor People the Most, According to a Bombshell Federal Report.” CNBC, November 27, 2018. <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/11/26/climate-change-will-hurt-poor-people-the-most-federal-report.html>.

issue to prevent the Church from advocating for policy changes. We exhort all pastors and church leaders to speak out in support of effective policies; and

Be it further resolved, we urge all congregations to be faithful stewards of Creation by responding to climate change through the promotion of energy conservation, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and technology. We urge all congregations to adopt programs at their facilities, and in their homes, for the conservation of energy and water, and for recycling of materials that can be reused; and

Be it further resolved, we call on legislators at all levels of government to actively promote policies which will protect the environment and slow the warming trend of the Earth. We urge them to ignore the pressures of special interests which have too long impeded the development of enlightened policies by putting their financial gain first; and

Be it further resolved, we fully support the conclusions and recommended actions of the 2017 Resolution on Climate change⁷; and

Be it further resolved, this resolution be presented at the 2020 General Conference.

Approved on February 27, 2017 and Submitted by:
The Creation Care Committee
North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church

**Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

⁷ <https://nccumc.org/ac2017/files/2017/07/ncc-ac17-resolutions-final.pdf>, pgs. 1-2.

6 – FULL COMMUNION WITH THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Whereas, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church welcomes and rejoices in the release in 2017 of the full communion proposal between The Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church, *A Gift to the World: Co-Laborers in the Healing of Brokenness*¹; and

Whereas, this full communion proposal, the result of fifty-five years of dialogue between Episcopalians and Methodists, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is grounded in our common heritage in the Church of England, and in the recognition that both churches are members of the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church in which the Gospel is rightly preached and taught; and

Whereas, the special gifts that the Holy Spirit has bestowed on each church are reflected in their historical documents and liturgies, hymnody and spirituality, and commitments to outreach and social justice; and

Whereas, this Conference affirms our desire to draw closer to our Episcopal neighbors in mission, sharing in the proclamation of the Good News of God’s love in Jesus Christ in word and deed; and

Whereas, this Conference acknowledges and encourages the ministries in which Methodists and Episcopalians are already working together in our Annual Conference such as disaster response, Council of Churches, and the North Carolina Episcopal-United Methodist Dialogue, active statewide for more than two decades, and pledges our commitment to continue and grow such ministries; and

Whereas, our Conference Commission commends *A Gift to the World* to the members of our Annual Conference, for reading, reflection, and discussion both within our congregations and in an ecumenical context with our Episcopal brothers and sisters, and when possible, also with Christians of other traditions, especially our full communion partners in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Moravian Church; and

Whereas, The United Methodist Church and The Episcopal Church encourage on both a local and conference/diocesan level, common worship, including services of Holy Eucharist, following the guidelines for Interim Eucharistic Sharing released in 2006²; and

Whereas, The Episcopal Church-United Methodist Dialogue Committee agreed in their April 2019 meeting to submit a resolution for full communion to the Council of Bishops³ and the Council of Bishops accepted this resolution at their May 2019 meeting and have unanimously authorized the submission of legislation to General Conference 2020 enacting a full communion relationship between The United Methodist Church and The Episcopal Church⁴;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church pledges our support for the approval of the full communion proposal at General Conference in 2020, and to the ongoing work of Christian unity in worship and service in the years to come.

¹ “A Gift to the World: Co-Laborers in the Healing of Brokenness.” The Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church, October 1, 2018. https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/documents/_a_gift_to_the_world.pdf.

² “Common Guidelines for Bishops, Clergy, and Laity for the Implementation of Interim Eucharistic Sharing Between The Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church.” *The Episcopal Church*. The Episcopal—United Methodist Dialogue, September 2006. https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/Common_Guidelines.pdf.

³ “Episcopal and United Methodist Churches Take Step toward Full Communion.” *The United Methodist Church*, May 1, 2019. <http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/episcopal-and-united-methodist-churches-take-step-toward-full-communication>.

