



# GUIDELINES



# Advocates for Inclusiveness

**Value and Empower All Persons for  
Full Participation in Church and Community**



G U I D E L I N E S

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**Value and Empower All Persons for Full Participation  
in Church and Community**

General Commission on the Status and Role of Women  
General Commission on Religion and Race

## ADVOCATES FOR INCLUSIVENESS

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# Blessed to Be a Blessing

If you are reading this Guideline, you have said yes to servant leadership in your church. You are blessed to be a blessing. What does that mean?

By virtue of our baptism by water and the Spirit, God calls all Christians to faithful discipleship, to grow to maturity in faith (see Ephesians 4). The United Methodist Church expresses that call in our shared mission “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” (*The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, or the *Discipline*, ¶120). Each local congregation and community of faith lives out that call in response to its own context—the wonderful and unique combination of God-given human and material resources with the needs of the community, within and beyond the congregation.

The work of servant leaders—your work—is to open a way for God to work through you and the resources available to you in a particular ministry area, for you are about God’s work. As stewards of the mysteries of God (see 1 Corinthians 4:1), servant leaders are entrusted with the precious and vital task of managing and using God’s gifts in the ongoing work of transformation.

In The United Methodist Church, we envision transformation occurring through a cycle of discipleship (see the *Discipline*, ¶122). With God’s help and guidance, we

- reach out and receive people into the body of Christ,
- help people relate to Christ through their unique gifts and circumstances,
- nurture and strengthen people in their relationships with God and with others,
- send transformed people out into the world to lead transformed and transforming lives,
- continue to reach out, relate, nurture, and send disciples...

Every ministry area and group, from finance to missions, engages in all aspects of this cycle. This Guideline will help you see how that is true for the ministry area or group you now lead. When you begin to consider all of the work you do as ministry to fulfill God’s mission through your congregation, each task, report, and conversation becomes a step toward transforming the world into the kingdom of God.

Invite Christ into the process to guide your ministry. You are doing powerful and wonderful work. Allow missteps to become learning opportunities; rejoice in success. Fill your work with the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

God blesses you with gifts, skills, and experience. You are a blessing when you allow God to work through you to make disciples and transform the world. Thank you.

(Find additional help in the “Resources” section at the end of this Guideline, in *The Book of Discipline*, and through <http://www.umc.org>.)

# What Is This Ministry?

## Who Says She Can't Be a Pastor?

First United Methodist Church in Vermillion, South Dakota, works diligently to be a “woman-friendly” church. The Reverend Brook McBride, pastor of this 200-member congregation, looks for any opening he can find to discuss and promote women in leadership positions.

“Sometimes the children in Sunday school will play *church* and a girl will say she wants to be the pastor. If someone says ‘you can’t do that,’ it brings up an opportunity for discussion,” he says.

“There have been a lot of women in leadership roles,” McBride says, “and not just the traditional roles; it’s the administrative board, trustees kinds of roles— all kinds of places. There’s not a delineation [of male/female] in the roles.”

First UMC is also faithful in using gender-inclusive language in Scripture readings and worship. McBride, who has been pastor there for ten years, says that was one of the criteria the congregation had in searching for a pastor.

“Because the laypeople are so good about bringing up the issue of inclusive language, it raises the awareness to the pastors so that they can bring that up from the pulpit.”

Even the songs are subject to scrutiny. “If the choir is doing something that isn’t inclusive, someone will bring it up, and it will be changed.”

McBride says a woman-friendly congregation makes a conscious effort to become so. “You need to talk to women; and where there are barriers, you have to intentionally tear them down. They *have* to be brought down. It starts very early with gender roles in the church and society.”

People notice that commitment to inclusiveness—especially a young girl who may want to lead a congregation of her own someday. (Adapted from *The Flyer*, vol. 44, issue 5, 2010)

### From Rejection to Solidarity

*In His Own Words: The Reverend Scott Manning, Clergy, West Michigan Conference*

“When I had my first pastoral assignment, I was informed by a lay leader that one of my council leaders had said he would not accept a woman or a black in the pastorate. And he got me, a person of mixed race and ethnic category. I took it as a challenge to build a relationship with that particular individual in the life of the church.

