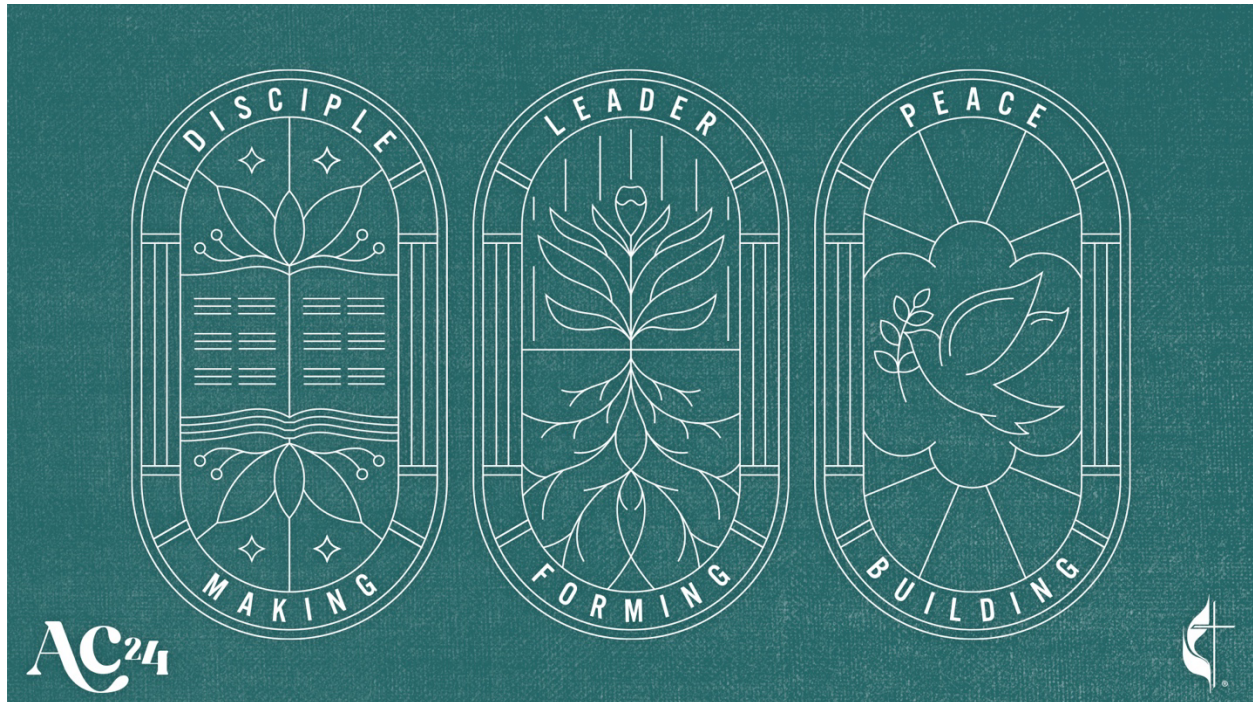


# RESOLUTIONS



2024 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 worship, grow, 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 worldwide 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/ac2024/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—INCLUSIVITY IN THE COMMUNION LITURGY

**Whereas**, about inclusivity, the official United Methodist Church website states, “Everyone is welcome to worship and actively participate in the life of our churches”<sup>1</sup>; and

**Whereas**, the United Methodist Social Principles (2016) paragraph 162 states, “We affirm all persons as equally valuable in the sight of God. We therefore work toward societies in which each person’s value is recognized, maintained, and strengthened”; and

**Whereas**, Galatians 3:28 states, “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male & female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus”; and

**Whereas**, the current Communion liturgy of “men and women of Christ” does not accurately represent the beliefs stated above; and

**Whereas**, making people feel comfortable and included at Church services is important and the current wording of the communion liturgy excludes people who don’t identify as either men or women; and

**Whereas**, inclusive wording in the church fosters a strong community where everyone can feel comfortable;

**Now, therefore, be it resolved**, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Churches echoes the 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference Session for Youth calling for the change of the communion liturgy from using “men and women of Christ” to “people of Christ”; and

**Be it further resolved**, legislation calling for this change shall be drafted and sent by the Conference Secretary to the next session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

The 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference Session for Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church  
July 2023

Referred to the 2024 Annual Conference Session for Youth by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of  
The United Methodist Church on June 14, 2024

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<sup>1</sup> “What Is the Church’s Position on Homosexuality?” The United Methodist Church, September 24, 2019. <https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-what-is-the-churchs-position-on-homosexuality>.

