

RESOLUTIONS



2022 SESSION OF
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, the United Methodist congregations throughout 56 counties in eastern North Carolina. Part of that business takes the form of considering resolutions. Resolutions deal with issues affecting the lives of members of the Conference, along with the lives of our neighbors. They also can address 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. For more information and resolution composition guidelines, visit <https://nccumc.org/ac2022/resolutions/>.

Resolutions also 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. Churches are encouraged to review and study these resolutions, working to implement them within their local congregations and communities.

1 – STATEHOOD FOR PUERTO RICO

Whereas, Puerto Rico has been an unincorporated US territory since the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898; and

Whereas, in 1914, Puerto Rico voted to get independence from the US, but it was rejected as unconstitutional; and

Whereas, in 1917, the US granted Puerto Ricans citizenship, despite the fact that a majority of them voted against it; and

Whereas, Puerto Rico's population of 3.29 million people would make it the 31st biggest state; and

Whereas, Puerto Rico is 3,515 square miles of land and water, which make it bigger than Delaware and Rhode Island; and

Whereas, Puerto Ricans hold American citizenship, yet Puerto Ricans who meet all federal voting requirements are only allowed to vote in presidential primaries for president and vice president; and

Whereas, Puerto Rico is only allowed to send one non-voting representative called the Resident Commissioner to Congress to speak on their behalf, and the representative is not allowed to vote, even when the bill directly affects Puerto Ricans; and

Whereas, Congress has control of citizenship, currency, postal service, foreign policy, military defense, commerce, and finance; and

Whereas, although Puerto Ricans hold American citizenship, they are not offered the full protection given by the US Constitution; and

Whereas, Puerto Rico has their own constitution, but it had to have Congressional approval; and

Whereas, Puerto Rican women weren't given the right to vote until 1929 because they had to ask Congress for it; and

Whereas, Puerto Rico has an executive branch, consisting of a governor and cabinet; a judicial branch with a supreme court; and a legislative branch with a bicameral legislature, that are all modeled after the US's; and

Whereas, in 2016, a control board was established by President Obama that consists of 7 presidentially appointed members who have the power to overrule any decision made by Puerto Rico; and

Whereas, in 2009, Puerto Rico paid 3.742 billion dollars in federal taxes to the US Treasury; and

Whereas, Puerto Ricans are included in the draft; and

Whereas, Puerto Rican people have fought in every American conflict since 1917; and

Whereas, an estimated 100,000 Puerto Ricans previously or currently serve in the military; and

Whereas, in 2009, the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization called for Puerto Rico to get the ability to exercise fully their inalienable right to self-determination and independence; and

Whereas, 66% of Americans support statehood for Puerto Rico; and

Whereas, in November 2020, a statehood referendum was held during the general election in which 52% of Puerto Ricans voted yes; and

Whereas, in March of 2021, House Bill H.R. 1522 and Senate Bill S. 780 were introduced to give Puerto Rico statehood, and both have bipartisan support;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, echo the 70th Annual Conference Session for Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church calling for Congress to give Puerto Rico statehood by passing bills H.R. 1522 and S. 780; and

Be it further resolved, this resolution be sent to Congressional Representatives for North Carolina G. K. Butterfield, Deborah Ross, Gregory Murphy, David Price, Virginia Foxx, Kathy Manning, David Rouzer, Richard Hudson, Dan Bishop, Patrick McHenry, Madison Cawthorn,

Alma Adams, and Ted Budd; North Carolina's Senators Thom Tillis and Richard Burr; Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico Jenniffer González; Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi; Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer; Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell; and President Joe Biden.