⁴ Hahn, Heather. “Bishops Move toward Episcopal Church Accord.” *United Methodist News Service*. The United Methodist Church, May 10, 2019. <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/bishops-move-toward-episcopal-church-accord>.

Approved on April 17, 2019 and Submitted by:
The North Carolina Conference Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Relations
Adapted from Rev. Lynne Bleich Weber's original by Tura Foster Gillespie, President of UMEIT

Explanation and Notes

The best explanation for this resolution comes from the full communion document: “In the fractured human community there is a great need for the realization of the unity among the followers of Christ Jesus. This proposal for full communion between The Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church is an effort to bring our churches into closer partnership in the mission and witness to the love of God and thus labor together for the healing of divisions among Christians and for the well-being of all. The vision of Revelation 22 is of the tree of life planed on both sides of a river “and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.” (Revelation 22:2) Faithful to Jesus’ prayer that his disciples be one so that the world may believe (John 17:20-23), may this proposal be an expression of God’s will for the churches.” – *from the Preface, A Gift to the World: Co-Laborers for the Healing of Brokenness – A Proposal for Full Communion* (November 21, 2017)

Note that “full communion” is not a merger of the churches. “Full communion is understood as a relationship between two distinct ecclesiastical bodies in which each maintains its own autonomy while recognizing the catholicity and apostolicity of the other, and believing the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith. In such a relationship, communicant members of each would be able freely to communicate at the altar of the other, and ordained ministers may officiate sacramentally in either church. Specifically, this includes transferability of members, mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries, mutual enrichment by one another’s traditions of hymnody and patterns of liturgy, freedom to participate in each other’s ordinations and installations of clergy, including bishops, and structures for consultation to express, strengthen, and enable our common life, witness, and service, to the glory of God and the salvation of the world.” (From *A Gift To The World*)

The historically African American churches include, but are not limited to those churches with whom The Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church have consulted in 2006, 2008 and 2009: the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), the African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion (AME Zion), and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME). In addition to the AME, AME Zion and CME, The United Methodist Church, through the Pan Methodist Commission, has also engaged in dialogues with the African Union Methodist Protestant Church and the Union American Methodist Episcopal Church, and formally ratified full communion in 2012.

For The Timeline of Episcopal Church – United Methodist Dialogue, previous agreed documents, guidelines for Interim Eucharistic Sharing, and other information, go to the TEC-UMC website:

<http://umc-tec.org>

**Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

8 – SEEKING AN END TO THE TORTURE OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

Whereas, torture is immoral, it violates the intrinsic dignity of the human being who is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-28). The human person is a creation of God. Every inch of the human body and every aspect of the human spirit comes from God and bears witness to his handiwork. Human dignity (value, worth) comes as a permanent and ineradicable endowment of the Creator to every person. Recognition of the intrinsic dignity of the human being requires a corresponding restraint in our behavior toward all human beings¹; and

Whereas, torture is a grave sin that inflicts severe moral injury not only to victims, their families, and communities, but also to any society that remains silent whenever the evil acts of torture occur. The biblical mandate is clear that evil must cease and evil deeds must stop (Isaiah 1:16-17)²; and

Whereas, torture is wrong without exception: the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church reminds us that the mistreatment or torture of persons by governments for any purpose violates Christian teaching and must be condemned and/or opposed by Christians and churches wherever it occurs. Scripture calls us to “Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured” (Hebrews 13:3 NRSV)³; and

Whereas, torture is illegal: it is against our country’s international law and treaty obligations, including the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The latter prohibits “...any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person to punish him/her for an act they or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed”⁴; and

Whereas, the “Mandela Rules” (<http://solitaryconfinement.org/mandela-rules>) adopted by the United Nations in 2015 state that solitary confinement shall not be applied for a time period in excess of 15 consecutive days. Solitary confinement shall be used only in exceptional cases as a last resort, and should be prohibited in the case of prisoners with mental or physical disabilities when their conditions would be exacerbated by such measures⁵; and