“In the midst of having an open space for him to have his concerns and me to build a relationship with him, his racism melted. When challenges were confronted in the life of the congregation, that individual was my strongest advocate. In building a relationship, we broke down walls that both of us had in how we saw one another and how we dealt with difficult issues in the life of the church and turned them into opportunity.

“When my father passed away, that person was there as a strong advocate and said, ‘If you need a fatherly figure to lean upon, I am here with you.’ We *can* make a difference in the life of the church if we engage one another in relationship building.”

## Inclusiveness Is...

While the word *diversity* is often used to refer to the presence of women and men, girls and boys from various races, ethnicities and cultures, *inclusiveness* is a broader and richer concept. The United Methodist Church seeks not just presence or representation but the meaningful participation of all who join together to create and build the church.

As United Methodists, “we recognize that God made all creation and saw that it was good. As a diverse people of God who bring special gifts and evidences of God’s grace to the unity of the church and to society, we are called to be faithful to the example of Jesus’ ministry to all persons. Inclusiveness means openness, acceptance, and support that enable all persons to participate in the life of the church, the community, and the world. Thus, inclusiveness denies every semblance of discrimination” (§140, the *Discipline*).

Diversity is the signature of God. Inclusiveness values diversity while building relationships. An inclusive community strives for all people to have opportunities to use their gifts, to be valued and respected as children of God. In an inclusive community, a variety of voices, perspectives, ideas, and experiences are recognized and heard. Together we are called to eradicate the sins of racism and sexism in the church and the world and transform the communities in which we live and worship. This is why many leaders in the church are answering God’s call to move from mere diversity to embodying inclusiveness.

# Biblical and Theological Foundations for Inclusiveness

Scripture tells us that in the beginning all people were created in God's image, becoming God's children (Genesis 1:26-31). Throughout the biblical witness, we encounter God's call for humanity to live in right relationship with God and one another (Isaiah 58:1-12).

Jesus models inclusiveness. In the New Testament, he issues two great commandments: to love God with all our heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Luke 10:27; see also Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18). In the life of Jesus, we see how we are to live and to reach across barriers of race, culture, gender, status, class, and ability. At Jacob's well, Jesus shares a cup with a Samaritan woman, breaking taboos, reaching across barriers of gender and clan, and surprising even his disciples (John 4). Jesus engages women as full partners in ministry, including Mary in a theological discussion rather than sending her to the kitchen to help Martha (Luke 10:38-42), and appointing Mary Magdalene as apostle to the apostles to share the news of his resurrection (John 20:10-18). When two blind men call to him, Jesus responds, "What do you want me to do for you?" inviting their voices rather than assuming their needs (Matthew 20:29-34).

Jesus also speaks against any situation where people are insulted, ridiculed, and called "fool" by others who believe themselves superior (Matthew 5:21-26). For him, these situations are no less than murder in the heart. Jesus views such humiliating treatment by one human being toward another as sin and as deliberate acts of defiance against God.

In Galatians 3:26-28, Paul asserts that Christian living requires us to live, work together, and love one another across lines of race, clan, gender, and status: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Racism and sexism are sins that deny the wisdom of God's creation and the fullness of life promised to all believers.

It is not enough to know what is wrong. We must learn how to bring into earthly existence the inclusive world that God designed. *The Book of Discipline*, ¶140, tells us that the "mark of an inclusive society is one in which all persons are open, welcoming, fully accepting, and supporting of all other persons, enabling them to participate fully in the life of the church, the community, and the world. A further mark of inclusiveness is the setting of church activities in facilities accessible to persons with disabilities."