Adapted from the resolution passed by the 70th Annual Conference Session of the Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, July 2021, Fayetteville, NC

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church on June 17, 2022

3 – THE CREATION OF A PAID CONFERENCE YOUTH POSITION

Whereas, all North Carolina Conference United Methodist Church Youth Events are fully run by volunteers without a single paid staff member; and

Whereas, 1 Timothy 4:12 (ESV) states, “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity,” which calls all youth to Christian fellowship and service; and

Whereas, Conference Youth Events foster a firm foundation in Christian fellowship and offer participants an introduction to the legislative process of The United Methodist Church which they can then use to assist their local churches in youth ministry; and

Whereas, ¶256 of *The Book of Discipline* (2016) states that Young People’s Ministries exist “To further educate youth and adults on The United Methodist Church as a connectional church by encouraging and supporting the participation of youth and adults in district, annual, jurisdictional, and central conferences, and other general Church ministries” which encourages having a full-time position dedicated to connecting youth across the Conference; and

Whereas, the deans of Conference Youth Events are solely tasked with scheduling the events, financially organizing all of the bills and contracts, and leading the design team without monetary compensation; and

Whereas, deans are unable to schedule their respective event past the year in which they are currently serving, which limits the participation of large church youth groups who have events overlapping with Conference events planned years in advance; and

Whereas, the Conference Council on Youth Ministries Chair is tasked with creating the structure for youth events, organizing CCYM meetings, and contacting District Youth Coordinators without a paid official to act as a supervisor; and

Whereas, attendance for the Annual Conference Session for Youth has been decreasing an average of approximately 16 members per year from the period of 2010 to 2019 (Table 1), which excludes the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on attendance; and

Whereas, attendance for the largest Conference Event, Pilgrimage, has been declining in attendance by approximately 189 members per year from the period of 2011 to 2019 (Table

1), and Pilgrimage once brought more than six thousand youth together but has averaged around three thousand five hundred between 2017 and 2019; and

Whereas, connection to the districts and local churches is vital for increasing participation in Conference Events; however, there is no position, volunteer or professional, that connects the districts to Conference Ministry; and

Whereas, there is no authority to recruit, administer, and provide an overall reference point for the direction of youth ministry on the conference level; and

Whereas, the District Youth Coordinators are the only link between the local church and the district, and there is no lead Youth Coordinator to coach the District Youth Coordinators to support Conference Events;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, echo the 70th Annual Conference for the Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church urging members of the Annual Conference to support youth ministry on the conference level by continuing to fund the newly-created position of Director of Youth Ministries¹, a paid position that acts as a communicator to the local churches and districts and assists deans by scheduling events years in advance and handling the financial responsibilities that are intrinsic to holding events; and

Be it further resolved, that this new Director of Youth Ministries should inform District Youth Coordinators of Conference Youth Ministry to increase participation and awareness of Conference Youth Events; and

Be it further resolved, that this resolution be sent to Bishop Fairley, Christine Dodson, the NC Conference Connectional Table, and the Cabinet.

Adapted from the resolution passed by the 70th Annual Conference Session of the Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, July 2021, Fayetteville, NC

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church on June 17, 2022

¹ “Villegas Joins Conference Staff as Director of Youth Ministries.” NC Conference of The UMC, May 3, 2022. <https://nccumc.org/news/2022/05/villegas-joins-conference-staff-as-director-of-youth-ministries/>. This staff position has been created since ACS 2021, and so the resolution has been edited to reflect this by the Conference Committee on Resolutions and Reference.

5 – GENDER WAGE GAP AMONGST CLERGY

Whereas, full rights for clergywomen were approved by the General Conference of The Methodist Church in 1956, and;

Whereas, in 2011, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women reported that clergywomen make an average of 13% less than clergymen and four years later, in 2015, that number grew to 16% less than men; and

Whereas, the clergy title comes from credentials such as ordination as well as educational requirements not affected by gender, making the wage gap between sexes unfair and notable; and

Whereas, the book of Esther tells the story of a powerful woman leading and saving a nation through her bravery, with Esther 9:32 (ESV) saying, “The command of Esther confirmed these practices of Purim, and it was recorded in writing”; and

Whereas, women are additionally less likely to be offered a parsonage and more likely to only be offered a salary (General Commission on the Status and Role of Women); and

