

Charter for Racial Justice

United Women in Faith first adopted the “Charter of Racial Policies” in 1952. We worked on ratification at multiple levels of the organization and readopted an updated version in 1962. Throughout the years, we lobbied The United Methodist Church to officially adopt the Charter, seeking to bring its commitments to the full body of the church. The Charter was first received by the General Conference in 1964 and first included in *The Book of Resolutions* in 1980. Since then, it has been updated and readopted regularly by delegates to General Conference. From the 1950s to the present, the Charter has been a core part of our identity.

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.



Evolution of the Charter:**1978:**

The Charter for Racial Justice was created and adopted by the Woman's Division of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

1980:

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church adopted the Charter, making it a denomination-wide commitment.

Ongoing:

The Charter has been a guiding document for UMW/United Women in Faith and the church in their efforts to dismantle racism and promote racial equity, including efforts to address systemic inequities in areas like education, housing, and employment.

Key Principles and Actions:**Acknowledging Racism:**

The Charter recognizes racism as a rejection of Christian values and a form of oppression.

Promoting Inclusion:

It calls for increasing efforts to include people of all races in church membership and leadership roles.

Addressing Systemic Issues:

The Charter encourages local churches to raise awareness of the ongoing need for equal opportunities in various areas, such as education, housing, and employment.

Advocating for Justice:

It supports the development and implementation of national and international policies to protect human rights.

Encouraging Dialogue and Education:

The Charter promotes the establishment of workshops and seminars to study and understand the historical and cultural contributions of different racial groups.

Continuing Relevance:

The Charter for Racial Justice remains a vital resource for the United Methodist Church and United Women in Faith in their ongoing work to address racial injustice and promote a more just and equitable world. The United Women in Faith have repeatedly submitted the Charter for readoption at General Conferences, ensuring its continued relevance and application.