Whereas, for 23 hours a day for months, years, even decades, more than 80,000 adults and youth are held in solitary confinement in U.S. prisons, jails, and detention centers⁶; and

Whereas, hundreds of North Carolina inmates are in solitary confinement at any given time which can cause and worsen mental disorders⁷; and

¹ Gushee, David P, “Against Torture: An Evangelical Perspective,” *Theology Today* 63, no. 3 (October 2006): 349-364, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F004057360606300307>.

² *The Book of Discipline* (2016) ¶164.A and *The Book of Resolutions* (2016) #6147

³ Ibid.

⁴ “Convention Against Torture.” *United Nations Human Rights: Office of the High Commissioner*. United Nations. Accessed May 11, 2019. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cat.aspx>, I.1.1.

⁵ “The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules).” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*. Accessed May 11, 2019. https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/GA-RESOLUTION/E_ebook.pdf, Rules 44 & 45.

⁶ Morrow, T.C. “Together to End Solitary: Monthly Nationwide Actions.” *National Religious Campaign Against Torture*. Accessed May 11, 2019. <http://nrcat.org/torture-in-us-prisons/together-campaign>.

⁷ Alexander, Ames. “State Secrets: Here’s What N.C. Won’t Tell You about Inmates in Solitary Confinement.” *Charlotteobserver.com*. Charlotte Observer, November 12, 2016. <https://www.charlotteobserver.com/article114163718.html>.

Whereas, North Carolina State Prison Director Kenneth Lassiter has stated that solitary confinement is not to be punitive. Rather, the only purpose of restrictive housing is to maintain order in prison⁸;

Now, therefore it be resolved, that the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church reaffirms its opposition to torture, recognizing that solitary confinement over 15 days is universally recognized as a form of torture; and

Be it further resolved, we urge the Peace with Justice Coordinator to form a study group to establish the current practices of solitary confinement in North Carolina prisons and to report on its findings at the 2020 Annual Conference; and

Be it further resolved, we urge that, resulting from this study, the Peace with Justice Coordinator, working with the Board of Church and Society, ensure that all churches are made aware of its findings on the evidence of solitary confinement in North Carolina by publishing a report that is circulated to all churches and Districts and by the holding of at least one public meeting in each District, all prior to the 2020 Annual Conference; and

Be it further resolved, we urge the Peace with Justice Coordinator hold a conference prior to or as a breakaway session at the 2020 Annual Conference that includes teaching strategies for advocacy aimed at reducing all solitary confinement; and

Be it further resolved, we urge the Peace with Justice Coordinator to create and circulate to all Conference churches an advocacy strategy by the 2020 Annual Conference aimed at getting the North Carolina Division of Prisons to adopt the “Mandela Rules” for use of solitary confinement in the state, county, and city prisons; and

Be it further resolved, we encourage all churches to join the Together to End Solitary initiative (<http://www.togethertoendsolitary.org/>) that calls for nationwide actions on the 23RD of each month initiated by the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, joining people throughout the U.S. who are holding monthly actions to call for an end to the torture of prisoners in solitary confinement; and

Be it further resolved, we encourage every UMC congregation to support and become active in the ministry of the NC Conference Peace and Justice Committee of the Board of Church and Society, NC No Torture through the NC Council of Churches (<http://www.nccouncilofchurches.org>), and NC Stop Torture Now (<http://www.ncstoptorturennow.org/>), a nonprofit organization.

Submitted by Joe Burton
NCCUMC Peace with Justice Coordinator,
Professing Member, Highland UMC, Raleigh, NC

**Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

⁸ Michaels, Will. “New Policy Limits Solitary Confinement Time For Inmates.” *WUNC.org*. WUNC 91.5 FM North Carolina Public Radio, July 24, 2017. <https://www.wunc.org/post/new-policy-limits-solitary-confinement-time-inmates>.

