

# Comparison of Political Party Platforms and The United Methodist Church

Prepared by the General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church



Who would Jesus vote for in the upcoming election? Only the foolish would hazard a guess. But the New Testament itself is a picture of Jesus' priorities amid all that clamored for His attention.

Christ's mission of justice and compassion was extended to all people. As United Methodists, we are called to transform the world. Part of that transformation is made through faithful advocacy, community involvement and holding our leaders accountable.

This guide is intended as a discernment tool for you, your church and your community to evaluate potential leaders and political agendas of the two major parties as they relate to the Social Principles and *Book of Resolutions* of The United Methodist Church. As you read through the guide, ask yourself: How do these party platforms align with Church priorities for addressing human need and the integrity of God's creation? What action might that call us to? What confession must we make about our own selfish priorities?

The United Methodist Church does not advocate a two-party system and we encourage you to seek out details on the variety of political parties and candidates. We have provided highlights based on party platform information available at the time.

## Party/candidate platform websites:

- **Democratic Party** – <http://www.democrats.org/agenda.html>
- **Green Party** – <http://www.gp.org/platform.shtml>
- **Libertarian Party** – <http://www.lp.org/platform>
- **Ralph Nader** – <http://www.votenader.org/issues>
- **Republican Party** – <http://www.gop.com/2008Platform>

Visit our website at [www.umc-gbcs.org](http://www.umc-gbcs.org) for information (including articles, statements, and resources) on the issues covered in this guide.

A **bulletin insert election guide** is also available on our website.

Issue	The United Methodist Church says...	The Democratic Party supports...	The Republican Party supports...
Abortion	<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶161.J, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roe v. Wade and the women's right to choose a safe and legal abortion</li> <li>• Health care and education to reduce unintended pregnancies and reduce the number of abortions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dignity and sanctity of all human life</li> <li>• A human life amendment to the Constitution to overturn Roe v. Wade</li> <li>• Opposing public fund funding organizations that advocate abortion</li> <li>• Appointing judges who respect traditional family values</li> <li>• Rejecting international treaties (like UN convention on women's rights and UN convention on right of the child) related to family planning and education</li> </ul>

