



Justice-seeking.
People of faith.



Plumbline: Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice

Methodist Federation for Social Action

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“I am setting a plumbline in the midst of my people...” - Amos 7:8

Definitions:

Reproductive health: addresses the reproductive processes, functions and system at all stages of life with the assumption that people should be able to have a responsible, satisfying and safe sex life. It includes attention to the issues of family planning, STD prevention and management and prevention of maternal and perinatal mortality and morbidity, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, reproductive tract infections including sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, infertility, malnutrition and anemia, and reproductive tract cancers.

Reproductive rights: mean that persons have the right to make personal decisions relating to their reproductive and sexual health including if, when, and under what circumstances to have children as well as the right to raise them in healthy, safe, and supportive environments. This includes the right to appropriate services including safe and legal abortion, access to contraception, adoption, alternative methods of pregnancy, comprehensive, age-appropriate, medically-accurate and culturally-competent sexuality and parenting education, counseling, care and rehabilitation.

Reproductive justice: the complete physical, mental, spiritual, political, economic, and social well-being of women and girls, and will be achieved when women and girls have the economic, social, and political power and resources to make healthy decisions about their bodies, sexuality, and reproduction for themselves, their families, and their communities in all areas of their lives. **The work of reproductive justice is derived from the lived experiences of women of color and women living in poverty.**

Resources:

[Gutmacher Institute](#)

[Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice](#)

[Religious Institute](#)

[Time to Embrace: Why Sexual and Reproductive Justice Movements Need Religion](#)

Values at Stake

MFSA affirms the sacredness of all creation, including the sanctity of human life, and believes that when and whether to bear a child is a woman’s private decision, and claims the right for women and men, regardless of economic condition, to have full access to adequately funded family planning services and to the option of a safe and legal abortion. (From MFSA’s [Statement on Reproductive Rights](#))

MFSA recognizes conversations about reproductive health, rights, and justice tend to focus on the hot button issue of abortion.

Such focus creates a false rhetoric. Reproductive health, choice, and justice are about sexuality education, access to reproductive health care and appropriate contraception, as well as access to safe, legal, and accessible reproductive health services, including abortion care. Denial of such services unfairly harms those who are poor, LGBTQI, immigrants, and people of color.

In calling on General Conference to consider the impact of proposed legislation, we view reproductive health, choice, and justice from the lens of intersectionality. The

global impact of allowing women to make healthy choices with their own agency about their own bodies and encouragement of responsible parenthood uplifts communities around the world.

We remind delegates that “The United Methodist Church supports the right for men and women worldwide to have the ability to choose when, or if, to have children. Affirming the right of women to access comprehensive health care services, including reproductive health, has always been a cornerstone of the UMC” ([GBCS website](#)).

Key Legislation: DO NOT SUPPORT

CB 606098, 60743, 60744, 60745, 60746, 60747, 60908 : Abortion

CB 60748, 60749, 60750, 60751, 60752 : Responsible Parenthood

CB 60704 : Religious Adoption Agencies

CB 60225: Embryonic Stem Cell Research Bioethics

CB 60837, 60838 : Relationship to Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice

FA 60760 : Investment Ethics

GA 60740 : Non-UM Coalitions

Key Legislation: SUPPORT

CB 60249: Responsible Parenthood

CB 60681 : Ministry to Those Who Have Had an Abortion

CB 60885 : Religious Adoption Agencies

CB 60256 : The Status of Women

CB 60402 : Repentance of Eugenics

CB 60252 : US Religious Hospital Mergers

CB 60541 : Eradicating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Key Legislation: SUPPORT WITH RESERVATION

CB 60755 : Gender-Selective Abortion

CB 60418 : Ethics of Embryonic Stem Cell Research