



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WISCONSIN CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
ANNOUNCES RESOLUTIONS REGARDING HEALTH CARE REFORM AND  
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

**Sun Prairie, WI, July 19, 2011** – The Wisconsin Conference of The United Methodist Church (UMC) has announced two resolutions of note that passed at its Annual Conference session which took place June 12 – 15, 2011:

1. A Resolution on Health Care in our Social Community, submitted by the Wisconsin Conference UMC Board of Church and Society, states that UMC church members are encouraged to contact their federal and state elected representatives to ensure that health care is:
  - a. Inclusive, and a shared responsibility
  - b. Affordable for individuals, families, and society as a whole
  - c. Accessible, so that all persons have access to health services
  - d. Accountable, so that our health care system offers a quality, equitable and sustainable means of keeping individuals and communities healthy
  
2. A Resolution on Collective Bargaining, submitted by the Wisconsin Conference UMC Board of Church and Society, encourages congregation members of the Annual Conference to use a statement by Bishop Linda Lee quoted to Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker to demonstrate the support of the Church in the right for workers to maintain collective bargaining rights:

*“We support the right of all public and private employees and employers to organize for collective bargaining into unions and other groups of their own choosing. Further, we support the right of both parties to protection in so doing and their responsibility to bargain in good faith within the framework of the public interest. In order that the rights of all members of the society may be maintained and promoted, we support innovative bargaining procedures that include representatives of the public interest in negotiation and settlement of labor-management contracts, including some that may lead to forms of judicial resolution of issues. We reject the use of violence by either party during collective bargaining or any labor/management disagreement. We likewise reject the permanent replacement of a worker who engages in a lawful strike.”*

Bishop Lee talked about these Resolutions and their importance for the Church and its members. “As United Methodists, we feel an obligation to speak out to uphold our Social Principles. It is a fundamental human right that our state’s residents have obtainable, affordable quality healthcare – and as we all know, there are many in our state who struggle with their well-being as they do not have the access to the healthcare that they need. And for many citizens in our state, the right to collective bargaining is incredibly important, and will help ensure that all the public workers are treated fairly, and are able to earn a decent wage for their efforts in the workplace. These two key Resolutions are important to all people of Wisconsin, whether or not they are members of the Church.”

(The Resolutions are presented in their entirety on the following pages.)

**About the Wisconsin Conference of The United Methodist Church**

The Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church, with headquarters in Sun Prairie, is a connection for ministry linking all United Methodist clergy and the 480 congregations in Wisconsin. For more information, contact Michele Virnig, Director of Communications, at [mvirnig@wisconsinumc.org](mailto:mvirnig@wisconsinumc.org) or 888-240-7328.

**Website:** [www.wisconsinumc.org](http://www.wisconsinumc.org)

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**A Resolution on Health Care in Our Social Community**  
**Submitted by: Wisconsin Conference UMC Board of Church and Society**

**WHEREAS** on March 23, we celebrated the one-year anniversary of the “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act,” and

**WHEREAS** many of the provisions of this act are being implemented in the next few years, and

**WHEREAS** the United Methodist Church has affirmed in its *Social Principles* that “health care is a basic human right” and that at the 2008 General Conference, added the phrase “it is a government responsibility to provide health care,”

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we encourage church members within the Wisconsin Annual Conference to contact their elected representatives (federal and state) and those responsible for implementing the “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act” to ensure that the implementation follows these values:

**Inclusive:** “Health care is a shared responsibility that is grounded in our common humanity.” Our abundant health resources need to be shared with everyone.

**Affordable:** “Health care must contribute to the common good by being affordable for individuals, families, and society as a whole.” Health care resources need to be administered efficiently and distributed with equity.

**Accessible:** “All persons should have access to health services that provide necessary care and contribute to wellness.” We need to act with justice and love to make sure that everyone in our society has access to the health care they need to enable them to live up to their potential both as individuals and as contributing members of society.

**Accountable:** “Our health care system must be accountable--offering a quality, equitable, and sustainable means of keeping us healthy as individuals and as a community.” As individuals and as a community, we need to ensure health care that treats equally body, mind, and spirit.

(Quotations taken from —“A Faith Inspired Vision of Health Care” developed by the Faithful Reform in Health Care Coalition)

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that through prophetic preaching and faith based study in each local congregation that these values be discussed and advocated publicly as “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act” is fully implemented.

We instruct the Communications Director of the Wisconsin Annual Conference to distribute this resolution to all churches in the Wisconsin Annual Conference and to send this statement to all of the news outlets in the state so that Wisconsin citizens know the position of The United Methodist Church.

## **A Resolution on Collective Bargaining**

**Submitted by: Wisconsin Conference UMC Board of Church and Society**

**WHEREAS** the *Social Principles* in the 2008 *United Methodist Book of Discipline* (§163B) states and Bishop Linda Lee quoted to Governor Scott Walker:

“We support the right of all public and private employees and employers to organize for collective bargaining into unions and other groups of their own choosing. Further, we support the right of both parties to protection in so doing and their responsibility to bargain in good faith within the framework of the public interest. In order that the rights of all members of the society may be maintained and promoted, we support innovative bargaining procedures that include representatives of the public interest in negotiation and settlement of labor-management contracts, including some that may lead to forms of judicial resolution of issues. We reject the use of violence by either party during collective bargaining or any labor/management disagreement. We likewise reject the permanent replacement of a worker who engages in a lawful strike.”

WE THEREFORE ENCOURAGE the members of the Wisconsin Annual Conference to make this position available to members of their congregation and to use it as material for education on this matter in the congregation.

FURTHER, WE ENCOURAGE congregation members, in the current political struggle in our state, to use this statement to support those who are oppressed by the actions of the current administration, State Senate and Assembly who have voted to take this right from workers, to let them know that the United Methodist Church stands with them in their efforts to maintain collective bargaining rights.

We instruct the Communication Director of the Wisconsin Annual Conference to distribute our Discipline’s statement above to all of the news outlets available to receive our press releases in the state of Wisconsin to inform the citizens of the state of the position of The United Methodist Church.