13 – SEEING OUR IMMIGRANT NEIGHBORS AND THE FORCES AFFECTING THEM

Whereas, Jesus was an immigrant, the Word made flesh having moved into the neighborhood of humanity (John 1), and whereas he was an asylum seeker and refugee of political violence (Matthew 2:13-14), and whereas our Faith is built on the Old Testament values of welcoming the stranger (Deuteronomy 10:19), giving justice to the foreigners abiding with us (Leviticus 27:19), and remembering times when the insiders were in fact outsiders and migrants (1 Chronicles 16:19-22), with this same Faith challenging us in the New Testament to love our neighbors as ourselves (Luke 10:27), give hospitality to strangers (Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:10), and prize connection in Christ over tribal divisions; and

Whereas, the *Book of Resolutions* clearly states (#3281 adopted 2008 and adapted and readopted in 2016):

“We denounce and oppose the rise of xenophobic, racist, and violent reactions against migrants in the United States, and support all efforts to build relationships among people, instead of building walls among diverse ethnicities and cultures; welcome newly arriving immigrants into our congregations; oppose the building of a wall between the United States and Mexico, which the communities of both sides of the border are in opposition to; and call the United States government to immediately cease all arrests, detainment, and deportations of undocumented immigrants, including children, solely based upon their immigration status until a fair and comprehensive immigration reform is passed.”;

and

Whereas, our Social Principles (*The Book of Discipline* [2016] ¶162.H) states, “We urge the Church and society to recognize the gifts, contributions, and struggles of those who are immigrants and to advocate for justice for all. 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 Federal passage of anti-immigrant legislation and administrative proclamation including the ICE enforcement 278(g) program—in which local law enforcement can, with ICE’s help, initiate deportation proceedings, has created a substantial amount of fear within immigrant communities; and we further see that this has created a new form of harassment of immigrant communities where local law enforcement have resorted to racial profiling and arresting law abiding immigrants to start the deportation process¹; and

Whereas, we see the harmful potential of anti-immigrant legislation that has been proposed this year, by our North Carolina representatives, including the proposal of HB-135 and HB-370, and the potential consequences of how this legislation could further bifurcate our communities along cultural lines with immigrant communities by singling out and “othering” the members of these communities; and

Whereas, many of our United Methodist congregations see the results of harsh and demeaning legal processes—such as isolation, severe anxiety and depression, childhood trauma, polarization, rising poverty levels in immigrant communities, lack of adequate and fair legal representation, lack of spiritual and faith-based support from religious communities, and exclusion from educational programs—without knowing what to do; and

Whereas, the United States of America’s border enforcement has placed non-violent, non-criminal asylum seekers in facilities resembling cages and concentration camps, and in many cases separating children from their families (many of whom remain separated for traumatizing amounts of time)²; and

¹ “The 287(g) Program: An Overview.” *American Immigration Council*, August 12, 2017.

<https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/287g-program-immigration>.

² Silva, Chantal Da. “On Mother’s Day, Women across U.S. Ask How Many Moms Are Still Separated from Their Children.” *Newsweek*, May 12, 2019. <https://www.newsweek.com/mothers-day-women-across-us-ask-how-many-moms-are-still-separated-their-1422309>.