# News Flash: Why We Need Advocates for Inclusiveness

All nations, including the United States, are growing more diverse by the day. According to the 2010 census data, U.S. child population grew far more diverse in the past decade, with the number of racial/ethnic children doubling in at least 10 states since the year 2000, in places such as Mississippi, Florida, Texas, California, New Mexico, and Hawaii. Asians and Hispanics account for the majority of the growth, with the Asian population heavily centered in the West Coast and in metropolitan areas and the Hispanic population living in rural and urban areas across the 50 states. More than half of U.S. children under age two in the United States are people of color. These findings also reinforce the prediction that by 2042, the majority of Americans will be people of color (<http://www.census.gov/2010census>).

In just one year, the poverty rate increased for all U.S. children younger than 18, except for non-Hispanic whites. Those living in the Midwest, South, and West were hit hardest (<http://www.census.gov/2010census>). While women and girls around the world perform 67 percent of the world's working hours, women as a group earn only 10 percent of the world's income. Further, women comprise 66 percent of the world's illiterate people own less than 1 percent of the world's property, even though they produce 50 percent of the world's food ([http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW\\_full%20report\\_color.pdf](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW_full%20report_color.pdf)).

Although women have gained a stronger voice in The United Methodist Church over the years, there is much more to be done. Women comprise just less than 50 percent of the world's population (World Demographics Profile 2011; Index Mundi, retrieved November 18, 2011) and of United Methodist church members. However, only 27 percent of United Methodist clergy are women. Among clergywomen, 80 percent of clergywomen are white, 8 percent are African American, 3 percent are Hispanic/Latina and 1.8 percent are Asian.

In 2014, 33 percent of district superintendents were women compared to 27 percent of all clergy that are female. Seventy five percent of the female district superintendents are white, which is similar to the percentage of white clergywomen. However, 25 percent of district superintendents are women of color, which is a far higher percentage than the 5.5 percent of all female clergy who are women of color (from <http://gcsrw.org/ResearchMonitoring/WomenbytheNumbers/Currentarticle.aspx>).



## **No More Hiding from the World Behind a Collar**

*In His Own Words: The Reverend Tom Choi, Clergy, California-Pacific Conference*

“In 1992, there were riots in Los Angeles following the Rodney King verdict. And there was a lot of tension, especially against Korean merchants who were in African American neighborhoods. They were really criticized for not patronizing black business, just taking money and not putting back.

“So I decided after these riots that I would go into the largely African American neighborhoods to lend a hand. But I decided to do so wearing a clergy collar, because I wanted people to know I was clergy and not a Korean merchant that was their enemy. It was really out of fear that I went down.

“I patronized a black business. I went down to a famous barbeque place in the Crenshaw district of Los Angeles. As I approached the line, there were looks that I just was afraid of. I just kind of said (pointing to the collar), ‘See, I’m a clergyperson. Don’t get mad at me!’

“I went up to the first person in line and said, ‘Hi, how you doing?’ And this person said, ‘I’m fine, how are you?’ I said, ‘Oh, just trying to make it.’ And this person laughed and said, ‘Yeah, so am I.’ And we started engaging in this conversation, and that happened again and again. There was this connection that I made that day.

“After that, when I went down there, I took off my collar and wore regular clothes. I said, ‘You know what, I need to stop hiding behind this clerical collar and just share the love of Christ instead.’”

Moving beyond our comfort zones, stereotypes, and biases is the call of the gospel.

# The Limitations of Language: “Women and Racial/Ethnic Persons”

A key challenge in addressing issues related to inclusiveness is the language we use. We recognize that racial/ethnic women face discrimination as both women and racial/ethnic persons. In these Guidelines, we use the phrase “women and racial/ethnic persons” to refer to concerns of all women and of all persons who belong to racial and ethnic groups that currently compose a minority of the U.S. population (also known as people of color).

## Racism and Sexism: Key Definitions

### Racism

Racism has two components. First, it is the power of one race to dominate another, usually because of historical, traditional, or numerical power. Second, it is a prejudicial value system that assumes that the dominant race is innately superior. Together, these two components—racial prejudice plus power—equal racism.

