



Mission and Justice Ministries
of the United Methodist Churches of Indiana



The United Methodist Church

Social Principles and Resolutions

The Social Community: Rights of Racial and Ethnic Persons

2016 Book of Discipline, Social Principles ¶162.A

A) Rights of Racial and Ethnic Persons

Racism is the combination of the power to dominate by one race over other races and a value system that assumes that the dominant race is innately superior to the others. Racism includes both personal and institutional racism. Personal racism is manifested through the individual expressions, attitudes, and/or behaviors that accept the assumptions of a racist value system and that maintain the benefits of this system. Institutional racism is the established social pattern that supports implicitly or explicitly the racist value system. Racism, manifested as sin, plagues and hinders our relationship with Christ, inasmuch as it is antithetical to the gospel itself. In many cultures white persons are granted unearned privileges and benefits that are denied to persons of color. We oppose the creation of a racial hierarchy in any culture. Racism breeds racial discrimination. We define racial discrimination as the disparate treatment and lack of full access and equity in resources, opportunities, and participation in the Church and in society based on race or ethnicity.

Therefore, we recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons. We rejoice in the gifts that particular ethnic histories and cultures bring to our total life. We commit as the Church to move beyond symbolic expressions and representative models that do not challenge unjust systems of power and access.

We commend and encourage the self-awareness of all racial and ethnic groups and oppressed people that leads them to demand their just and equal rights as members of society. We assert the obligation of society and people within the society to implement compensatory programs that redress long-standing, systemic social deprivation of racial and ethnic persons. We further assert the right of members of historically underrepresented racial and ethnic persons to equal and equitable opportunities in employment and promotion; to education and training of the highest quality; to nondiscrimination in voting, access to public accommodations, and housing purchase or rental; to credit, financial loans, venture capital, and insurance policies; to positions of leadership and power in all elements of our life together; and to full participation in the Church and society. We support affirmative action as one method of addressing the inequalities and discriminatory practices within the Church and society.

Proposed 2020 Social Principles

The Social Community: Racism, Ethnocentrism and Tribalism

We condemn racism, ethnocentrism, tribalism, and any ideology or social practice based on false and misleading beliefs or ideologies that one group of human beings is superior to all other groups of human beings. Additionally, we utterly reject laws, policies and social practices that marginalize, discriminate and/or encourage the use of violence against individuals, communities or social groups based on perceived racial, ethnic or tribal differences.

We call on congregations and on pastors, bishops, and other church authorities to educate themselves about the root causes and manifestations of racism, ethnocentrism, and tribalism with communities of faith and to develop strategies for overcoming these kinds of social divisions. We likewise urge governments, businesses, and civil society organizations to renounce statements, policies and actions aimed at promoting exclusion, discrimination and violence.

Responsibilities for Eradication of Racism

The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church -- 2016

Annual Conferences', Districts', and Local Congregations' ***Responsibilities for Eradication of Racism***

WHEREAS, conferences, districts, and local congregations within the United States are becoming more diverse; and

WHEREAS, it is predicted that within the United States, the population of persons of European descent will be less than 50 percent before 2050; and

WHEREAS, racism has been a systemic and personal problem within the US and The United Methodist Church (UMC) and its predecessor denominations since its inception; and

WHEREAS, The UMC is committed to the eradication of racism; and

WHEREAS, it takes significant change, learning, time, and healing to eradicate racism; and

WHEREAS, it takes significant attitudinal and systemic change to learn and to incorporate the gifts and contributions of the different racial-ethnic persons within the church's ministry, structures, and mission; and

WHEREAS, since 1980 the Charter for Racial Justice Policies has served as an articulation of United Methodist understanding of the biblical imperative for the eradication of racism and a guide for action (#161 2004 Book of Resolutions—"A Charter for Racial Justice Policies in an Interdependent Global Community");

Therefore, be it resolved, that every annual conference, district, and local congregation within the US have a strategy and program which educates and supports systemic and personal changes to end racism and work multiculturally, and