## 2—FURTHERING RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF DISAFFILIATION ON NC YOUTH MINISTRY AND MINISTERIAL PROGRAMS

**Whereas**, The United Methodist Church and its entirety of congregants and ministerial programs are currently undergoing a theological divide, the splitting of The United Methodist Church denomination, and there has been little to no research on the impact of this split on the different ministerial program; and

**Whereas**, The North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church has a very involved youth ministry program with approximately 5,000 participants, and there is not much consideration when it comes to the impact on youth ministry programs and how disaffiliation is impacting the individual church-involved youth; and

**Whereas**, scant research has been conducted about the impact of the disaffiliation on youth ministry, however the little research conducted can show the North Carolina Conference and worldwide United Methodist Church that research is incredibly important to determine how to lead and grow the youth ministerial program; and

**Whereas**, one work of research has been conducted with interviews and surveys about how the youth have been impacted by disaffiliation; and

**Whereas**, from the quantitative data from that piece, the youth survey showed that approximately 93% of the 40 North Carolina Methodist-affiliated survey respondents opposed disaffiliation, which ultimately provided further information and structure to the negative impact, synthesized from a youth's perspective. This quantitative data supported the research on this topic by interpreting the youth's opinions and allowing researchers to make assumptions about the future of the denomination, and the surveys with Conference Youth Director Jason Villegas and Local Pastor Ed Priestaf showed trends in their responses concerning mental and spiritual wellbeing, economic factors, and youth impact which contributed to the collection of results; and

**Whereas**, from the little research gathered, it has been proven that the impact of religion on LGBTQ+ youth is detrimental; and

**Whereas**, most American Protestant denominations have condemned same-sex activity as sinful, barred LGBTQ+ individuals from spiritual leadership roles (or required celibacy in such positions), and refused to approve same-sex union ceremonies, and these beliefs are currently supported by the three major denominations, the Roman Catholic Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, and The United Methodist Church, which account for nearly 35% of Americans' religious associations (Barnes & Meyer, 2012); and

**Whereas**, this negative perception of these young individuals impacts their physical and mental state, LGBTQ+ people experienced discrimination more frequently than heterosexual people, both daily and throughout their lifetime; and

**Whereas**, this is a very controversial and current topic and there are concerns regarding the future of youth ministry programs and how this process will impact individual youth mentally, physically, and spiritually;

**Now, therefore, be it resolved**, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Churches echoes the 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference Session for Youth in calling for more research to fully determine the impact of the denomination-wide disaffiliation on a local level within youth ministry; and

**Be it further resolved**, we urge the creation of a survey to be distributed by The North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church to determine the impact of the recent disaffiliation on the Conference's youth population with the results to be organized by a taskforce that would present their findings at the next session of Annual Conference; and

**Be it further resolved**, this resolution be sent to Conference Youth Director Jason Villegas, UMC Director of Young People's Ministries Christopher Witerdink, and the CCYM chairs Jenn Tabor and Heather Wong.

Sources:

HRC Foundation. (2020). *Stances of faiths on LGBTQ issues: United Methodist Church*. Human Rights Campaign. Retrieved March 21, 2023, from <https://www.hrc.org/resources/stances-of-faiths-on-lgbt-issues-united-methodist-church>

Almeida, J., Johnson, R. M., Corliss, H. L., Molnar, B. E., & Azrael, D. (2009, August). *Emotional distress among LGBT youth: The influence of perceived discrimination based on sexual orientation*. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. Retrieved March 21, 2023, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3707280/>

The 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference Session for Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church  
Approved July 2023

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church on June 14, 2024

### 3—MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS IN ALL NORTH CAROLINA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH BATHROOMS

**Whereas**, not having access to period products can be harmful for many people for various circumstances; and

**Whereas**, data from the nonprofit Free the Tampon Foundation found 86 percent of people started their period unexpectedly in public without the supplies they needed; and

**Whereas**, if and when people were caught in public without period supplies they needed, 57 percent said they would feel embarrassed and annoyed, and 43 percent would feel anxious and stressed; and

**Whereas**, many people are constantly in need of menstrual products in their daily life and it's not uncommon to be unprepared;

**Now, therefore, be it resolved**, the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Churches echoes the 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference Session for Youth in urging that all bathrooms in United Methodist churches have menstrual products available; and

**Be it further resolved**, this resolution shall be sent to every local church's pastor and chair of the board of trustees.