Racism manifests in two distinct ways: personal and institutional. Personal racism is the collection of individual expressions, attitudes, and behaviors that accept the assumption that one race is superior to another. Institutional racism is the creation of and complicity with social patterns, laws, and procedures that provide implicit and explicit support of a racist value system. An individual from the dominant race can be open and welcoming to persons of other races but still participate in institutional racism by supporting, or neglecting to confront, systems and structures that manifest racism overtly or covertly.

Although words such as *prejudice*, *bigotry*, *discrimination*, *stereotype*, and *racial/ethnic harassment* describe the nature of racism, they all have distinct meanings.

**Prejudice** is an unfavorable judgment or feeling about something without the benefit of knowledge, thought, or reason.

**Bigotry** is extreme intolerance of any creed, belief, opinion, or group that differs from one's own. It is an acute form of prejudice.

**Discrimination** is the collection of practices and policies that are based on prejudice or partiality. It is the power to exercise differential treatment.

**Stereotype** is a widely held, fixed, and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or group.

**Racial/ethnic harassment** is overt or covert abuse of persons based on their race or ethnicity. This abuse can manifest through inappropriate language, behavior, or other intimidating or unwanted actions. (See “Racial/Ethnic Harassment,” *The Book of Resolutions*.)

Racism occurs when one group intentionally or unintentionally uses its inherent power to enforce its racial prejudices against other groups in society.

## Sexism

*Sexism* is a system of beliefs or worldviews that regard women as inferior and men as superior. Like racism, there are two components: personal and institutional. Institutional sexism is the creation of and complicity with social patterns, laws, and procedures that provide implicit and explicit support of a sexist value system. Men may support and welcome women as partners in ministry, but they may still participate in institutional sexism by supporting, or neglecting to confront, systems and structures that overtly or covertly manifest sexism. Any attitude, action, or structure that excludes people from full participation in power and responsibility—economic, social, or political—or declares them inferior because of their gender is sexism.

Sexism manifests in a variety of ways. These are a few examples:

- devaluing (a legal system blames rape victims for dressing “provocatively”),
- discrimination (U.S. women on average earn only 78 cents for every dollar earned by men doing the same work),
- harassment (a boss demotes an employee who refuses to sleep with him or her),
- oppression (persecuting women pastors or firefighters, or any women working in traditionally male vocations, who are doing a “man’s” job).

**Sexual misconduct** “is a betrayal of sacred trust. It is a continuum of unwanted sexual or gender-directed behaviors by either a lay or clergy person within a ministerial relationship (paid or unpaid). It can include child abuse, adult sexual abuse, harassment, rape or sexual assault, sexualized verbal comments or visuals, unwelcome touching and advances, use of sexualized materials including pornography, stalking, sexual abuse of youth or those without capacity to consent, or misuse of the pastoral or ministerial position using sexualized conduct to take advantage of the vulnerability of another” (*The Book of Resolutions* 2012, page 136). Furthermore, “the use of pornography in church programs, on church premises or with church property by persons in ministerial roles (lay and clergy) is a form of sexual misconduct” (*The Book of Resolutions* 2012, page 162).

**Sexual harassment** is “any unwanted sexual comment, advance, or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. . . . Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender” (*The Book of Discipline*, ¶ 161.I). It can include “unwanted sexual jokes, repeated advances, touching, displays, or comments that insult, degrade, or sexually exploit women, men, elders, children, or youth” (*The Book of Resolutions* 2012, page 136).

**Sexual abuse** in ministry “is a form of sexual misconduct and occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (lay or clergy, pastor, educator, counselor, youth

leader, or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, coworker, or volunteer” (*The Book of Resolutions* 2012, page 136). Sexual misconduct within the ministerial relationship involves an abuse of power and betrayal of sacred trust, a violation of the ministerial role and exploitation of those who are vulnerable. Similarly, sexual and gender harassment are usually understood as exploitations of power relationships rather than as exclusively sexual or gender issues.