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<b>Affirmative Action</b>	<p>We affirm that all persons are full-fledged members of the human community with every right and privilege. Implementation of “affirmative action” reflects a shared understanding that diversity is a positive outcome of social inclusion that yields benefits for the entire community.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Affirmative Action 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affirmative action as one method of addressing the inequalities and discriminatory practices</li> </ul>	<p><i>Makes no statement regarding this issue.</i></p>
<b>Africa (including Sudan/Darfur)</b>	<p>[We] advocate for government leaders to place the need for people and justice at the center of any concerted efforts towards the eradication of poverty, sustainable and equitable development, and reconstruction on the continent of Africa.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Africa Reconstruction and Development Book of Resolutions</i></p> <p>[We] demand an end to the massacres, the atrocities and ... crimes against humanity. [We] call upon all parties to work through the [UN] and African Union to secure justice for all Sudanese.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>A Call to Compassion and Caring 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable economic growth and development</li> <li>Reversing chronic issues like poverty, hunger, conflict and HIV / AIDS</li> <li>Strengthening democratic development and human rights protection</li> <li>Encouraging political and economic reform</li> <li>Protecting the Comprehensive Peace Agreement</li> <li>Bringing and end to genocide throughout Sudan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding trade among African nations</li> <li>Providing material, transportation and humanitarian aid</li> <li>Securing a comprehensive and humane settlement</li> </ul>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<p>We support governmental and private programs designed to benefit the resident farmer rather than the factory farm.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶162.N, <i>Social Principles</i></p> <p>A prerequisite for meeting the nutritional needs of the world's population is an agricultural system which uses sustainable methods, respects ecosystems, and promotes a livelihood for people who work the land.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶162.O, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety net for family farmers</li> <li>Establishing a permanent disaster relief program</li> <li>Expanding research and trade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal agriculture aid to those in need</li> <li>Economic safety net for farmers</li> <li>Creation of a Farm Savings Account to manage risks</li> <li>Opposing mandates on farmers, including expansion of the Clean Water Act</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Alcohol and Other Drugs</b></p>	<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶162.J, Social Principles 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<p><i>Makes no statement regarding this issue.</i></p>	
<p><b>Bioethics</b></p>	<p>We should not create embryos with the intention of destroying them, as in the creation of embryos for research purposes. Neither should we, even for reproductive purposes, produce more embryos than we can expect to introduce into the womb in the hope of implantation. ... We believe that it is morally tolerable to use existing embryos for stem cell research purposes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Embryonic Stem Cell Research 2008 General Conference</i></p> <p>We call for a ban on all human cloning, including the cloning of human embryos [for] all projects, privately or governmentally funded. ... We call for a ban on therapeutic, medical, research, and commercial procedures which generate waste embryos.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Human Cloning 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investing in biomedical research and stem cell research</li> <li>• Lifting federal funding ban on embryonic stem cell research</li> <li>• Ensuring patent laws to protect rights</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Makes no statement regarding human cloning.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanding support of stem cell research</li> <li>• Preventing the unethical destruction of embryonic human life</li> <li>• Banning human cloning and the creation of human embryos for research</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Budget / Government Spending</b></p>	<p>We hold governments responsible for ... the guarantee of the rights to adequate food, clothing, shelter, education and health care.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">¶164.A, <i>Social Principles</i></p> <p>We petition the President and Congress to reapportion dollars, saved by reduced military spending and base closings, for domestic programs that will enable the financial support for an increase in quality educational offerings in the public school systems of the country, adequate health care, affordable housing, the creation of sufficient employment opportunities and a new comprehensive employment training act.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Enabling Financial Support for Domestic Programs, Book of Resolutions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating government waste and programs that aren't working</li> <li>• Devoting \$50 billion to economic growth</li> <li>• Assisting states with funding services like education, health care and infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating wasteful spending</li> <li>• Adopting the Balance Budget Amendment</li> <li>• Implementing a 1-year pause on non-defense, non-veterans discretionary spending</li> <li>• Funding new programs through reductions in existing programs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Caring for Children</b></p>	<p>Once considered the property of their parents, children are now acknowledged to be full human beings in their own right, but beings to whom adults and society in general have special obligations. Thus, we support the development of school systems and innovative methods of education ... children have the rights to food, shelter, clothing, health care, and emotional well-being ... regardless of actions or inactions of their parents or guardians. In particular, children must be protected from economic, physical, and sexual exploitation and abuse.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">¶162.C, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster care systems</li> <li>• Enhancing adoption care programs</li> <li>• Protecting children from violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving children the opportunity to say the Pledge of Allegiance in public school and condemning activist judges who deny this opportunity.</li> <li>• Establishing of an Inter-Agency Task Force on Human Trafficking</li> <li>• A child care tax credit,</li> <li>• Family literacy and improvement of early childhood programs, such as Head Start.</li> <li>• Mandatory sentencing provisions for gang conspiracy crimes and violent or sexual offenses against children</li> </ul>

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<b>Climate</b>	<p>We acknowledge the global impact of humanity's disregard for God's creation. We ... support efforts of all governments to require mandatory reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and call on individuals, congregations, businesses, industries, and communities to reduce their emissions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶160, Social Principles 2008 General Conference</i></p> <p>[We] call on the nations of the world to require reductions in greenhouse emissions using the most efficient and cost effective mechanisms.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Global Warming 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment in clean and efficient domestic technologies</li> <li>• Help developing countries preserve biodiversity</li> <li>• Participate in global efforts to enforce emission reductions</li> <li>• Implement market-based cap and trade mechanisms or systems to reduce carbon emissions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology-driven, market based solutions to reduce emissions and increase energy efficiency</li> <li>• A "Climate Prize" for scientist who solve the challenges of climate change</li> </ul>
<b>Criminal Justice Reform</b>	<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Gun Violence 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing recidivism</li> <li>• Community programs to avoid juvenile delinquency</li> <li>• Recognizing the right to own firearms</li> <li>• Gun regulation controlled by local governments / municipalities</li> <li>• Closing the gun show loophole</li> <li>• Background checks</li> <li>• Banning assault weapons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Second Chance Act in preventing recidivism</li> <li>• Mandatory minimum sentences for violent crimes</li> <li>• Punishing juveniles who commit serious crimes</li> <li>• Opposing gun control and lawsuits against gun manufacturers</li> <li>• Appointing judges who will uphold the rights to own firearms.</li> </ul>
<b>Death Penalty</b>	<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶164.G, Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing conviction review processes for all death row cases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring courts have the option to impose the death penalty on cases of capital murder and other heinous crimes</li> <li>• Streamline review process for claims of innocence and prevent delays by defense attorneys</li> </ul>

