

Week 5: Methodism 101

February 22, 2022

United Methodist Agencies and Social Principles

### United Methodist Agencies

-Agencies provide resources and services that equip local congregations and provide a connection for ministry throughout the world. These agencies are councils, boards, commissions, committees, divisions, or other units.

-Found at all levels of the connection: churchwide, regional, local.

-Established by the general conference.

-Important for providing a common vision, mission, and ministry for the entire global church.

-Each agency is governed by a board of directors, lay and clergy, that are elected by jurisdictions and central conferences. Bishops also share in the oversight on these boards.

### List of Agencies

- 1.) The General Commission on Archives and History: serves the church through the ministry of memory, allowing United Methodists to learn from their past and anticipate our future.
- 2.) The General Board of Church and Society: headquartered in the only non-governmental building on Capitol Hill in Washington DC. GBCS leads and challenges United Methodists to pray, study, and work in areas of social concern. Its resources inform, motivate, and train United Methodists on issues of social justice in society.
- 3.) United Methodist Communications (UMCOM): UMCOM provides leadership for the denomination in communication, public relations, and promotion of the general funds and worldwide programs of the denomination. UCOM also produces resources and communications-related services and training to support the ministries of local churches and annual conferences.
- 4.) Discipleship Ministries: Connects laity and clergy around the world with contextually appropriate resourcing and materials, training, consulting and networking to support spiritual formation, new church development and revitalization of local churches.
- 5.) General Council of Finance and Administration: Ministry includes protecting the legal interests of the denomination. They collect and analyze statistics, serve as the Trustees of the financial assets given to the denomination and maintains an insurance program available to all UMC congregations in the US.
- 6.) General Board of Global Ministries: Connects the church in mission. Sends and supports over 300 short and long term missionaries, collaborates and engages with volunteers, participates in evangelizing and church planting through mission initiatives. Addresses diseases of poverty and global health

and responds to natural and civil disasters. UMCOR is part of global ministries.

- 7.) The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry: embraces the ministry of learning and leadership formatting in The UMC. Oversees clergy training and candidacy programs. Supports a global network of more than 1000 Methodist related schools, colleges, and universities.
- 8.) General Commission on Religion and Race: Challenges and equips the people of the UMC to be an intentionally diverse body of Christ. Offers tools to guide conversations about racial justice, racism, and religion. Leads in systematic transformation, monitors for racial equality, encourages cross-racial/cross-cultural ministry and serves a fair-process advocated in matters of racial discrimination.
- 9.) General Commission on the Status and Role of Women: Advocates for full participation of women in the total life of the United Methodist Church.
- 10.) United Methodist Men: involves men in a growing relationship to Jesus Christ and his church and provides resources and support for the programs of evangelism, stewardship, and the needs of men.
- 11.) United Methodist Publishing House: Oldest and largest of the denomination's general agencies, started in the late 1700s. Distributes official publications, records, and forms of the denomination. Publishes books through Abingdon Press and operates Cokesbury.
- 12.) United Methodist Women: fosters spiritual growth and develops leaders. Seeks to improve the lives of women, children, and youth. UMW advocates for peace and justice, economic inequality, education, the rights of children, human rights and farm workers rights.
- 13.) Wespath: Formerly the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Administers pension plants that help secure the retirement futures of clergy and lay workers. Oversees healthflex insurance plan.

## Social Principles

-Methodists have a long history of concern for social justice.

-Since 1972, The General Conference of the UMC has revised the Social Principles at each General Conference.

-The Social Principles, while not to be considered church law, are a prayerful and thoughtful effort to speak to the human issues in the contemporary world from a sound biblical and theological foundation as historically demonstrated in the United Methodist traditions.

What do we have social principles about?

- 1.) The Natural World
  - a.) Water, air, soil, minerals, plants
  - b.) Energy resource utilization

- c.) Animal life
  - d.) Global climate stewardship
  - e.) Space
  - f.) Science and technology
  - g.) Food safety
  - h.) Food justice
- 2.) The nurturing community
- a.) Culture and identity
  - b.) The family
  - c.) Marriage
  - d.) Divorce
  - e.) Single persons
  - f.) Women and men
  - g.) Human sexuality
  - h.) Family violence and abuse
  - i.) Sexual harassment
  - j.) Abortion
  - k.) Ministry with those who have experienced an abortion
  - l.) Adoption
  - m.) Faithful care for dying persons
  - n.) Suicide
  - o.) Sexual assault
  - p.) Pornography
  - q.) Bullying
- 3.) The social community
- a.) Rights of racial and ethnic persons
  - b.) Rights of religious minorities
  - c.) Rights of children
  - d.) Rights of young people
  - e.) Rights of the aging
  - f.) Rights of women
  - g.) Rights of men
  - h.) Rights of immigrants
  - i.) Rights of persons with disabilities
  - j.) Equal rights regardless of sexual orientation
  - k.) Population
  - l.) Alcohol and other drugs
  - m.) Tobacco
  - n.) Medical experimentation
  - o.) Genetic technology
  - p.) Rural life
  - q.) Sustainable agriculture

- r.) Urban-suburban life
  - s.) Media violence and christian values
  - t.) Information communication technology
  - u.) Persons living with HIV and Aids
  - v.) Right to health care
  - w.) Organ transplantation and donation
  - x.) Mental health
- 4.) The Economic Community
- a.) Prosperity
  - b.) Collective bargaining
  - c.) Work and leisure
  - d.) Consumption
  - e.) Poverty
  - f.) Foreign workers
  - g.) Gambling
  - h.) Family farms
  - i.) Corporate responsibility
  - j.) Finance
  - k.) Trade and investment
  - l.) Graft and corruption
  - m.) Public indebtedness
- 5.) The political Community
- a.) Basic freedom and human rights
  - b.) Political responsibility
  - c.) Church and state relations
  - d.) Freedom of information
  - e.) Education
  - f.) Civil disobedience and obedience
  - g.) The death penalty
  - h.) Criminal and restorative justice
  - i.) Military services
- 6.) The world Community
- a.) Nations and cultures
  - b.) National power and responsibility
  - c.) War and peace
  - d.) Justice and law