Be it further resolved, that an educational program which will include understanding systemic racism, a strategy for its eradication, appreciation and valuation of diversity, and guidelines for working with different groups in communities toward becoming an inclusive church be offered at least yearly within the annual conference, and

Be it further resolved, that all clergy and lay leadership be encouraged to participate in such programs and that all newly ordained clergy be required to participate in these programs, and

Be it further resolved, that between 2008 and 2012 the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Commission on Religion and Race make available to annual conferences, districts, and local congregations resources such as the Charter for Racial Justice Policies and the Reflection and Action Planning Resource to assist them in their efforts, and

Be it further resolved, that the General Commission on Religion and Race include as part of its review process the adherence of annual conferences, districts, and local congregations in equipping and supporting leadership to eradicate racism and work multiculturally, and that as

annual conferences, districts, and local congregations develop and implement programs, results will be forwarded by the Conference Commission on Religion and Race (or other conference structures dealing with those responsibilities) to the General Commission on Religion and Race.

ADOPTED 2000

REVISED AND READOPTED 2008

RESOLUTION #3374, 2008 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #164, 2004 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #151, 2000 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS

Racism and Economic Injustice Against People of Color in the U.S.

The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church -- 2016

Biblical and Theological Grounding

WHEREAS, the prophet Isaiah spoke out:

Woe to those who make unjust laws, / to those who issue oppressive decrees, / to deprive the poor of their rights / and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people (Isaiah 10:1-2a NIV); and

WHEREAS, Jesus taught the foundation of the law and the prophets was to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself and he made clear that everyone is our neighbor; and

WHEREAS, Jesus proclaimed the essence of his ministry when he read from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, / because he has anointed me / to bring good news to the poor. / He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives / and recovery of sight to the blind, / to let the oppressed go free. (Luke 4:18 NRSV); and

WHEREAS, the prophet Isaiah proclaimed God's condemnation of economic injustice, saying:

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, / and oppress all your workers. / Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight / and to strike with a wicked fist. / Such fasting as you do today / will not make your voice heard on high. . . . / Is not this the fast that I choose: / to loose the bonds of injustice, / to undo the thongs of the yoke, / to let the oppressed go free, / and to break every yoke? / Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, / and bring the homeless poor into your house; / when you see the naked, to cover them, / and not to hide yourself from your own kin? (Isaiah 58:3b-4, 6-7 NRSV); and

Background and Motivation

WHEREAS, this condemnation applies directly to the reality of racial injustice and economic inequality in the US; and

WHEREAS, the US has the most unequal distribution of income and wealth of all developed nations; and

WHEREAS, in 1967, when Jim Crow segregation was wounded, but still alive, median household income was 43 percent higher for white, non-Hispanic households than for black households, yet by 2011, with legal segregation eliminated, that figure had risen to 72 percent (Ned Resnikoff, "Race is the elephant in the room when it comes to inequality," MSNBC, posted 03/13/14, updated 05/23/14. Available online at <<http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/washingtons-silence-the-racial-wealth-gap>>); and

WHEREAS, despite steadily rising overall wealth in the US, the “wealth gap” between whites and African Americans went from 12 to 1 in 1984 to 19 to 1 in 2009 (Ibid.). Significant disparities exist at all income levels. So, for example, in the bottom fifth of households, poor whites have an average of \$24,000 in assets. Poor black households have, on average, \$57 in assets, for a ratio of 421 to 1. In the middle income level, the ratio is 5.2 to 1 and even at the highest income level, white households have, on average 3.2 times more wealth than black households (Tim Wise, *Colorblind: The Rise of Post-Racial Politics and the Retreat from Racial Equality* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2010), 69-70); and

WHEREAS, “African Americans are twice as likely as whites to be employed in low-wage jobs and twice as likely to be unemployed,” even when the job climate is good. In addition, on average, black men remain unemployed seven more weeks than white men and black women are out of work five more weeks than white women (Ibid., 66-67); and

