

What does the Lord require of us?

Methodist Federation for Social Action Legislative Priorities GC 2008

Manifest God's hospitality to all persons

- Clarify a United Methodist understanding of church membership and amend language in the *UM Discipline* to make clear both the responsibilities of the pastor and the congregation and the limits of a pastor's authority in determining readiness for membership.
- Remove all language within the *UM Discipline* that would in any way prohibit full participation in the ministries of the UMC based on gender identity and/or sexual orientation.
- Work diligently to make the church fully accessible to those with disabilities.
- Call on the church to work with the General Commission on Religion and Race in eliminating the barriers that make persons of color feel less than welcome in many United Methodist Churches.

Follow the example of Christ's non-violent love

- Call on the UMC to lead in the development of non-violent alternatives to conflict in our personal lives, our communities, our nation and our world, following the teachings of Jesus.
- Follow the lead of UM Bishops in calling for repentance of our sins in the occupation of Iraq and an end to the war.
- Support the comprehensive resolution "A Call for Peacemaking" that will be submitted to GC 2008

Promote racial and interfaith justice and reconciliation

- Support the work of the Commission on Religion and Race and the Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns in addressing issues of immigration, racial profiling, and understanding the gifts of multi-racialism and multi-culturalism.
- Give full support to the new initiative of the Commission on Religion and Race in expanding its work to educate and involve white members of the church in building an anti-racism movement within the UMC.

Demand justice for those who are most vulnerable, particularly persons who are poor

- Support the excellent work of the Women's Division as one of the church's agencies that has done this most consistently – especially in ministries reaching out to women and children.
- Work with individuals and groups within the UMC seeking justice by addressing issues related to a living wage, pensions and health care for those working within the church and in the larger society.
- Support the Global Aids Initiative of UM Bishops as well as the Nothing But Nets Program.

Work for a fully participatory church where all voices are heard

- Support proposals related to the global nature of the UMC that allow for regional and cultural expression and autonomy while maintaining our global nature.

Support Peace in the Middle East

- Continue advocating for peace in the Middle East through calling on Israel to end:
 - the military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem
 - the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, and
 - the destruction of Palestinian homes and the continued building of illegal Jewish Settlements.
- Call on Palestinian Government officials to condemn violence against Israeli civilians
- Call on the US to cease military aid to the region
- Call on the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits to identify companies which benefit from the occupation of Palestine and make recommendations for selective divestment to bring pressure to bear on Israel

Support for sexuality education and the moral agency of women in reproductive health matters

- Call on the UMC to go on record at the 2008 General Conference in support of the work of, and membership in, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.
- Give full support to emerging adult stem cell research and support the current UM stance that endorses continued use of embryonic stem cell research from donated embryos that would otherwise be discarded so long as this is done voluntarily and with informed consent.

Protect civil rights and civil liberties

- Acknowledging the legitimate security concerns of our nation, we condemn policies and actions by the U.S. that have violated the civil rights of so many.
- Support the General Board of Global Ministries in its call for the church to affirm the prophetic tradition of dissent; for local congregations to undertake education efforts; and for national UM agencies to work with national and international civil liberties and human rights organizations.

Protect planet earth

- Support actions and policies that put clean, innovative energy technologies to use that significantly reduce global warming and encourage new innovations leading to even more reductions.
- Continue to support the work of UM Bishops as they update In Defense of Creation to include both the threat of nuclear weapons and environmental dangers.

Affirm the openness of our Wesleyan tradition

- Affirm our Wesleyan heritage of theological openness and inquiry as we seek always to deepen our discipleship as faithful Christians.
- Celebrate the freedom of United Methodist pulpits and freedom of thought and expression in our universities and seminaries.
- Oppose all efforts to move the church toward becoming rigid in doctrine and creeds.