Find extensive resources on sexual ethics (including a sample sexual harassment policy) at [www.umsexualethics.org](http://www.umsexualethics.org), a ministry of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

# Christian Response to the Sins of Sexism and Racism

Advocates for inclusiveness play a vital role in the spiritual health of the church. While challenging, the work is critical to The UMC's commitment to end racism and sexism in order to bring the church closer to becoming "one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

*Theology* is the study of God and God's relation to the world. Theologians bring a range of perspectives and insights from their backgrounds and life experiences. Feminist, womanist, *mujerista*, and liberation theologies enlarge the gospel message with attention paid to issues of oppression and dominance. Advocates can make use of these theologies to help build an inclusive church, opening the door for people from different backgrounds to worship together, to grow together, and to be healed from the sins of racism and sexism, either as oppressors or as people who have been abused.

**Liberation Theology** is a protest against trampled human dignity, drawn from life experiences and biblical texts that show God's preference for the poor. It asserts that scriptural holiness and discipleship should and must shape authentic Christian responses to the problems of racism, sexism, and classism and the growing gap between poverty and privilege. (The writings of Gustavo Gutiérrez or Justo L. González provide examples.)

**Feminist Theology** includes the study and examination of Christian tradition, practices, interpretation of Scripture, and the nature of God and humanity's relationship from the perspectives and experiences of women. It rejects the notion that women are morally or spiritually inferior to men. (See the writings of Rosemary Radford Ruether or Ellen Armour.)

**Womanist Theology** draws on the strength of women, particularly African American women. The term *womanist*, first used by author Alice Walker, comes from the black folk expression of mothers to female children, "You acting womanish"—that is, like a woman. Womanist theology shows appreciation for women's strength, emotional flexibility, and, as Walker writes, a "commitment to the survival of an entire people, male and female" (*In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*, New York: Harcourt Inc., 1983), xi). (Also see the writings of Renita Weems or Katie Cannon.)

**Mujerista Theology** draws from the personal and lived experiences of Hispanic/Latina women who have grown up in the convergence of very different cultures (the *mestizaje*) and histories (Amerindian, African, and Spanish) as well as liberation theology. (See the writings of Ada María Isai-Díaz.)



# Where Does It All Lead?

The work of building an inclusive beloved community is not a trendy, politically correct pursuit. Neither is it an afterthought for the congregation after the “real work” of the church is done. Inclusiveness helps us live out a fundamental belief of our faith as Christians: every human being is created in the image of God and deserves to be treated as such.

While inclusiveness is vital, it is not enough unless it leads to equity. Inclusiveness speaks to presence, an invitation to join together with others. Equity is a matter of justice and fairness. It is a commitment to address the impact of systems, policies, procedures, and budgets on people who have historically been marginalized—people of color and women.

James tells us, “For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead” (James 2:26). In the same way, inclusion without a commitment to equity is incomplete. Inclusion begins with relationships, which can change hearts and minds. Equity ensures that systems within the church and the communities in which we live are changed as well.

As the Reverend Michael Yoshii of the California-Nevada Annual Conference writes, “Such a vision should include a place for all of God’s people, with open access to the basic necessities of life, including food, shelter, and clothing. It envisions a society in which diversity is respected and nurtured in all aspects of social, cultural, and political life, and in which spiritual and material benefits are cultivated, valued, and shared equitably.”

This is nothing less than a vision of the reign of God—on earth as it is in heaven.

## Breaking Down the Dividing Walls

*In Her Own Words: The Reverend Jacqueline D. Rose-Tucker, Clergy, North Georgia Annual Conference*

“In my last year of seminary, I had just been approved pending appointment. And I was not going to be approved because I was told there was just no place for African American women in The United Methodist Church. And my response to that was, ‘You know, I was born in this church, and God called me. And if God called me to ministry, then God has a place of service for me.’ And I just kept on moving.

“And I got an appointment. I still remember my first church; it was Union Chapel in Marietta, Georgia. We were processing in, and the song was ‘I’ve Got a Feeling [Everything’s Gonna Be Alright]’: When I arrived at that pulpit, I felt like I had indeed come home. God is faithful.

