



Our 2011 Legislative Priorities

Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church



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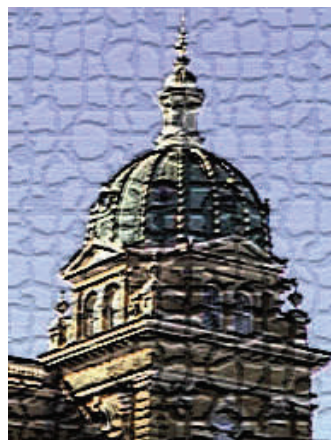
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Following Our Wesleyan Tradition

At the urging of two United Methodist legislators — Beje Clark and Sue Mullins — some years ago at our Iowa Annual Conference, it was determined our collective voice should be heard loud and clear at the Capitol, in the marketplace and around the state in our local churches. Hence, the Legislative Advocacy Program was born. Since that time the positions of The United Methodist Church have been heard on the many issues that come before us in the course of our daily lives.

Guided by our *General Conference Book of Discipline*, *General Conference Book of Resolutions*, United Methodist Social Principles and our Iowa Conference Book of Resolutions, the Church speaks its heart and mind based on our mutual understanding of what it means to be a disciple. As our common United Methodist doctrinal heritage notes, “[b]y joining heart and hand, we assert that personal religion, evangelical witness, and Christian social action are reciprocal and mutually reinforcing. Scriptural holiness entails more than personal piety; love of God is always linked with love of neighbor, a passion for justice and renewal in the life of the world” (2008 *General Conference Book of Discipline*, p. 47, ¶101. Section 1 — Our Doctrinal Heritage).

In addition to communicating the positions of The United Methodist Church to the Iowa General Assembly and to the U.S. Congress (Iowa delegation), the Social Justice & Mission Ministry works to inform Iowa United Methodists about current happenings in the state legislature and what citizens can do to make a difference. We truly are active participants in the search for justice of all of God’s people.

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...What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:6-8, RSV)



Listed here are four priority issues for the IAUMC. What's the reasoning for our beliefs? Check out our denominational doctrine, described in [Following our Wesleyan Tradition](#).

Environmental Justice

We support and encourage social policies that serve to reduce and control the creation of industrial byproducts and waste; encourage the reduction of municipal waste; provide for appropriate recycling and disposal of municipal waste; and assist the cleanup of polluted air, water and soil.

We advocate for the conservation of energy and responsible development of all energy resources, with special concern for the development of renewable energy resources, that the goodness of the earth may be affirmed.

We support strenuous efforts to conserve energy and increase energy efficiency. We include under conservation: insulation, co-generation, recycling, public transportation, more efficient motors in appliances and automobiles, as well as the elimination of waste, and a more simplified lifestyle.

We support national energy programs that will not increase the financial burden on the poor, the elderly, and those with fixed incomes. Furthermore, energy policies must guarantee universal service to all consumers, protecting

low-income and rural residents.

Information from The [United Methodist] Book of Resolutions 2008, Resolutions 1001, 1023, 1026, and the Social Principles, ¶160.1.

Restorative Justice

We urge the creation of a genuinely new system for the care and restoration of victims, offenders, criminal justice officials, and the community as a whole.

We support the consideration of victim-offender mediation, family group conferencing, and various other restorative justice techniques as an alternative to the criminal courts.

We support the elimination of all status offenses from the juvenile codes and from the processes for determining juvenile delinquency. We urge that all offenses by children and youth be handled with extreme reluctance to incarcerate the offender. We especially oppose solitary confinement of children and youths in official detention.

Information from The [United Methodist] Book of Resolutions 2008, Resolutions 5031, 5033, 5034, and the Social Principles, ¶164B and H.

Immigration

We support legislation that will uphold the civil and human rights of all migrants in the United States and will provide an opportunity to attain legal status for all undocumented migrants currently living in the U.S., as well as those arriving in

the future.

We advocate for state support of expanded ESL or ESOL classes.

We call upon the U.S. government to immediately cease all arrests, detainment and deportations of undocumented immigrants, including children, solely based upon their immigration status, until just and humane immigration reform is passed.

We support an increase in the number of visas for short-term workers to come into the United States to work in a safe, legal, and orderly way.

We support the elimination of privately-operated detention centers, which are not regulated by state and federal government.

Taken from The [United Methodist] Book of Resolutions 2008, Resolution #3281.

Poverty and Economic Justice

We support funding for welfare, at a minimum, indexed to the rate of inflation.

We advocate that states should provide means by which employment programs can be evaluated at the local level for effectiveness and fairness and allow welfare recipients to retain a substantial portion of wage earnings and assets before losing cash, housing, health, child care, food assistance or other benefits.

We oppose the growing legalization and promotion of gambling. Dependence on gambling revenue has led many governments to exploit the weakness

of their own citizens, neglect the development of more equitable forms of taxation, and thereby further erode citizen confidence in government.

We deplore the establishment of lotteries and their use as a means of raising public revenues.

We oppose the increasing development of the casino enterprise, which has taken captive entire communities and corrupted many levels of government with its fiscal and political power.

We support the strong enforcement of anti-gambling laws and the repeal of all laws that give gambling an acceptable and even advantageous place in our society.

We support progressive income taxes and oppose tax reduction measures that would increase the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few.

Taken from The [United Methodist] Book of Resolutions 2008, Resolutions 3261, 4041, 4056 and 4091.

For more information about our 2011 Legislative Priorities, please visit the "Advocacy" page (in "Ministries") at www.iaumc.org.