WHEREAS, while median income for Asian Americans is higher than that of whites, Asian Americans earn less than whites at the same educational level (Ibid., 95) and many Asian Americans still live in poverty; and

WHEREAS, slavery, Jim Crow segregation, the sharecropping and tenant-farmer system, the convict slave-labor system (See Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor Books, 2008)), thousands of lynchings, KKK terror, and other historical practices prevented the accumulation of wealth and property by most African American families and the legacy of those systems of oppression still affects many families, recent studies show that ongoing mass disparities between whites and blacks in the US can be directly attributed to current racist policies and practices:

One study showed that African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans have more than a one-in-three chance of suffering discrimination in any given job search, concluding that roughly 600,000 blacks, 275,000 Latinos, and 150,000 Asian Americans face job discrimination each year (Wise, 88).

In studies of service-industry employment, research showed that even when researchers sent African-American testers who were more qualified; white applicants were more likely to get an interview (Ibid., 90-91).

A Princeton study using black, white, and Latino test applicants who were trained to have the same communication styles, physical characteristics, and demeanor found that white applicants were far more likely than applicants of color to be called back. It also found that even white men claiming a felony record were slightly more likely to be called back than black applicants with no criminal record (Ibid., 88-89); and

WHEREAS, the deliberate de-industrialization of the US in the 1970s and '80s led to massive job losses among people of color, who had only gained access on a large scale to good-paying blue-color jobs. This is directly linked to the re-impoveryment of a large proportion of African-American households, to urban decay (as incomes and tax revenues plummeted) and the dramatic rise in the jail and prison population (starting around 1980). People of color (especially African American and Hispanic men) became an unneeded surplus labor force and mass incarceration became one of the primary solutions to that problem; and

WHEREAS, widespread discrimination against people of color continues in the US in housing, education, health care, and the policing and criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, we need a vision of a beloved community, founded on social and economic justice and motivated by self-giving love. This vision includes removing the power of police oversight and discipline from the police themselves; substantially reducing sentences for minor crimes and dramatically reducing the prison population; eliminating the “prisons for profit” system; providing genuinely equal education opportunities for all; creating an economic system that provides for an equitable distribution of wealth, with much larger programs to assist developing nations; reinstating and strengthening voting-rights protections; and strengthening investigation and enforcement against discrimination in employment, housing, education, and healthcare; and

WHEREAS, racial injustice and inequality still constitute the cornerstone of US economic and social policy and practice; and

WHEREAS, intense and ongoing systemic and institutional racism is still the greatest barrier in the US to building beloved community;

Therefore, be it resolved, that The United Methodist Church advocates, encourages, and will support a new multiracial, mass movement for racial and economic justice in the US; and

Be it further resolved, that every annual conference in the US support anti-racism training for every active clergy member and for all members of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and district committees on ordained ministry, and that this training be offered as well to other key leaders among laity in each conference. We note that anti-racism training must address white privilege and focus on intentional struggle and advocacy against racism in our churches and in society at large. So-called “diversity training” or “sensitivity training” is insufficient; and

Be it further resolved, that every annual conference, district, and local church should be engaged, intentionally, in being an anti-racist church, not merely on paper, but in action. Church bodies at every level should seek to educate themselves on the extent of racism in business, education, government, housing, and healthcare and find ways to advocate for the elimination of specific instances locally and nationally.