Source:

Ali, Shirin (2022). *The Movement to Make Period Products Free is Growing in the U.S.* The Hill. Retrieved April 12, 2023, from <https://thehill.com/changing-america/respect/accessibility/3604347-the-movement-to-make-period-products-free-is-growing-in-the-u-s/>

The 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference Session for Youth of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church  
Approved July 2023

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church on June 14, 2024

## 5—A CALL FOR PEACE

**Whereas**, Jesus in Matthew 5:9 says, “blessed are the peacemakers”; and

**Whereas**, the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church declare war incompatible with Christian teaching (*The Book of Discipline 2016* ¶165.C) and that nations have a right to self-determination (¶165.B); and

**Whereas**, the response to the attack on innocent civilians on October 7<sup>th</sup> has disproportionately fallen on innocent Israeli and Palestinian civilians; and

**Whereas**, The United Methodist Church has said in the Social Principles it stands for justice and peace (¶165.A);

**Now, therefore, be it resolved**, we the North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist calls for an immediate and permanent cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hamas and the release of hostages; and

**Be it further resolved**, we strongly and prayerfully encourage the US Department of State to work with Israeli and Palestinian authorities and other regional interests towards a long-term solution to the conflict that ensures long-lasting peace, stability, and security for both Palestinians and Israelis.

Methodist Federation for Social Action, North Carolina Annual Conference Chapter  
Approved May 9, 2024

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church on June 15, 2024



## 6—CHURCH LAND USE

**Whereas**, when God created the heavens and the earth, God put into place systems and cycles that would be life-promoting and -sustaining and made humans caretakers of all life on earth; and

**Whereas**, God gave the earth water, which is essential for all life, and created a cycle of cleansing, renewal, and release that makes the water that God gave us in the beginning usable and life-supporting still today (Genesis 1:9-10); and

**Whereas**, God gave the earth soil where life abounds, filled with microorganisms vital to the health and fertility of the soil; where life can grow and thrive, taking nutrients and water from the soil to support the growth of plants; and where life is renewed when microorganisms perform the process of decay following death and bring forth new, fertile soil through the process (Genesis 1:11); and

**Whereas**, God gave the earth plants that grow from the combination of nutrients in the soil, the sunlight, and the water, and that are used as food and shelter by other life forms on earth. These plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, which cleans the air and provides humans and other animals with oxygen they require to live. Through transpiration, these plants release water into the air that cools the air and becomes the basis for precipitation that releases water back to the ground for use, once again, by plants and other animals (Genesis 1:11-12); and

**Whereas**, God created humans, animals, creatures of the sea, and birds of the air, to live upon the earth; God created all these things, and more, to work together in harmony in a manner that promotes and sustains all life on earth. When we work together as our Creator intended, God multiplies the fruits of our labors and brings forth more and more blessings (Genesis 1:20-27); and

**Whereas**, at present, humans are not working together in harmony with the rest of Creation as God intended; we are in the midst of a biodiversity and wildlife crisis that is so extreme it is often referred to as the Sixth Mass Extinction.<sup>2</sup> According to the Center for Biological Diversity, more than 30,000 species go extinct annually. Ornithological studies reveal that nearly three billion North American birds have vanished since 1970, and two thirds of the birds that remain are at an increasing risk of extinction due to global temperature rise.<sup>3</sup> While prior mass extinction events in history were due to natural causes, this one is being caused by humans through land conversion, habitat destruction and fragmentation, use of chemical pesticides and biocides, as well as other harmful synthetic chemicals that persist in the environment known as “forever chemicals,” water pollution, and air pollution, including excessive release of methane and carbon dioxide into the atmosphere as by-products from the production and burning of massive amounts of fossil fuels, which is causing the climate crisis; and

**Whereas**, since human actions are the cause of these problems, they can also be the solution. Because God created the earth to incorporate life-promoting and life-sustaining systems, we humans can follow God’s intended order and renew the life-giving abilities of these systems that we have been harming (Genesis 1:28-31);