“So whatever the boundaries—racial, sexual—boundaries that humans seem to erect around us, with all kinds of excuses, God has a way of breaking that down. Ephesians 2: breaking down the dividing walls. God is good.”

# What Do I Do As an Advocate for Inclusiveness?

**A**s an advocate for inclusiveness, you can help every ministry, every committee, and every aspect of your church be intentional about the full and equal participation of women and racial/ethnic persons in the life of the church. You can also educate the congregation on issues of injustice and opportunities for reconciliation in the community and in the world.

Remember: what you do will reflect the fullness of the ministry of Christ.

## What Are My Basic Responsibilities?

As a congregational leader who has agreed to be an advocate for an inclusive church, you have accepted an exciting yet challenging role. The work that you and your committee do aims to create and celebrate a congregation that enables full and equal participation of women and racial/ethnic persons—all God's children.

There are five basic responsibilities:

1. Keep the church council and the congregation aware of the meaning of the church's commitment to racial/ethnic and gender inclusiveness in The United Methodist Church.
2. Present and recommend to the church council various opportunities for confronting racism and sexism, and help your church find opportunities for worship, fellowship, Christian nurture, and service with individuals, groups, and congregations with diverse racial/ethnic and gender diversity.
3. Work with church leaders and consult with the pastor to keep the congregation and church council informed of community and congregational issues and concerns affecting women and racial/ethnic persons; make appropriate recommendations for outreach and advocacy.
4. Model inclusiveness, which will inspire and coordinate efforts to help your congregation experience and reflect the inclusive community of God.
5. Seek training in cultural competency; then work with the congregation to claim racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity as a core value.

## Quick-Start Tips

**Build awareness.** Publish the United Methodist definition of inclusiveness in church bulletins and newsletters, or on your congregation's website or bulletin board. Advertise the congregation as one that welcomes women and men of all races and cultures.

**Present opportunities.** Share information about community events such as a cultural heritage celebration or a Women’s History Month exhibit. Encourage church members or groups to attend and discuss with one another what they learn. Plan a time to share stories or invite speakers to talk about the daily realities they face in the community, church, and workplace.

**Work with church leadership.** Build relationships with ministry groups such as missions, youth, Sunday school, United Methodist Women, and United Methodist Men. Explore concerns of the community and the world—for example, racial violence, human sex trafficking, and immigration issues—through church announcements, guest speakers, and study groups.

**Model inclusiveness.** Commit to having a worship service that brings in the praise experiences of other cultures or churches. Recruit, encourage, and support women and racial/ethnic leaders in the local church, district, and annual conference.

## What Does the Coordinator Do?

When you take on the role of coordinating your congregation’s efforts to be inclusive, you will:

- Learn about racism, sexism, discrimination, and their impact on individuals, congregations, communities, and institutions. You will participate in training events and discussion forums, read publications, visit websites, and listen to people’s experiences.
- Recruit members to serve as a ministry group. You will lead the group by sharing information and insights about inclusiveness, while also scheduling meetings, developing plans, and interpreting the group’s work to the church council and the congregation.
- Attend all meetings of the church council to share recommendations and concerns.
- Seek opportunities to work with other groups and ministries in the church, such as missions and Christian education, to help reinforce inclusiveness as the responsibility of everyone in the church.
- Lead the group in praying for guidance, strength, and positive outcomes.

## Quick-Start Tips

**Begin with prayer.** Remember that these matters touch people deeply. They are not “just politics.” Inclusiveness challenges us to live according to Jesus’ example to love our neighbor. As coordinator, you must rely on God’s guidance and inspiration to address these issues effectively.

**Study this Guideline.** Learn about the theological and historical perspectives of women’s status and roles, racial/ethnic diversity, and inclusiveness in The United Methodist Church.

**Speak with your pastor.** Meet with the pastor, the chair of the church council, and the previous chair of the inclusiveness ministry group to determine concerns, priorities, challenges, and opportunities for ministry.