A Charter for Racial Justice Policies The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church -- 2016

A Charter for Racial Justice Policies in an Interdependent Global Community

Racism is a system of inequality based on race prejudice and the belief that one race is innately superior to all other races. In the United States, systemic race-based prejudice and misuse of power have justified the conquest, enslavement, and evangelizing of non-Europeans. During the early history of this country, Europeans used legal documents such as the Christian Doctrine of Discovery of 1823 to justify the notion that their civilization and religion were innately superior to those of both the original inhabitants of the United States and the Africans who were forcibly brought to these shores as slaves. The concepts of race and racism were created explicitly to ensure the subjugation of peoples the Europeans believed to be inferior. The myth of European superiority persisted—and persists—in every institution in American life. Other people who came, and those who are still coming to the United States—either by choice or by force—encountered and continue to encounter racism. Some of these people are the Chinese who built the country's railroads as indentured workers; the Mexicans whose lands were annexed; the Puerto Ricans, the Cubans, the Hawaiians, and the Eskimos who were colonized; and the Filipinos, the Jamaicans, and the Haitians who lived on starvation wages as farm workers.

In principle, the United States has outlawed racial discrimination; but in practice, little has changed. Social, economic, and political institutions still discriminate, although some institutions have amended their behavior by eliminating obvious discriminatory practices and choosing their language carefully. Adding to this reality, the success of some prominent people of color has contributed to the erroneous but widespread belief that America is in many ways a “post-racial” society where race is seldom a factor in the opportunities and outcomes in people's lives. The institutional church, despite sporadic attempts to the contrary, also still discriminates on the basis of race.

The damage from years of systemic race-based exploitation has not been erased and by all measurable indicators, a color-blind society is many years in the future. A system designed to meet the needs of one segment of the population cannot be the means to the development of a just society for all. The racist system in the United States today perpetuates the power and control of those who are of European ancestry. It is often called “white supremacy.” The fruits of racism are prejudice, bigotry, discrimination, and dehumanization. Consistently, African Americans, Hispanics, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders have been humiliated by being given jobs, housing, education, medical services, transportation, and public accommodations that are all inferior. With hopes deferred and rights still denied, the deprived and oppressed fall prey to a colonial mentality that can acquiesce to the inequities.

Racist presuppositions have been implicit in US attitudes and policies toward Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. And the fact that racism is not explicitly expressed in these policies leads many to believe that race-based prejudice in public policy is a thing of the past. While proclaiming democracy, freedom, and independence, the United States, however, has been an ally and an accomplice to perpetuating racial inequality and colonialism throughout the world. The history of The United Methodist Church and the history of the United States are

intertwined. The “mission enterprise” of the churches in the United States went hand in hand with “Westernization,” thus sustaining a belief in and the institutionalization of this nation’s superiority. Through policies that were hyper expansionist and inherently racist, such as Manifest Destiny.

We are conscious that “we have sinned as our ancestors did; we have been wicked and evil” (Psalm 106:6 GNT). We call for a renewed commitment to the elimination of institutional racism. We affirm the 1976 General Conference Statement on The United Methodist Church and Race that states unequivocally: “By biblical and theological precept, by the law of the church, by General Conference pronouncement, and by Episcopal expression, the matter is clear. With respect to race, the aim of The United Methodist Church is nothing less than an inclusive church in an inclusive society. The United Methodist Church, therefore, calls upon all its people to perform those faithful deeds of love and justice in both the church and community that will bring this aim into reality.”

Because we believe:

1. That God is the Creator of all people and all are God’s children in one family;
2. That racism is a rejection of the teachings of Jesus Christ;
3. That racism denies the redemption and reconciliation of Jesus Christ;
4. That racism robs all human beings of their wholeness and is used as a justification for social, economic, environmental, and political exploitation;
5. That we must declare before God and before one another that we have sinned against our sisters and brothers of other races in thought, in word, and in deed;
6. That in our common humanity in creation all women and men are made in God’s image and all persons are equally valuable in the sight of God;
7. That our strength lies in our racial and cultural diversity and that we must work toward a world in which each person’s value is respected and nurtured;
8. That our struggle for justice must be based on new attitudes, new understandings, and new relationships and must be reflected in the laws, policies, structures, and practices of both church and state.

We commit ourselves as individuals and as a community to follow Jesus Christ in word and in deed and to struggle for the rights and the self-determination of every person and group of persons.