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<b>Disabilities</b>	<p>We recognize and affirm the full humanity and personhood of all individuals with mental, physical, developmental, neurological, and psychological conditions or disabilities. ... We call the Church and society to be sensitive to, and advocate for, programs of rehabilitation, services, employment, education, appropriate housing, and transportation. ... [And] to protect the civil rights of persons with ... disabilities.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶162.G, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities</li> <li>• Options for home care instead of institutions</li> </ul>	<p><i>Makes no statement regarding this issue.</i></p>
<b>Discrimination</b>	<p>We insist that all persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶161.G, <i>Social Principles</i></p> <p>Certain basic human rights and civil liberties are due all persons. We are committed to supporting those rights and liberties for homosexual persons.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶162.H, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ending discrimination based on race, sex, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and disability</li> </ul>	<p><i>Makes no statement regarding this issue.</i></p>
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	<p>We recognize that family violence and abuse in all its forms—verbal, psychological, physical, sexual—are detrimental to the covenant of the human community. We encourage the Church to provide a safe environment, counsel and support for the victim. While we deplore the actions of the abuser, we affirm that person to be in need of God's redeeming love.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶161.H, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ending violence against women</li> <li>• Creating a special advisor to the president</li> <li>• Increasing funding to domestic and sexual assault prevention programs</li> <li>• Strengthening sexual assault and domestic violence laws</li> <li>• Providing job security to survivors</li> <li>• Building foreign policies that are sensitive to issues of aggression against women around the world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A constitutional amendment to protect the rights of crime victims, based on the belief that the innocent have far fewer rights than the accused</li> </ul>

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<b>Energy</b>	<p>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. ... We must chart a new course rooted in our shared principles of justice and sustainability.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Energy Policy Statement 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic production of clean and renewable energy through incentives</li> <li>• Investing in research and development of new renewable technologies (including solar, wind and geothermal)</li> <li>• Increase automobile fuel efficiency</li> <li>• Reduce oil consumption by 35% by 2030</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased drilling for new oil fields (offshore and onshore)</li> <li>• Open Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for drilling</li> <li>• Increase use of nuclear power</li> <li>• Energy tax credits</li> <li>• Continued coal production and utilization</li> </ul>
<b>Family Planning and Sex Education</b>	<p>People have the duty to consider the impact on the total world community of their decisions regarding childbearing and should have access to information and appropriate means to limit their fertility, including voluntary sterilization.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶162.I, Social Principles</i></p> <p>All children have the right to quality education, including full sex education appropriate to their stage of development that utilizes the best educational techniques and insights. Christian parents and guardians and the Church have the responsibility to ensure that children receive sex education consistent with Christian morality, including faithfulness in marriage and abstinence in singleness.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶162.C, Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive affordable family planning</li> <li>• Age-appropriate sex education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replacing “family planning” programs for teens with increased funding for abstinence education, which teaches abstinence until marriage as the responsible and expected standard of behavior.</li> </ul>

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<b>Gambling (including online and tribal)</b>	<p>Gambling is a menace to society, deadly to the best interests of moral, social, economic, and spiritual life, destructive of good government and good stewardship. As an act of faith and concern, Christians should abstain from gambling and should strive to minister to those victimized by the practice. ... The Church acknowledges the dichotomy that can occur when opposing gambling while supporting American Indian tribal sovereignty and self determination. ... The Church's prophetic call is to promote standards of justice and advocacy that would make it unnecessary and undesirable to resort to commercial gambling ... as a recreation, as an escape, or as a means of producing public revenue or funds for support of charities or government.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶163.G, <i>Social Principles</i> 2008 General Conference</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal savings accounts and stronger consumer protection laws</li> <li>• American Indian Tribal Sovereignty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete prohibition of gambling over the internet</li> <li>• American Indian Tribal Sovereignty</li> </ul>
<b>Global Poverty</b>	<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶163.E, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing the U.N. Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to cut extreme poverty by 50% by 2015</li> <li>• Increasing investments by \$50 billion by 2012</li> <li>• Partner with the private sector to invest in development and poverty reduction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizing literacy and learning</li> <li>• Improving economic development, clean water and agriculture</li> <li>• Increasing microcredit funding</li> </ul>
<b>Health Care</b>	<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶162.T, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to affordable comprehensive, health care for all</li> <li>• Sharing the costs for care</li> <li>• Decisions being made by patients and health care providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privatization</li> <li>• Utilizing health care savings accounts</li> <li>• Lowering costs through a free market system</li> <li>• Decisions being made by patients and health care providers</li> </ul>