Whereas, ¶1310 of *The Book of Discipline* (2016) lists many qualifications for ordination, including that a candidate “[h]ave a personal faith in Christ and be committed to Christ as Savior and Lord” and “[g]ive evidence of God’s gifts for ordained ministry, evidence of God’s grace in their lives, and promise of future usefulness in the mission of the Church”, but includes nothing prohibiting either gender towards pastoral leadership;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, echo the 70th Annual Conference Session for Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church calling for the closing of the wage gap between clergymen and clergywomen in not only the North Carolina Conference but also the global United Methodist Church be achieved through the respective cabinets advocating for and negotiating for equal pay for women, and;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, echo the 70th Annual Conference Session for youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church calling for the closing of the wage gap between clergymen and clergywomen in not only the North Carolina Conference but also the global United Methodist Church through the respective cabinets advocating for and negotiating for equal pay for women, and;

Be it further resolved, this resolution be sent to Bishop Leonard Fairley and Conference Committee on Youth Ministry Interim Chair Jay Locklear to be passed to the future permanent Chair.

Adapted from the resolution passed by the 70th Annual Conference Session of the Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church,
July 2021, Fayetteville, NC

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of
The United Methodist Church on June 18, 2022

6 – THE WORLD AS PARISH: IN SUPPORT OF UNITED METHODIST VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION (UMVIM) MINISTRIES

Whereas, Christians are called to be witnesses of Jesus Christ across the entire world, as is demonstrated in Acts 1:8 (CEB): “Rather, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”; and

Whereas, Christians are called to the care of others through service, as is demonstrated by 1 John 3:16-18 (CEB): “This is how we know love: Jesus laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. But if someone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but refuses to help—how can the love of God dwell in a person like that? Little children, let’s not love with words or speech but with action and truth”; and

Whereas, John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement wrote in his journals, “I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation”²; and

Whereas, Resolution #3142 (*Book of Resolutions* [2016]) of The United Methodist Church affirms “[p]eople of the Wesleyan heritage look upon the whole world as their parish. They feel committed to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people”; and

Whereas, UMVIM exists to connect individuals with mission both in their own community and across the globe, relating closely with annual conferences, UMVIM committees, and the General Board of Global Ministries to put the best of our collective resources to good use. Through Global Ministries’ Mission Volunteer Office, UMVIM is connected to a network of organizations and programs such as Mission Volunteers (individual service over a longer term), NOMADS, Primetimers, Global Mission Fellows, and a cadre of career missionaries³; and

Whereas, since the 1970s, UMVIM has offered a framework through which disciples can engage in short-term mission locally, nationally, and globally, equipping tens of thousands of United Methodists to engage in short-term mission each year in ministries as varied as, community development, pastor training, microenterprise, agriculture, Vacation Bible School, building repair and construction, and medical/dental services; and

² John Wesley, Journals, <https://ccl.org/ccl/wesley/journal/journal.vi.iii.v.html>, accessed 9 April 2022.

³ UMVIM 2020 Team Leader Handbook, 4.

Whereas, in 1980, a petition was passed at General Conference admitting UMVIM as part of the structure of the global church. The legislation affirmed the “concept of volunteers in mission (short-term) as an authentic form of personal missionary involvement, and to devise appropriate structures to interpret and implement such opportunities for short term volunteers in the global community”⁴; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Annual Conference United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (NCC UMVIM) exists to promote, encourage, and enable Christians to exemplify “Christian Love in Action” and aims to achieve the Great Commission through providing short-term missional exchange opportunities for everyday Christians; and

Whereas, the core values of an UMVIM team are 1) God Is in Charge of Our Mission, 2) Radical Discipleship, 3) Partnership, 4) People over Projects, 5) Intercultural Competency, 6) Self-Awareness, and 7) John Wesley’s Simple Rules⁵; and

Whereas, the tenets of the General Board of Global Ministries “Theology of Mission” are 1) God’s Mission from Creation to Completion, 2) The Self-Emptying Life of Jesus the Christ in Service to the Least and the Last, 3) The Church as a Community of Servanthood in Mission, 4) Grace at Work Everywhere, 5) Transformative Witness, 6) God’s Prior Presence, Our Current Response, and 7) The Spirit’s Surprising Activity⁶;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church commend and encourage the work of UMVIM ministries. We encourage and urge missional involvement from persons at the local, Conference, Jurisdictional, and General levels of the Church through a variety of UMVIM ministries; and