Therefore, as United Methodists in every place across the land, we will unite our efforts within the Church to take the following actions:

1. Eliminate all forms of institutional racism in the total ministry of the Church, giving special attention to those institutions that we support, beginning with their employment policies, purchasing practices, environmental policies, and availability of services and facilities;
2. Create opportunities in local churches to deal honestly with the existing racist attitudes and social distance between members, deepening the Christian commitment to be the church where all racial groups and economic classes come together;

3. Increase efforts to recruit people of all races into the membership of The United Methodist Church and provide leadership-development opportunities without discrimination;
4. Establish workshops and seminars in local churches to study, understand, and appreciate the historical and cultural contributions of each race to the church and community;
5. Raise local churches' awareness of the continuing needs for equal education, housing, employment, medical care, and environmental justice for all members of the community and to create opportunities to work for these things across racial lines;
6. Work for the development and implementation of national and international policies to protect the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of all people such as through support for the ratification of United Nations covenants on human rights;
7. Support and participate in the worldwide struggle for liberation in church and community;
8. Facilitate nomination and election processes that include all racial groups by employing a system that prioritizes leadership opportunities of people from communities that are disproportionately impacted by the ongoing legacy of racial injustice. Use measures to align our vision for racial justice with actions that accelerate racial equity.

ADOPTED 1980

READOPTED 2000, 2008, 2016

RESOLUTION #3371, 2008, 2012 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #161, 2004 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #148, 2000 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS

See Social Principles, ¶ 162A.

Stop Criminalizing Communities of Color in the United States

2016 Book of Resolutions

In the United States, policing policies, immigration law enforcement, and exponentially growing incarceration rates all disproportionately impact persons of color and harm families and communities. The United Methodist Church must work to dismantle policies that assume whole groups of people are criminals and encourage public acceptance of the injustices of racial profiling (2008 Book of Resolutions, #3378), mass incarceration, and disenfranchisement of entire communities demonized as a threatening “other.”

Economic Crisis and Demonization of Communities

Globally and within nations, including the United States, there is a widening gap between rich and poor (2012 Book of Resolutions, #4052 and #6028). To maintain order amid this wealth and resource inequality, governments increasingly enact policies that divide workers and exploit migrant labor, as did Pharaoh in the biblical story of the Exodus. The Book of Exodus opens with Pharaoh looking over the land of Egypt and seeing a people growing in strength and number; he becomes fearful.

“He said to his people, ‘Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land’” (Exodus 1:9-10 NRSV).

Pharaoh did not fear other peoples or migrant labor but rather, he feared that a mixed multitude of Israelites, impoverished Egyptians, and “enemies” would unite (Exodus 12:38) and rise up to free themselves from exploitation. As in Pharaoh’s day, today’s governments use fear-based policies to divide and to control populations that might otherwise challenge the growing concentration of wealth and resources in the hands of a few.

Today, invoking the crises language of national security—“the war on drugs,” “the war on illegal immigration,” “the war on terror”—the US government, like Pharaoh, has targeted poor, racial, ethnic, migrant, and other marginalized communities of color for selective enforcement of statutes, and thus criminalized entire communities.

Waging “War” on Communities of Color

The 40-year-old “war on drugs” has had a devastating impact on communities of color in the United States. In 2012, 23.9 million Americans, ages twelve and over, and of all races and socioeconomic levels had used an illicit drug or abused a medication, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2015). But the “war on drugs” has not been waged across all races and socioeconomic levels; it has been waged through systemic selective law enforcement targeting African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans (2012 Book of Resolutions #3042, #3376, and #5033) in settings that vary from traffic stops, SWAT-type raids on homes and grocery stores, and stop- and-searches of people going about their daily tasks.

