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*of Hate in the United States*

*Resolution Number: New*

*Financial Implications: None*

*Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries*

1 Add new resolution to the Book of Resolutions as follows:

2

3 Resisting Hate, Fear and Scapegoating and Transforming the Context of Hate in the

4 United States

5

6 “Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

7 Those who say, “I love God, and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do

8 not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not

9 seen.” I John 4: 8 and 20 NRSV

10

11 WHEREAS in the post 9/11 world, reports of hate crimes of acts such as the following

12 have become part of the daily lives of people both in the United States and around the

13 world:

14 A Muslim Arab-American woman receives a threat from a co-worker “You and your kids

15 will pay” ...”death”

16 A Catholic high school student is punched and kicked on a bus by a group of youth for

17 looking “Chinese”

18 A teenage boy is beaten with a baseball bat because of his perceived sexuality

19 Anti-Semitic graffiti is spray painted on a store selling kosher meat products

20 Four men attack and kill one of twelve undocumented immigrants

21 A cross is burned on the lawn of a house for sale after being viewed by an African

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22 American Family

23

24 These acts encourage social movements that promote bigotry based on race, religion,  
25 gender, sexual orientation and national origin (white supremacists/nativists) to appeal to  
26 racial and other fears.

27

28 If we look only at these acts as the acts of individuals or groups of individuals we will fail  
29 to recognize the wide context of fear and hate that gives rise to these individual acts. That  
30 context has both historical roots and grounding in current economic and political realities.  
31 Demographic change and economic uncertainties contribute to a sense of insecurity and  
32 anxiety about the future leading to old animosities and prejudices being revived and new  
33 ones.

34

35 WHEREAS the centuries old legacy of racism in the United States means that  
36 communities of color are still targeted and used as scapegoats. In the name of a “war on  
37 terror” racial profiling by police and other government agencies is on the rise and local  
38 government strategies are attempting to control immigration by criminalizing immigrants  
39 and refugees by building a wall across the southern border of the United States and  
40 creating laws to restrict immigrant and refugee rights. School officials who ostracize gay  
41 and lesbian students encourage homophobia rather than acceptance of diversity. Media  
42 reports that fail to distinguish differences within religious traditions inadvertently

43 promote religious intolerance by portraying all Muslims as radical Islamists or all Jews as  
44 Christ haters.

45

46 WHEREAS “free speech” is interpreted by media conglomerates as the right to use the  
47 public airways for ‘entertainment’ that denigrates and ridicule women, people of color,  
48 immigrants, lesbians and gays, persons with disabilities etc. and anyone who is ‘different’  
49 from the ‘mainstream’.

50

51 WHEREAS the United Methodist Church has a long tradition of challenging individual  
52 acts of hate as well as hate speech and violence against specific groups and communities.

53 The "Social Principles" affirm that United Methodists “deplore acts of hate or violence  
54 against groups or persons based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious  
55 affiliation, national origin, or economic status (162A). As the Social Principle affirm,  
56 "certain basic human rights and civil liberties are due all persons" (§162H).

57 And following the guidance of the Social Principles, we "commit ourselves to be in  
58 ministry for and with all persons," (§161G).

59

60 Therefore, be it resolved that the United Methodist Church reaffirms its historical  
61 commitment opposing acts of hate, hate speech and violence, in both church and society  
62 and commits itself to redouble its efforts to speak out against hate crimes and work to  
63 transform the context of fear and hate that gives permission to these acts, naming and

64 challenging the culture that perpetuates it;

65

66 Be it further resolved, that the United Methodist Church, with assistance from the

67 appropriate boards, agencies, and local churches, implement the following

68 recommendations:

69

70 Faith and Biblical Resources:

71 Provide biblically based resources for young people and adults that address the historic

72 and systemic roots of hate that lead to hate speech and hate crimes;

73 Create resources to help United Methodists analyze the language of hate among groups

74 that use religious language to justify hatred and bigotry;

75 Work with ecumenical and interfaith groups to create worship resources, and develop

76 community activities to unite religious groups on behalf of justice for all;

77

78 Educational Resources:

79 Develop educational materials to build understanding of the systemic, institutionalized

80 culture of racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of marginalization;

81 Develop materials to explore and challenge expressions of hate, including: personal

82 attitudes, scapegoating individual violence, media distortions, to public policy and

83 collective violence, including state violence;

84 Educate United Methodists about trends of hate in the US and the world and how the

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85 church can prevent and respond to acts of hate,  
86  
87 Action/Organizing/Advocacy:  
88 Encourage United Methodists to report hate incidents to the police, and to organize  
89 support for victims of hate crimes;  
90 Encourage United Methodists to end complicity with hate by speaking out when jokes,  
91 disparagements, and stereotypes violence are based on identity or status;  
92  
93 Annual Conferences - Responding to Hate Crimes:  
94 Annual conferences develop data bases of information of local and state hate groups and  
95 explore the connections between anti-immigrant/refugee groups and white supremacist  
96 organizations in order to develop strategies for response for use by local churches;  
97 Organize letter writing campaigns and denominational and ecumenical delegations to  
98 meet with state government officials to advocate for the passage, funding, and  
99 implementation of strong and comprehensive state hate crimes laws that extend civil  
100 rights protections to all individuals and groups;  
101 Encourage law-enforcement personnel to maintain records on hate crimes and to bring to  
102 justice the perpetrators of such violence and intimidation;  
103  
104 Annual Conferences - Transforming the Culture of Hate:  
105 Strongly encourage local churches, annual conferences, general agencies, campus

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106 ministry units, and any other place where the United Methodist Church has a witness, to  
107 create opportunities to hear from excluded groups about the reality and impact of hate  
108 and to partner with them to act for justice;

109 Be active participants in civic or religious organizations that promote unity and diversity  
110 and work to eradicate acts of hate, as well as working with diverse grassroots and  
111 national organizations;

112 Engage in efforts to enable communities to unearth the truth about past hate violence, to  
113 bring perpetrators (including state actors) to trial, and to heal wounds and seek  
114 reconciliation based on justice and more equitable power relationships. This effort is  
115 based on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and other efforts now  
116 linked through the Center for Transitional Justice;

117 Work through local organizations and local schools to ensure their policies and training  
118 programs adequately address various forms of discrimination and sexual harassment  
119 based on gender and perceived sexual identity;

120 Use United Nations and other resources for adults and children in efforts to build a global  
121 Culture of Peace;

122 Create an Annual Conference taskforce to develop strategies to address actions of the  
123 media that use or condone hate speech, stereotypes or racial profiling.

124

125 The United Methodist Church calls on Annual Conferences to report on their work on  
126 culture of hate and hate crimes at their annual conference meeting; to include hate crimes

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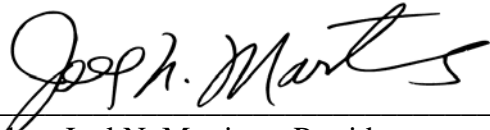
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127 in their conference report to the General Commission on Religion and Race; and to work  
128 with the General Board of Church and Society and the General Board of Global  
129 Ministries, including the Women's Division on this concern.

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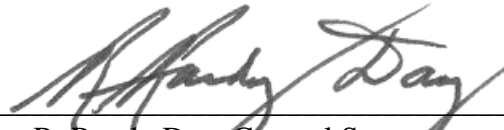
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