Be it further resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, deeply lament the times in which Christian mission has been and is used as an excuse to justify the control, colonization, exploitation, and enslavement of peoples throughout the world; and

Be it further resolved, we, the North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church strongly encourage mission teams to follow UMVIM Ministries “Core Values and Best Practices”; and

Be it further resolved, we, the North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church strongly encourage mission teams to adhere to the General Board of Global Ministries “Theology of Mission”; and

⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/umvimhistory>, accessed 9 April 2022.

⁵ <https://www.umvim.org/team-leader-handbook>, accessed 13 April 2022. These core values are expanded upon in the UMVIM Team Leader Handbook.

⁶ <https://umcmmission.org/our-theology-of-mission/>, accessed 13 April 2022. These tenets missional theology are expanded upon in GBGM’s Our Theology of Mission.

Be it further resolved, given the 2016 United Methodist *Book of Discipline* establishes an UMVIM Awareness Sunday (§ 265.5), we, the North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, strongly encourage local churches to collect an offering on UMVIM Awareness Sunday in support of North Carolina Conference UMVIM Ministries; and

Be it further resolved, we, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church strongly urge the North Carolina Annual Conference to continue providing budgetary funding for UMVIM missions and ministries; and

Be it further resolved, the Conference Secretary shall send a copy of this resolution no later than August 1, 2022 to the following persons: the NCCUMC Resident Bishop; the Senior Pastor and Outreach Chair of each Conference church; each Conference District Superintendent; each Conference District Lay Leader; each member of the Conference Leadership Team; each Conference Officer; each Jurisdictional Coordinator of UMVIM Ministries; each member of the General Board of Global Ministries' Senior Leadership Team; and each Director of the General Board of Global Ministries.

Approved by NCC UMVIM Committee, April 14, 2022

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of
The United Methodist Church on June 18, 2022

7 – AS WE MOVE FORWARD

Whereas, the resolution “Supporting Full Inclusion of LGBTQIA+ Persons and Rejecting the Traditional Plan” was passed on June 14, 2019 by the 2019 Session of the North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church (the last such meeting of this body in an in-person format); and

Whereas, the above named and adopted resolution speaks to the removal of discriminatory language from *The Book of Discipline* which explicitly focuses on LGBTQIA+ persons; and

Whereas, in light of the postponement of the 2020 General Conference, many Annual Conferences have adopted non-discriminatory resolutions (some as early as 2016) that are guiding their Annual Conferences, which include the Desert Southwest, the New England, Cal-Pac and Oregon-Idaho Annual Conferences; and

Whereas, we recognize that while there is a deep theological divide among the people called United Methodists, we remain convinced that a total and full inclusion of all persons, in every aspect of ministry, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation is a clear reflection of the intention of the Kingdom of God; and

Whereas, we firmly seek to abide and adhere to John Wesley’s General Rules of doing no harm, doing good, and loving God. We recognize that in Luke 10:27, Jesus teaches us to love God and to love our neighbor, even if that neighbor is ‘different’, simply because we are all children of God; and

Whereas, it is the position of this conference stated many times over that our church is better together, as a “United” Methodist Church, working to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church shall continue to open the doors of inclusion of all God’s children, including LGBTQIA+ persons; and

Be it further resolved, we encourage unity in a totally inclusive United Methodist *connexion*, as it is central to our Wesleyan heritage that the table of the Lord is and should be open to all, and as the Lord’s table is open so too should be the Lord’s houses of worship and ministries, and

Be it further resolved, we, as the body of Christ, be a welcoming community of disciples so that we may reflect the fullness of the Kingdom of God, inclusive of all regardless of ideologies, race, gender, sexual orientation and identity, including the intellectually and physically challenged so that we all may work together to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Methodist Federation for Social Action, North Carolina Conference Chapter
Approved May 15, 2022

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of
The United Methodist Church on June 18, 2022