Policies like New York City’s “stop and frisk” and “broken windows” policing have empowered officers to detain and search pedestrians without probable cause and make arrests for minor infractions. In 2013, 88 percent of the nearly 200,000 persons “stopped and frisked” by the

New York Police Department were innocent civilians; 85 percent of those stopped were Black and Latino, and 11 percent were White (New York Civil Liberties Union, 2015). These policies subject hundreds of thousands of innocent people of color to routine abuse, public humiliation, injury, and even unprosecuted deaths for some (Harris-Perry, 2014).

Similarly, children of color are punished more severely and more frequently than their white classmates (US Department of Education, 2014), making school suspensions and expulsions “stops” on the “school-to-prison pipeline”—pushing children out of school and onto troubled streets and then off to prison.

Such over-policing erodes community trust in law enforcement and sends a clear message to police that not all Americans are equal under law, as people in targeted communities do not have the same constitutional protections other Americans enjoy (Alexander, 2010).

Targeting Migrants

This criminalization of entire communities is being expanded today in the name of a so-called “war on ‘illegal’ immigration” and “war on terror.” As with the “war on drugs,” citizens and migrants alike in “immigrant” communities are subjected to racial profiling and suspension of basic rights. Migrants are being arrested and held in prisons in a growing network of “detention centers,” many private for-profit institutions.

Roundups targeting specific communities of color, such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids or drift-net arrests (this refers to police sweeps within a specific community and arrests without probable cause designed to catch potential criminals) sweep up large numbers of people without probable cause often for nonviolent offenses. In the process, more than 5,000 migrant parents have permanently lost custody of their children as detention court and family court policies collide (Race Forward). When migrants who have been deported seek to reunite with their families, they face felony charges for reentering the United States. More than 25,000 migrants with these and other nonviolent convictions are detained in thirteen private prisons under the “Criminal Alien Requirement” program, costing tax-payers billions of dollars every year.

Mass Incarceration

The criminalization of communities of color includes mass incarceration. The “war on drugs” has played a critical role in the escalation of US incarceration rates. From 1970 to 2009 the US prison population grew more than 700 percent (American Civil Liberties Union, 2015) so that today, with only 5 percent of the world’s population, the United States incarcerates 25 percent of all prisoners in the world. This makes the US the world’s largest jailer. More than 60 percent of the people incarcerated in US prisons are people of color. Nearly half of federal prisoners (48 percent) are incarcerated for drug offenses (Federal Bureau of Prisons, 2015). Nearly half of state prisoners (47 percent) were convicted of nonviolent drug, property, or public order crimes (The Sentencing Project, 2015).

Migrant communities also find themselves in the tight grip of mass incarceration promoted by a growing prison industry, which includes the multi-billion-dollar business of detention and deportation. In 2010, private companies in the United States operated more than 250 correctional facilities, housing almost 99,000 prisoners. These companies regularly lobby Congress for more detention and mandatory sentences as they profit from increased incarceration and extended sentences, even if this is not the most effective use of taxpayer dollars (Detention Watch Network, 2011). US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detains an average of 34,000 immigrants each day, three times the number detained in 1996. In

2012, about 400,000 immigrants were detained, costing taxpayers \$1.7 billion at an average of \$122 a day per bed (Carswell, Sarah; Grassroots Leadership; Detention Watch Network, 2015). As of 2015, a congressionally mandated bed quota obliged ICE to incarcerate 34,000 immigrants in detention at any given time or pay private companies in any case (Detention Watch Network, 2015).

Both citizen prisoners and migrant detainees are frequently held in facilities far away from their families and legal counsel, placing tremendous hardship on loved ones and their ability to legally fight for their freedom.

Impact on Women and Children

Women of color—citizen and migrant—are at the crux of the mass incarceration of people of color. African American and Latina women make up the fastest-growing population in US prisons and jails (The Rebecca Project for Human Rights). Nearly 25 percent of women in state prisons are there for nonviolent drug-related offenses (Carson, 2015). Fifty-six percent of female prisoners are mothers (Glaze & Maruschak, 2015).