Whereas, we have many law-enforcement officers in our churches and communities who desire to connect with immigrant communities but have found it increasingly difficult because of the policies and postures of state and federal governments—stances which would criminalize peaceful and communicative endeavors like FaithAction IDs, which would also put prohibitive law enforcement costs on our local governments³; and

Whereas, we celebrate the many cultural, faithful, diversifying, entrepreneurial, and hardworking contributions of our immigrant sisters and brothers in our congregations and communities, we do so often while being hindered from deeper connection, hindrances coming from the aforementioned obstacles, hindrances which necessitate the movement towards greater vision and understanding of the prohibitive forces at work;

Now, therefore be it resolved, the North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church calls on its members to be engaged in understanding the laws—both prohibitive and supportive—that govern the lives of their immigrant neighbors, by receiving news updates regarding immigration laws by subscribing to the mailing list of one or some of the agencies which are endorsed and supported by the Immigration and Refugees Committee of our NCCUMC (many of these are linked at <http://ImmigrationTaskForce.Church>); and

Be it further resolved, we encourage all congregations who are aware of immigrant neighbors with whom they do not yet have a relationship to prayerfully encourage their existing nurture, outreach, and/or witness committees/work areas or otherwise active outreach teams and committees to subscribe to NCCUMC Refugee and Immigration Committee updates and the Immigration Ministry Task Force (<http://ImmigrationTaskForce.Church>) updates, to be aware of local and Conference-wide initiatives that can bolster their efforts to meet and support their immigrant neighbors; and

Be it further resolved, this Conference fully endorses the creation and sustaining of the provision of legal services to immigrants to support their navigation through the difficult immigration legal system; by fully supporting the existing Apex Immigration Service immigration paralegal clinic based at Apex UMC; and by fully endorsing and supporting the creation of a full service immigration law clinic at St. Andrews UMC in Fayetteville, a resource to be registered with Justice for our Neighbors (JFON), a UMC service organization based out of UMCOR and the Board of Global Ministries; and to encourage all NCCUMC congregations to seriously consider creating a JFON or paralegal immigration legal service as a ministry of their congregation; and

Be it further resolved, we direct the Conference Secretary to e-mail a copy of this resolution to every pastor in the Conference, and urge each district have an assigned liaison person to connect with the Immigration and Refugee Committee on matters of immigration ministry germane to the NCCUMC; and

Be it further resolved that this resolution shall be sent to every legislative office of the North Carolina General Assembly in Raleigh, the Congressional offices of the North Carolina Congressional Delegation, and the offices of Senators Thom Tillis and Richard Burr.

For further study: <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/what-the-church-says-immigration>

Approved on May 12, 2019 and Submitted by:
The Conference Immigration and Refugee Committee, The Conference Hispanic/Latino Committee,
The Conference Mission Team, and The Immigration Task Force of the NCCUMC

**Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

³ Sirota, Alexandra Forter. "Local Communities Face High Costs of Federal Immigration Enforcement." *North Carolina Justice Center*, April 16, 2019. <https://www.ncjustice.org/publications/local-communities-face-high-costs-of-federal-immigration-enforcement/>.

14 – THE AGE OF YOUTH IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Whereas, ¶32 in *The Book of Discipline* (2016) classifies a youth as “between the ages of twelve (12) and seventeen (17)”

Whereas, ¶256.3 in *The Book of Discipline* (2016) classifies a youth as “approximately twelve through eighteen years of age in the United States”; and

Whereas, inconsistencies within *The Book of Discipline* could discriminate against youth who are in middle or high school but are younger or older than those listed; and

Whereas, inconsistencies could also confuse youth leaders when deciding who is eligible for youth events; and

Whereas, using language such as “approximately” will cater to special age situations during years in school systems which will encourage more youth to participate in events associated with The United Methodist Church; and

Whereas, providing a clear directive of who youth ministries should serve will focus the church’s energy in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world among our youth;

Now, therefore be it resolved, the Conference Secretary, on behalf of the North Carolina Annual Conference, shall submit a legislative petition to the 2020 General Conference of The United Methodist Church to change ¶32 Article 1 to match ¶256 Section 3 in *The Book of Discipline* which defines a youth as one aged “approximately twelve through eighteen in the United States and up to twenty-four in the central conferences.”