**Now, therefore, be it resolved**, North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church local churches and other holders of church lands, such as camp and retreat centers, as well as conference offices and district locations, are urged to implement actions in their setting that bring their land back in harmony with God’s intention and systems; and

**Be it further resolved**, all aforesaid organizations be urged to implement sustainable practices in their landscaping that support local, native biodiversity and healthy ecology. These actions can include evaluating the plants growing on their property, removing invasive species, replacing monoculture lawns with ecologically supportive plantings, and including native plant species in all landscaping; and

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<sup>2</sup> Eldredge, Niles. “The Sixth Extinction.” [actionbioscience.org](https://www.actionbioscience.org), August 12, 2009. Accessed May 10, 2024.

[https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/population\\_and\\_sustainability/extinction/pdfs/Eldredge-6th-extinction.pdf](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/population_and_sustainability/extinction/pdfs/Eldredge-6th-extinction.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> “Halting the Extinction Crisis.” Center for Biological Diversity. No date. Accessed May 10, 2024.

[https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/biodiversity/elements\\_of\\_biodiversity/extinction\\_crisis/index.html](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/biodiversity/elements_of_biodiversity/extinction_crisis/index.html)

**Be it further resolved,** property owned and cared for by aforesaid organizations be used to protect and support life, both human and non-human. This may include landscaping that can prevent disasters, such as rain gardens or wetland restoration that prevents flooding, or erosion control that prevents topsoil loss. This also may include planting that supports local flora and fauna, such as planting native trees in clusters of three or more, plants to provide food sources for local wildlife, and plants that provide for local, native pollinators; and

**Be it further resolved,** all aforesaid organizations are urged to stop using synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and other biocides that negatively impact soil and ecological health, and to incorporate sustainable practices in their property upkeep, such as composting, natural areas, and renewable sources of energy and water.

NCCUMC Creation Care Committee  
Approved April 15, 2024

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church on June 15, 2024

## 7—STRIVING TOWARDS A DIVERSE & EQUALLY PAID CLERGY

**Whereas**, “faith in Christ Jesus is what makes each of you equal with each other, whether you are a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a free person, a man or a woman” (Galatians 3:28, CEV); and

**Whereas**, God’s very nature is diverse. The Trinity is made up of distinct persons united as one. Diversity is at the core and heart of who God is. If the image of God is diverse, and we as humans are made in the image of God, then we hold that same diversity. Since diversity is at the core of who God is and who we are, then diversity is also at the heart of how we all come together in the Church. The early Church and the Church of today are made up of many generations, individuals of different economic classes, ethnicities, races, and personalities; and

**Whereas**, as baptized members of the Body of Christ, we vow to “accept the freedom and power God gives us to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves” and “serve Christ as Lord in union with the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races (*United Methodist Book of Worship*, Baptismal Covenant I, pg. 88)”; and

**Whereas**, full clergy rights for clergywomen were approved by the General Conference of the Methodist Church in 1956 and full clergy rights for persons of color were approved by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church in 1968; and

**Whereas**, in 2024, only 71 of the 361 clergy members or 19.6% of clergy in the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church (NCCUMC) are people of color<sup>4</sup>; and

**Whereas**, in 2024, only 133 of the 361 active clergy members or 36.8% of clergy in the NCCUMC are women<sup>4</sup>; and

**Whereas**, in 2024, in the NCCUMC, full-time clergy women earned 91.7 cents to every dollar earned by white clergy men<sup>4</sup>; and

**Whereas**, in 2024, in the NCCUMC, full-time clergy of color earned 84.6 cents to every dollar earned by white clergy men<sup>4</sup>; and

**Whereas**, in 2018, 40% of pastors of color and 20% of female pastors are at minimum salary compared to 13% of white male clergy in the NCCUMC<sup>5</sup>; and

**Whereas**, there are currently no Native American pastors in seminary or in the ordination process in the NCCUMC<sup>5</sup>; and

**Whereas**, forming anti-racist disciples is a priority of the NCCUMC and regular reporting and goals are needed to help us achieve this goal together as an annual conference; and

**Whereas**, candidates for ministry, who become certified, licensed, provisional, and/or full-connection clergy, begin as members of local churches recommended by local church Charge Conferences. Local church charge conferences also annually set clergy salaries;