Women in prison and detention face sexual harassment and sexual abuse, as they struggle to keep families together. Women who face abuse in prison and detention fear speaking out and cannot flee. Both imprisoned and detained women have been chained and shackled during childbirth. Most incarcerated women were first survivors of sexual and physical abuse.

Ending the Torture of Solitary Confinement

Once incarcerated, the conditions of confinement for many people of color continue to follow a pattern of bias, as exemplified by the use of solitary confinement in jails, prisons, and immigrant detention centers. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, on any given day, roughly 80,000 incarcerated adults and youth are held in solitary confinement in the United States. A disproportionate number of them are people of color (Schlanger, 2013). Pro-longed solitary confinement in US prisons constitutes torture and violates the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT).

Solitary confinement also impacts immigrants confined in civil detention. Women are placed in solitary confinement in retaliation for reporting incidents of rape.

Ongoing Punishment After Incarceration

The impact of the criminalization of communities of color does not end after incarceration. Rather, upon their release from prison, people with a felony conviction begin a lifelong sentence of second-class citizenship, stripped of their right to vote, facing legal discrimination in employment and housing, and banned from accessing government services such as tuition assistance, food stamps, housing, and more. Such experiences are described in Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.

The United Methodist Church's Response

The United Methodist Church affirms the inalienable human rights of all persons. The Charter for Racial Justice calls us to challenge institutional racism. Also, The United Methodist Church's Social Principles (§164H) calls United Methodists to practice restorative justice, seeking alternatives to retribution and restoration of right relationships among all God's people. So, The United Methodist Church calls on local and national governments to:

- Stop the criminalization of communities of color and the cacophony of “wars” being waged against these communities.
- Make the enforcement and protection of international human rights law central to criminal justice and immigration policy.
- End racial/ethnic/religious profiling by law enforcement officers and end “zero tolerance” policies in schools.
- Suspend ICE raids, end family detention and ALL incarceration of children in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Keep families together.
- End local police involvement in immigration enforcement (2012 Book of Resolutions, #3281).
- End mandatory sentencing laws and mandatory detention policies, and affirm judicial discretion in sentencing and deportation rulings.
- Restore the full citizenship rights, including the vote, to US citizens with felony convictions; remove barriers to their employment and ability to secure housing and supportive services. Provide education and job creation so they can rejoin society.
- Repeal employer sanctions and other measures that criminalize undocumented migrants seeking work. The United Methodist Task Force on Immigration, representing the Council of Bishops, agencies, and racial/ethnic caucuses should work to:
- Affirm the humanity and inherent dignity of all who are under correctional control and examine links between criminal justice and immigrant enforcement policies as they impact communities of color.
- Challenge the criminalization of migrants in the United States and globally by engaging annual and central conferences in advocacy. Build alliances with ecumenical and secular groups. General Board of Church and Society, General Commission on Religion and Race, the General Board of Global Ministries, and United Methodist Women should:
- Develop local church resources on this issue with US and international groups.
- Work with central conferences to deepen research, analysis, and action on global migration policies.
- Mobilize congregations to challenge private prisons and detention centers, and to advocate the release of prisoners held for nonviolent offenses. Annual conferences and local congregations should:
- Challenge police engagement in immigration enforcement.
- Call United Methodists to discernment on these issues through use of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, as well as the frameworks of human rights, racial justice, and restorative justice. Use a critical lens regarding mass media. (See Resolution #8016, “Proper Use of Information Communication Technologies.”)
- Engage with churches and local communities in speaking out publicly for police accountability regarding racial profiling, misconduct, abuse, and killings.
- Work to end the use of solitary confinement.
- Provide reentry ministries for people released from prison.

ADOPTED 2016

See Social Principles, ¶ 162A.

White Privilege in the United States

2016 Book of Resolutions

European Americans enjoy a broad range of privileges denied to persons of color in our society, privileges that often permit them to dominate others who do not enjoy such privileges. While there are many issues that reflect the racism in US society, there are some cases where racism is the issue, such as affirmative action, housing, job discrimination, hate crimes, and criminal justice. In addition, there are many broader social issues where racism is one factor in the equation, albeit often the major one.