Submitted by:
Charlie Hatch
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Professing Member, First United Methodist Church, Mount Olive, NC

**Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

15 – SUPPORTING FULL INCLUSION OF LGBTQIA+ PERSONS AND REJECTING THE TRADITIONAL PLAN

Whereas, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual people (LGBTQIA+) are of sacred worth, and are deserving of full inclusion in the life and ministry of The United Methodist Church, which includes being married in United Methodist churches by United Methodist clergy, and being ordained as clergy and elected as bishops in The United Methodist Church; and

Whereas, LGBTQIA+ members who are siblings, parents, and friends have continued to support the church with our/their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness despite harmful language adopted into *The Book of Discipline* in 1972 calling LGBTQIA+ practice “incompatible with Christian teaching”; and

Whereas, the Traditional Plan amplifies the harm to LGBTQIA+ members by preventing us/them from being fully included in the life and ministry of The United Methodist Church; and

Whereas, the Traditional Plan does further harm to local churches by discouraging churches from being fully inclusive when the talents, abilities, and callings of LGBTQIA+ members are desperately needed; and

Whereas, the amendments made to *The Book of Discipline* through the Traditional Plan denigrate LGBTQIA+ people who are called into ordained ministry by disqualifying us/them from ordination in The United Methodist Church simply because of our/their sexual orientation or gender identity, per Petition 90036 and Petition 90043; and

Whereas, the Traditional Plan unjustly punishes United Methodist clergy who embrace LGBTQIA+ persons by officiating at same-sex weddings, implying that the celebration of marriage between couples who are gay or lesbian is so abhorrent that, as per Petition 90042, it sets inhumane mandatory penalties for pastors convicted by a trial court of performing same-sex weddings, which are a year’s suspension without pay for the first offense and termination of conference membership and church credentials for a second offense; and

Whereas, Scripture tells us, “If one member suffers, all suffer together” and no part of the Body of Christ is to say to another part, “I have no need of you,” (1 Corinthians 12 ESV); and whereas the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has said that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” the Traditional Plan harms or threatens to harm any of us by introducing the idea that one group of people can be systematically excluded from the Body of Christ, urging the question “Who’s next?”; and

Whereas, more than 1,500 United Methodists from across the North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church signed a petition opposing the Traditional Plan and calling for full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ persons¹; and

Whereas, the Traditional Plan was approved by a vote of only 53% (438 to 384) of delegates to the Special Session of General Conference 2019, indicating diverse opinions of the church toward LGBTQIA+ persons²; and

Whereas, the entire Biblical record speaks of God’s love for all humanity and the Christian Gospel speaks of full inclusion and acceptance of all of humanity, we conclude that the Traditional Plan and the final amendments to the UMC *Discipline* as confirmed by the Judicial Council are incompatible with Christian teaching;

¹ “Sacred Witness NC: A Call of Action for a Fully Inclusive United Methodist Church.” Accessed May 12, 2019.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdwfwnW2FjSspD_SexwMPnA1GVweQLQ-0Uw3E2X397II0c2eg/viewform.

² United Methodist Communications. “What Happened and What Didn’t at General Conference 2019.” The United Methodist Church. March 01, 2019. <http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/what-happened-and-what-didnt-atgeneral-conference-2019>.

Therefore, be it resolved, we call for the repeal of the Traditional Plan (Petitions 90032, 90036, 90042, 90043, 90044, 90045, 90046, and 90047) at the next General Conference of The United Methodist Church; and

Be it further resolved, we urge local United Methodist congregations of the North Carolina Conference to ensure that LGBTQIA+ persons are welcomed and included in the membership and leadership positions of the local churches and to encourage members of the local congregations to be accountable for inclusion of ALL people, as stated in ¶214 of *The Book of Discipline* (2016); and

Be it further resolved, the North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church calls for the removal of all the harmful discriminatory language in *The Book of Discipline*, including the incompatibility clause in the Social Principles, at the next General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Submitted by:

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Professing Member, Duke Memorial United Methodist Church, Durham, NC

The Church and Society Committee
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**Passed June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.*