

Comparison of Political Party Platforms and The United Methodist Church

Economic and Environmental Justice Issues

Budget / Government Spending We hold governments responsible for ... the guarantee of the rights to adequate food, clothing, shelter, education and health care. ¶164.A, Social Principles

Democratic Party

- Eliminating government waste and programs that aren't working
- Devoting \$50 billion to economic growth
- Assisting states with funding vital services like education, health care and infrastructure.

Republican Party

- Eliminating wasteful spending
- Adoption of Balance Budget Amendment
- Implementing a 1-year pause on non-defense, non-veterans discretionary spending
- Funding new programs through reductions in existing programs

Energy We must creatively explore all sustainable energy options available to us. ... We believe that the economic, environmental, and social implications of each energy source should be fully assessed. Energy Policy Statement, 2008 General Conference

Democratic Party

- Domestic production of clean and renewable energy through incentives
- Investing in research and development of new renewable technologies (including solar, wind and geothermal)
- Increase automobile fuel efficiency
- Reduce oil consumption by 35% by 2030

Republican Party

- Increased drilling for new oil fields (offshore and onshore)
- Open Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for drilling
- Increase use of nuclear power
- Energy tax credits
- Continued coal production and utilization

Living Wage Every person has the right to a job at a living wage. ¶163.C, Social Principles

Democratic Party

- Increasing minimum wage and indexing it to inflation

Republican Party

Makes no statement regarding this issue.

Social Security It is the birthright of every child of God to live a life with dignity and access to the basic necessities of life. It is our responsibility [to]... collectively through our government, to ensure that all God's children are cared for through all stages of life. Guidelines for Social Security Reform, 2008 General Conference

Democratic Party

- Strengthen guarantee of benefits
- No privatization
- Increased contributions from those making over \$250,000

Republican Party

- Providing worker control over their contributions
- Allowing workers to invest Social Security benefits into personal investments into personal accounts

Economic and Environmental Justice

The Economic and Environmental Justice Program calls the church and society into a greater faithfulness to the biblical vision of wholeness and justice for all of God's creation.

For more information, please Contact **John Hill** at 202.488.5654 or jhill@umc-gbcs.org.

About the General Board of Church and Society

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Civil and Human Rights Issues

Death Penalty

We believe the death penalty denies the power to redeem, restore, and transform all human beings....we oppose the death penalty (capital punishment) and urge its elimination from all criminal codes.

¶164.G, Social Principles

Democratic Party

- Providing conviction review processes for all death row cases

Republican Party

- Ensuring courts have the option to impose the death penalty on cases of capital murder and other heinous crimes
- Streamline review process for claims of innocence and prevent delays by defense attorneys

Immigration

"We recognize, embrace and affirm all persons, regardless of country of origin, as members of the family of God. We urge the Church and society to recognize the gifts, contributions and struggles of those who are immigrants and to advocate for justice for all."

¶162.G, Social Principles

Democratic Party

- Comprehensive immigration reform that allows undocumented immigrants to apply for citizenship;
- Penalizing businesses for hiring undocumented immigrants;
- Increasing number of visas for families and workers.

Republican Party

- Securing borders through physical and virtual barriers and
- Enrollment of undocumented aliens into verification program for citizenship or deportation

Torture

The mistreatment or torture of persons by governments for any purpose violates Christian teaching and must be condemned and/or opposed by Christians and churches wherever and whenever it occurs.

¶164.A, Social Principles

Democratic Party

- Rejects the use of torture

Republican Party

Makes no statement regarding this issue.

Criminal Justice Reform

In the love of Christ, who came to save those who are lost and vulnerable, we urge the creation of a genuinely new system for the care and restoration of victims, offenders, criminal justice officials, and the community as a whole.

Gun Violence, 2008 General Conference

Democratic Party

- Funding strategic, and effective community policing,
- Holding offenders accountable
- Investing in crime prevention, including initiatives that get youth and nonviolent offenders back on track

Republican Party

Makes no statement regarding this issue.