**Review resources.** Read the materials listed in the resources section of this Guideline.

**Contact the conference office.** Ask to be included on mailing lists of church coordinators working in the area of inclusiveness, if you are not already. Your corresponding annual conference committee may be named Religion and Race or Status and Role of Women, or another name. Inquire about training opportunities and additional resources as well.

**Work with your ministry group.** Work with current members and recruit more members to help set goals and activities for the year that will build awareness about issues. Together, take action on concerns of racial/ethnic and sexual injustice.

**Get in touch with community groups and other church groups.** Work with these other groups to learn and to plan activities together.

## How Is the Ministry Group Organized?

Because the local church has been given the freedom to organize to best meet its needs, there are several options for organizing the work of inclusiveness:

An individual may be elected as coordinator of a ministry group, working with the church council to plan inclusive church initiatives and ministries and bringing issues of injustice and opportunities for reconciliation to the attention and consciousness of the congregation.

In accordance with ¶254 of *The Book of Discipline*, the charge conference may elect annually a coordinator or ministry group chairperson for any or all of these areas: Christian unity and interreligious concerns, church and society, community volunteers, education, evangelism, higher education and campus ministry, missions, prayer advocacy, religion and race, status and role of women, stewardship, and worship.

Where necessary, the charge conference may combine the assignments of coordinators or ministry groups. For example, an individual may be elected as chairperson of outreach to help the congregation with concerns related to religion and race, status and role of women, Christian unity and interreligious concerns, church and society, and missions.

In this Guideline, we use the term *coordinator(s)* to refer to the person or persons who carry out the ministry group's leadership role of advocating for an inclusive church. Two areas of particular emphasis are religion and race, and status and role of women. These areas correspond to the agencies of the general church that are charged with working toward the full and equal responsibility of racial/ethnic persons and women in the total life of The United Methodist Church: the General Commission on Religion and Race, and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. Annual conferences and districts may also have groups that address issues of inclusiveness, using the corresponding names of the Conference Commission on Religion and Race and the Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

## How Do I Relate to Other Groups in My Church?

### The Charge Conference

According to ¶247.1 of *The Book of Discipline*, "the charge conference shall be the connecting link between the local church and the general Church and shall have general oversight of the church council."

## The Church Council

The church council shall provide for the planning and implementation of programs of “nurture, outreach, witness, and resources in the local church” and for the “administration of its organizational and temporal life” (the *Discipline*, ¶252). As coordinator of the ministry group, you are a member of the church council (or other appropriate body) along with other church leaders, through which you address the needs and opportunities of the ministry group.

## Other Program Areas

The coordinator of the ministry group is encouraged to work with leaders of all program areas of the local church, giving particular attention to church and society, United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men. These local units are committed to mission outreach, advocacy, and spiritual growth and transformation. They are partners in addressing racism and sexism and in fostering full and equal responsibility and participation of all in the life of the congregation while seeking to eliminate racism and sexism in the local community, across the nation, and around the world.

### Five Things Any Advocate Can Do

Even as coordinator, don’t take on all the work yourself! Empower others and build a team in your congregation to become advocates for inclusiveness with these ideas anyone can do:

1. Write a series of articles for the church newsletter or website about racial/ethnic or gender inclusiveness. Encourage feedback from readers.
2. Create a true/false quiz that relates to popular perceptions about people of different races and ethnicities and about the comparative roles of women and men. Create the quiz as a bulletin insert; answer the questions and discuss issues during a mission moment the following Sunday. Ask your pastor to preach a sermon that highlights these perceptions from a biblical perspective.
3. Contact a local Equal Employment Opportunity office or justice advocacy center, a Human Relations Commission, or the Department of Social Services to get statistics about sexual and racial harassment and discrimination, or sexual abuse of women and children in your area. Ask how the church can support positive changes.
4. Create a bulletin board in the church that displays news and editorial articles, photos and illustrations on concerns related to sexism and racism from local, national, and international perspectives (e.g., racial profiling, human trafficking, sexual harassment, domestic violence).
5. Compare your church’s demographics to that of the neighborhood and city or town in which it is located. What communities could your church approach to build a more inclusive congregation? Find more information at [www.perceptgroup.com](http://www.perceptgroup.com). Many annual conferences purchase plans, so it is a free service to local churches; check with your conference.