**Now, therefore, be it resolved**, that all members of NCCUMC have a role to play in working towards a diverse and equally paid clergy. We urge all North Carolina Conference United Methodists to avail themselves of the information regarding the racial and gender wage gap in the North Carolina Conference and work within their local context through the actions of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) and charge conferences to strive towards diversity and pay equity in regard to candidates for ministry and clergy salary; and

**Be it further resolved**, we, the NCCUMC, urge the Bishop’s Cabinet of our Annual Conference to report on the racial and gender wage gap in the North Carolina Conference among active clergy each year at Annual Conference; and

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<sup>4</sup> Statistic received from the NCCUMC Conference Treasurer’s Office.

<sup>5</sup> Statistic received from the NCCUMC Office of Race Equity and Justice Ministries.

**Be it further resolved,** we urge the Bishop’s Cabinet in coordination with the Office of Clergy Life to report on the racial and gender diversity of candidates for ordained ministry, active clergy serving in the Annual Conference, and the number of clergy who have entered and exited the conference or ordination process; and

**Be it further resolved,** we urge the Bishop’s Cabinet to establish a yearly measurable goal in partnership with the NCCUMC Office of Race Equity and Justice Ministries and the NCCUMC Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) that works towards equity in closing the racial and gender wage gap among clergy in the NCCUMC. The measurable outcome of this yearly goal could be reported at the NCCUMC the following year.

Corridor District Anti-Racism Team  
Approved May 2, 2024

Endorsed by:  
Asian Ministries Committee  
Hispanic Latinx Committee  
Native American Committee  
Strengthening the Black Church Committee  
Refugee and Immigration Committee  
Commission on the Status & Role of Women

Approved by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church on June 15, 2024

## 8—LAMENT FOR CLERGY AND FAMILY HEALTH INSURANCE IN THE NCCUMC

**Whereas**, “Health is a condition of physical, mental, social wellbeing...Health care is a basic human right” (*Book of Discipline 2016* ¶162V); and

**Whereas**, the Duke Endowment spent \$12,000,000 to study the health of UMC pastors in North Carolina and found that, “Churches and other religious institutions have often been viewed as structures in which to enact health interventions. However, this study’s findings indicate that it is critical to improve the health of clergy themselves”<sup>6</sup>; and

**Whereas**, the financial burden of insurance costs has had a significant impact on families in the NCCUMC since it has changed providers; and

**Whereas**, prescription prices have increased, pushing essential medications beyond reach for many families; and

**Whereas**, many clergy, their spouses, and children of NCCUMC are going without proper mental and physical healthcare because they cannot afford it. This is exacerbated by faithfully serving during a distinctive time to be a United Methodist pastor; and

**Whereas**, access to mental health care has plummeted with our current plan. Therapists and psychiatrists, once in-network, are now out of reach for policyholders. Even with providers advocating for necessary treatments, denials are rampant; and

**Whereas**, emergency room visits, often due to out-of-network hospitals or doctors, have resulted in crippling bills ranging from \$2,000 to \$10,000 when it used to be an attainable co-pay; and

**Whereas**, the current state of insurance and healthcare offerings leaves families grappling with increased expenses, decreased coverage, postponed care, and worries about future unpredictability. Our healthcare coverage used to be simple and dependable. Now it is frustrating, demoralizing, and discouraging;

**Now, therefore, be it resolved**, we ask that the Insurance Committee of CFA to consider reviewing insurance options, with an emphasis on offering respectable coverage for the many dedicated active clergy and their families in the NCCUMC; and

**Be it further resolved**, we ask the Insurance Committee to consider doing a study that involves clergy, spouses, and families to evaluate the experience, financial implications, and effectiveness of our current insurance plans and options.

The Clergy Spouse Association of the NCCUMC  
Approved May 8, 2024

Referred to the NCCUMC Insurance Committee by majority vote by the North Carolina Conference of  
The United Methodist Church on June 14, 2024

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<sup>6</sup> Proeschold-Bell, Rae Jean, and Sara H. LeGrand. 2010. “High Rates of Obesity and Chronic Disease Among United Methodist Clergy.” *Obesity* 18 (9): 1867–70. <https://doi.org/10.1038/oby.2010.102>.