Civil and Human Rights

The General Board of Church and Society advocates for the preservation of civil and human rights for all people throughout the world. The creation of humankind in God's own image reveals God's value for all of human life.

For more information, please Contact **Bill Mefford** at 202.488.5657 or bmefford@umc-gbcs.org.

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Health and Wholeness Issues

Alcohol and Other Drugs

We affirm our long-standing support of abstinence from alcohol as a faithful witness to God's liberating and redeeming love for persons. We support abstinence from the use of any illegal drugs. ... we recommend total abstinence from the use of tobacco.

¶162J, *Social Principles*
2008 General Conference

Democratic Party

Republican Party

Makes no statement regarding this issue.

Health Care

Health is a condition of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being, and we view it as a responsibility—public and private. Health care is a basic human right.

¶162.T, *Social Principles*

Democratic Party

- Access to affordable comprehensive, health care for all
- Sharing the costs for care
- Decisions being made by patients and health care providers

Republican Party

- Privatization
- Utilizing health care savings accounts
- Lowering costs through a free market system
- Decisions being made by patients and health care providers

Pornography

We deplore all forms of commercialization and exploitation of sex with their consequent cheapening and degradation of human personality. We call for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting sexual exploitation or use of children by adults and encourage efforts to hold perpetrators legally and financially responsible.

¶161.G and ¶162.C, *Social Principles*

Democratic Party

- Elimination of sex trafficking
- Tolls for parents in blocking online and television content

Republican Party

- Increasing regulation of technology to thwart sexual predators
- Implementing reporting mechanisms for notifying authorities of child pornography on company networks
- Punishment for sexual predators

Health and Wholeness

Our advocacy focuses on achieving a global society of persons who have access to health and wholeness by emphasizing the Wesleyan understanding of social holiness extending to influence personal habits, public policy, and environmental and social factors that impact the Health and Wholeness of individuals and communities around the globe.

For more information, please Contact **Cynthia Abrams** at 202.488.5636 or cabrams@umc-gbcs.org.

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Peace with Justice Issues

[We] call on the U.S. government to immediately work with all deliberate speed towards peaceful resolution if issues with Iran and to reject any first-strike actions by U.S. armed forces.

War and Peace with Iran, North Korea, and the World, 2008 General Conference

Middle East Peace (Iran, Iraq and Israeli/Palestine)

We call upon the U.S. government to end the cycle of violence in Iraq by developing and implementing a plan for the immediate and safe withdrawal of all U.S. and partner coalition troops from the country.

Peace in Iraq 2008 General Conference

[We] continue to work with ecumenical and inter-faith bodies to advocate for Palestinian self-determination and an end to Israeli occupation and to affirm Israel's right to exist within secure borders.

Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land Book of Resolutions

Democratic Party

- Preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons
- Ending the war in Iraq responsibly
- Ending any permanent base agreements in Iraq
- Actively securing peace for Israelis and Palestinians
- Establishing a Palestinian state and a Jewish state, with Jerusalem as the capital of Israel

Republican Party

- Increasing political, economic and diplomatic pressure
- Retaining all options for dealing with Iran
- Committing to winning the war
- Respecting the advice of military commanders
- Protecting Israel's security through military technology
- A two democratic state solution
- Moving the U.S. embassy to the capital of Israel

Global Poverty

The majority of persons in the world live in poverty. In order to provide basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education, health care and other necessities, ways must be found to share more equitably the resources of the world.

¶163.E, Social Principles

Democratic Party

- Implementing the U.N. Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to cut extreme poverty by 50% by 2015
- Increasing investments by \$50 billion by 2012

Republican Party

- Emphasizing literacy and learning
- Improving economic development, clean water and agriculture
- Increasing microcredit funding

Peace with Justice

The Peace with Justice Program aims to make shalom visible and active in people's lives and communities. The General Conference assigned the General Board of Church and Society to implement the program and called the church to "strengthen its capacity to act as a public policy advocate" in communities and nations throughout the world.