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<b>HIV / AIDS</b>	<p>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. ... We support their rights to employment, appropriate medical care, full participation in public education, and full participation in the Church.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶162.S, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing funding for HIV/ AIDS research, care and prevention</li> <li>• Implementing a strategic plan to combat HIV / AIDS</li> <li>• Expanding and renewing minority HIV / AIDS initiatives</li> <li>• Providing Medicaid coverage to low-income HIV-positive individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assisting countries affected by HIV/ AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis</li> <li>• Prioritizing maternal and child health</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<p>The need for adequate housing at affordable costs is critical today. Love for neighbor demands that Christians care about how adequately their neighbors are sheltered. We support use of a wide variety of subsidized housing approaches ... however the development of a “voucher” program with no ceiling on the actual rent that can be charged ... will not alleviate the present situation. Public housing continues to be a vital necessity in both urban and rural areas.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Housing in the USA</i> 2008 General Conference</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing new fair and affordable lending standards</li> <li>• Preserving and developing affordable rental housing</li> <li>• Combat homelessness, especially among veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free market approaches</li> <li>• Making homeownership accessible through open housing laws and voucher programs</li> <li>• Housing policies that recognize the needs of renters</li> </ul>
<b>Human Sexuality</b>	<p>We insist that all persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured. Certain basic human rights and civil liberties are due all persons. We are committed to supporting those rights and liberties for homosexual persons.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶162.H, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ending discrimination in all forms (including sexual orientation)</li> <li>• Repealing “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” military policies and implementing policies for men and women to serve openly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affirming the incompatibility of homosexuality with military service</li> </ul>

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<b>Human Trafficking</b>	<p>United Methodists in every congregation, community, conference, and nation are encouraged to ... denounce sex tourism, trafficking of women and children, and female genital mutilation. The General Board of Church and Society shall lead The United Methodist Church's efforts toward the abolition of sex trafficking.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Abolition of Sex Trafficking 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong legislation enforcement to protect trafficking victims and bring traffickers to justice</li> <li>• Addressing root causes of human trafficking (including poverty, discrimination and gender inequality)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing an Inter-Agency Task Force on Human Trafficking</li> <li>• Increasing diplomatic efforts with foreign governments</li> <li>• Implementing international notifications of known offenders who travel abroad</li> </ul>
<b>Immigration</b>	<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶162.G, Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive immigration reform that allows undocumented immigrants to apply for citizenship;</li> <li>• Penalizing businesses for hiring undocumented immigrants;</li> <li>• Increasing number of visas for families and workers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing borders through physical and virtual barriers</li> <li>• Enrollment of undocumented aliens into verification program for citizenship or deportation</li> </ul>
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	<p>[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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Latin America and the Caribbean 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with Latin America and the Caribbean</li> <li>• Strengthen democracy throughout Latin America and the Caribbean</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating secure borders with sovereign nations</li> <li>• Developing mutually beneficial trade agreements</li> </ul>
<b>Living Wage</b>	<p>Every person has the right to a job at a living wage.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶163.C, Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing minimum wage and indexing it to inflation</li> </ul>	<p><i>Makes no statement regarding this issue.</i></p>

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<p><b>Marriage</b></p>	<p>We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman. ... We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶161.C, Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of all families</li> <li>• Opposing the Defense of Marriage Act</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adding a Constitutional amendment to define marriage as a union of a man and a woman.</li> <li>• State initiatives to define traditional marriage</li> </ul>
<p><b>Middle East Peace (Iran, Iraq and Israeli/Palestine)</b></p>	<p>[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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>War and Peace with Iran, North Korea and the World 2008 General Conference</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Peace in Iraq 2008 General Conference</i></p> <p>[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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land Book of Resolutions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons</li> <li>• Implementing tougher sanctions and high-level diplomacy</li> <li>• Working with the international community to enforce unilateral and multilateral sanctions</li> <li>• Ending the war in Iraq responsibly</li> <li>• Launching a comprehensive regional and international plan</li> <li>• Ending any permanent base agreements in Iraq</li> <li>• Actively securing peace for Israelis and Palestinians</li> <li>• Establishing a Palestinian state and a Jewish state, with Jerusalem as the capital of Israel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing political, economic and diplomatic pressure</li> <li>• Retaining all options for dealing with Iran</li> <li>• Committing to winning the war</li> <li>• Respecting the advice of military commanders</li> <li>• Protecting Israel's security through military technology</li> <li>• A two democratic state solution</li> <li>• Moving the U.S. embassy to the capital of Israel</li> </ul>
<p><b>Nuclear Weapons</b></p>	<p>We believe ... the production, possession or use of nuclear weapons to be condemned.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶165.C, Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating nuclear weapons worldwide</li> <li>• Negotiating a global ban</li> <li>• Strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive strategy to reduce nuclear weapons worldwide</li> <li>• Developing a national defense system</li> </ul>