Poverty is a serious problem in the US, but a far greater percentage of people of color are poorer than white persons. Police brutality is also more prevalent in communities of color. Schools in predominantly white communities receive a far higher proportion of education dollars than those in predominantly non-white communities, leading to larger class size, fewer resources, and inferior facilities.

While welfare affects the entire society, it hits predominantly non-white communities hardest. Many in Congress support tax credits for families to enable middle-class parents to stay home with their children, welfare “reform” forces poor, single parents to take low-paying jobs and leave their children to inadequate or nonexistent day care. Because more and better job opportunities are open to white persons, they are leaving the welfare rolls faster than non-white persons, making non-white persons a disproportionate segment of the welfare population.

While people of color make up about 30 percent of the United States’ population, they account for 60 percent of those imprisoned. The prison population grew by 700 percent from 1970 to 2005, a rate that is outpacing crime and population rates. The incarceration rates disproportionately impact men of color: 1 in every 15 African American men and 1 in every 36 Hispanic men are incarcerated in comparison to 1 in every 106 white men. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, one in three black men can expect to go to prison in their lifetime. Individuals of color have a disproportionate number of encounters with law enforcement, indicating that racial profiling continues to be a problem. A report by the US Department of Justice found that Blacks and Hispanics were approximately three times more likely to be searched during a traffic stop than white motorists. African Americans were twice as likely to be arrested and almost four times as likely to experience the use of force during encounters with the police (American Prospect, March 17, 2012, *The 10 Most Disturbing Facts About Racial Inequality in the U.S. Criminal Justice System*).

If only one of these areas impacted communities of color disproportionately, an explanation might be found in some sociological factor other than race. But where race is a common thread running through virtually every inequality in our society, we are left with only one conclusion: White, European Americans enjoy a wide range of privileges that are denied to persons of color in our society. These privileges enable white persons to escape the injustices and inconveniences which are the daily experience of racial ethnic persons. Those who are White assume that they can purchase a home wherever they choose if they have the money; that they can expect courteous service in stores and restaurants; that if they are pulled over by a police car it will be for a valid reason unrelated to their skin color. Persons of color cannot make these assumptions.

We suggest that the church focus not only on the plight of people living in urban or rural ghettos, but also on white privilege and its impact on white persons. For example, churches in white or predominantly white communities need to ask why there are no persons of color in

their community, why the prison population in their state is disproportionately Black and Hispanic persons, why there are so few Black and Hispanic persons in high-paying jobs and prestigious universities, why schools in white communities receive more than their fair share of education dollars, and why white persons receive preferential treatment from white police officers.

We ask the General Conference to recognize white privilege as an underlying cause of injustice in our society including our church and to commit the church to its elimination in church and society.

The rights and privileges a society bestows upon or withholds from those who comprise it indicate the relative esteem in which that society holds particular persons and groups of persons.

We ask each local church with a predominantly white membership: 1) to reflect on its own willingness to welcome persons without regard to race and to assess the relative accessibility in housing, employment, education and recreation in its community to white persons and to persons of color; and 2) to welcome persons of color into membership and full participation in the church and community and to advocate for their access to the benefits which white persons take for granted.

We challenge individual white persons to confess their participation in the sin of racism and repent for past and current racist practices. And we challenge individual ethnic persons to appropriate acts of forgiveness.

Finally, we call all persons, whatever their racial or ethnic heritage, to work together to restore the broken body of Christ.

ADOPTED 2000
AMENDED AND READOPTED 2008, 2016
RESOLUTION #3376, 2012 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS
RESOLUTION #3379, 2008 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS
RESOLUTION #170, 2004 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS
RESOLUTION #166, 2000 BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS

*See*Social Principles, ¶ 162A.