For more information, please Contact **Mark Harrison** at 202.488.5645 or mharrison@umc-gbcs.org.

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Women and Children Issues

Domestic Violence We recognize that family violence and abuse in all its forms—verbal, psychological, physical, sexual—are detrimental to the covenant of the human community.

¶161.H, Social Principles

Democratic Party

- Creating a special advisor to the president
- Increasing funding to domestic and sexual assault prevention programs
- Strengthening sexual assault and domestic violence laws
- Building foreign policies that are sensitive to issues of aggression against women around the world

Republican Party

Makes no statement regarding this issue.

HIV / AIDS In response to the HIV/AIDS crisis in the world, The United Methodist Church commits itself to a holistic approach of awareness, education, prevention, treatment, community organizing and public advocacy... All individuals living with HIV and AIDS should be treated with dignity and respect.

¶162.S, Social Principles

Democratic Party

- Increasing funding for HIV/AIDS research, care and prevention
- Expanding and renewing minority HIV / AIDS initiatives
- Providing Medicaid coverage to low-income HIV-positive individuals

Republican Party

- Assisting countries affected by HIV/ AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis
- Prioritizing maternal and child health

Abortion

Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother and the unborn child... We recognize tragic conflicts of life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures. We support parental, guardian, or other responsible adult notification and consent before abortions can be performed on girls who have not yet reached the age of legal adulthood. We cannot affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control, and we unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection.

¶161.J, Social Principles

Democratic Party

- Roe v. Wade and the women's right to choose a safe and legal abortion
- Health care and education to reduce unintended pregnancies and reduce the number of abortions

Republican Party

- Dignity and sanctity of all human life
- A human life amendment to the Constitution to overturn Roe v. Wade
- Opposing public fund funding organizations that advocate abortion
- Appointing judges who respect traditional family values
- Rejecting international treaties (like UN convention on women's rights and UN convention on right of the child) related to family planning and education

Women and Children

As United Methodists, we are called to be in ministry with women and children recognizing that women and children bring abundant gifts to the world.

For more information, please Contact **Linda Bales** at 202.488.5649 or mharrison@umc-gbcs.org.

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United Nations and International Affairs

Latin America and the Caribbean

[We] call on government leaders to place people and justice at center of concerted efforts toward the eradication of poverty and sustainable and equitable development in the region. Special attention should be made to people who are marginalized: indigenous communities, Afro-Latinos, women and children.

Latin America and the Caribbean
2008 General Conference

Democratic Party

- Partnering with Latin America and the Caribbean
- Strengthen democracy throughout Latin America and the Caribbean

Republican Party

- Creating secure borders with sovereign nations
- Developing mutually beneficial trade agreements

Trade

We affirm the importance of international trade and investment in an interdependent world. Trade and investment should be based on rules that support the dignity of the human person, a clean environment and our common humanity.

¶163.J, *Social Principles*

Democratic Party

- Enforcing trade laws and safeguarding workers, business and farmers
- Creating bilateral trade agreements
- Protecting the environment, food safety and health of American citizens

Republican Party

- Increase international trade
- Developing multilateral regional and bilateral trade agreements

United Nations

We endorse the United Nations and its related bodies as the best instruments now in existence to achieve a world of justice and law.

¶165.D, *Social Principles*

Democratic Party

- Enhancing the global cooperation of issues of weapons proliferation to climate change
- Stronger international institutions
- United Nations reform

Republican Party

- United Nations reform

United Nations and International Affairs

Bringing together United Methodists around the world who have signified their intention to use the United Nations mechanisms and other regional and international multilateral instruments as basis for advocating both national and international policies on issues as diverse as sustainable development, human rights, disarmament, international law, war and peace, women, children, and freedom of religion or belief.

For more information, please Contact **Liberato Bautista** at 212.682.3633 or lbautista@umc-gbcs.org.

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