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<b>Pornography</b>	<p>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. We call for the establishment of adequate protective services, guidance, and counseling opportunities for children thus abused. ... In particular, children must be protected from economic, physical, and sexual exploitation and abuse.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶161.G and ¶162.C, Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elimination of sex trafficking</li> <li>• Tolls for parents in blocking online and television content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing regulation of technology to thwart sexual predators</li> <li>• Implementing reporting mechanisms for notifying authorities of child pornography on company networks</li> <li>• Punishment for sexual predators</li> </ul>
<b>Social Security</b>	<p>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 as individuals, as churches and as expressed collectively through our government, to ensure that all God's children are cared for through all stages of life.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Guidelines for Social Security Reform 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen guarantee of benefits</li> <li>• No privatization</li> <li>• Increased contributions from those making over \$250,000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing worker control over their contributions</li> <li>• Allowing workers to invest Social Security benefits into personal investments into private accounts</li> </ul>
<b>Tax</b>	<p>We support measures that would reduce the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. We further support efforts to revise tax structures and to eliminate governmental support programs that now benefit the wealthy at the expense of other persons.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶163, Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating corporate tax loopholes and tax havens</li> <li>• Providing tax cuts to the middle class</li> <li>• Increase tax on families making over \$250,000 to support programs, including health care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requiring a supermajority in Congress to guard against tax increases</li> <li>• Government taxes only to raise money for essential functions</li> <li>• Making 2001 and 2003 tax cuts permanent</li> </ul>

# Comparison of Political Party Platforms and The United Methodist Church

Prepared by the General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church



Issue	The United Methodist Church says...	The Democratic Party supports...	The Republican Party supports...
<b>Torture</b>	<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶164.A, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rejects the use of torture</li> </ul>	<p><i>Makes no statement regarding this issue.</i></p>
<b>Trade</b>	<p>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. Trade agreements must include mechanisms to enforce labor rights and human rights as well as environmental standards. Broad-based citizen advocacy and participation in trade negotiations must be ensured through democratic mechanisms of consultation and participation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶163.J, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcing trade laws and safeguarding workers, business and farmers</li> <li>• Creating bilateral trade agreements</li> <li>• Protecting the environment, food safety and health of American citizens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase international trade</li> <li>• Developing multilateral regional and bilateral trade agreements</li> </ul>
<b>United Nations</b>	<p>We endorse the United Nations and its related bodies as the best instruments now in existence to achieve a world of justice and law.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶165.D, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing the global cooperation of issues of weapons proliferation to climate change</li> <li>• Stronger international institutions</li> <li>• United Nations reform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Nations reform</li> </ul>
<b>War on Terror</b>	<p>We advocate the extension and strengthening of international treaties and institutions that provide a framework within the rule of law for responding to ... terrorism.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">¶165.C, <i>Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a comprehensive strategy to defeat global terrorism</li> <li>• Political reforms, democratic institutions and human right</li> </ul>	<p><i>Makes no statement regarding this issue.</i></p>

# Comparison of Political Party Platforms and The United Methodist Church

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Issue	The United Methodist Church says...	The Democratic Party supports...	The Republican Party supports...
<p><b>Women's Rights</b></p>	<p>We affirm women and men to be equal in every aspect of their common life. We therefore urge that every effort be made to eliminate sex-role stereotypes in activity and portrayal of family life and in all aspects of voluntary and compensatory participation in the Church and society.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶162.F, Social Principles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanding access to women's economic development opportunities</li> <li>• Expanding microcredit opportunities</li> <li>• Ensuring equal protection under the law to protect property ownership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embracing core values of liberty, equality, meritocracy, and respect for human dignity and the rights of women.</li> <li>• Rejecting any treaty or agreement that would violate those values, including the UN convention on women's rights</li> </ul>
<p><b>Worker Rights</b></p>	<p>We support the right of public and private ... employees and employers to organize for collective bargaining into unions and other groups of their own choosing.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>¶163.B, Social Principles</i></p> <p>The United Methodist Church is particularly concerned about the unethical practices of locking workers out of their workplaces and permanently replacing striking workers. [Supports] the National Labor Relations Act ... allow[ing] workers to choose union representation by signing cards, require mediation and binding arbitration if a first contract agreement is not reached in a reasonable period of time, and expand penalties for employers violating workers' right to organize.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Rights of Workers 2008 General Conference</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labor organizations and collective bargaining</li> <li>• Opposing Right-to-Work laws in states</li> <li>• Opposing "paycheck protection" laws</li> <li>• Implementing the "card check"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labor organizations and collective bargaining</li> <li>• Enacting Right-to-Work laws in states</li> <li>• Implementing "paycheck protection" laws</li> <li>• Opposing the "check card"</li> </ul>