# Models for Racial/Ethnic Inclusiveness

## An “All Nations” Community and Church

When Culmore UMC was first planted in 1953 in Bailey’s Crossroads, Virginia, just outside Washington, the community was primarily middle-class and white, with many government workers. Single-family suburban homes began creeping into Virginia farm country. The church reflected this demographic, opening its doors to welcome those in its midst.

How times can change.

Today, the Culmore community still reflects its surroundings. Now the church includes members originally from Sierra Leone, Ghana, Brazil, Mexico, Eritrea, the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Korea, China, and Iran, along with original members from Virginia. The church’s vision is to be “a house of prayer for all peoples” (see Isaiah 56:7) where all God’s people are welcomed to table, nurtured and transformed to be Christ to others in the world.

Even as it opens the doors to the world, the church brings the world to northern Virginia. The All Nations Choir leads worship on Sundays. Once a month, there is both an African and a Filipino vespers service, allowing members to gather for praise, prayer, and sharing of testimonies, and welcoming others as well.

Commitment to inclusion and justice moves beyond the sanctuary on Sundays. At Culmore, volunteers teach English as a Second Language classes. They advocate for immigration reform and affordable housing in their community. Church members are also trying to discern how to respond to the increasing number of day laborers and homeless people in their neighborhood.

“What we experience today in worship is this ongoing work of God, moving the hearts and minds of God’s people to a ministry of outreaching love,” the church proclaims.

Here are some ideas for ways your congregation can bring inclusiveness for racial/ethnic persons into the life of the community. What ideas of your own can you add?

- Develop plans to maintain a mutual relationship with a congregation of a different racial/ethnic background. Plan and implement large- and small-group activities together.
- Integrate worship experiences from different cultures, drawing on experiences at global gatherings, annual conference, or through videos and broadcasts of services.
- Make plans to observe and celebrate Black History Month (February), Women’s History Month (March), Asian-Pacific Island American Heritage Month (May),

Hispanic/Latino(a) Heritage Month (mid- September to mid-October), and Native American Heritage Month (November). Be sure to also observe and contribute to church-wide offerings on United Methodist Special Sundays—especially Human Relations Day (in January), Native American Ministries Sunday (usually in April), and World Communion Sunday (in October). Order the interpretative materials, which feature racial/ethnic offering recipients, from United Methodist Communications.

- Offer a four- to six-week Bible study that explores the biblical foundation of inclusiveness, the nature of racism, and diversity as one of God’s gifts.
- Publicize training experiences for people who want to work in the area of racial justice and reconciliation.
- Engage a facilitator who can assist white persons to be self-reflective by evaluating terms or images that may be perceived by others as stereotyped, degrading, or hurtful and by examining their own attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, especially in regard to what is known as “white privilege.”
- Identify and challenge manifestations of racism in the printed and electronic media in your community.
- Have pulpit exchange experiences that will allow the church to hear the gospel proclaimed by a woman or a clergy person of a different racial/ethnic group.
- Use a hymn or song each month from another racial/ethnic tradition and language. *Global Praise* hymnals, published by the General Board of Global Ministries and available from Cokesbury, are an excellent source for choruses.
- Encourage the church to use bulletin covers that reflect racial/ethnic inclusiveness.
- Teach the congregation short prayers in other languages for use in worship.
- Use the first language of hymns, if not the entire hymn, sing a refrain in the first language. “Pues Si Vivimos” (“When We Are Living”), *The United Methodist Hymnal*, #356 is a good example.

## Changing Congregations and Communities

One goal for racial/ethnic inclusiveness is to increase the congregation’s awareness about its own community and to respond to any racial or cultural transitions that are occurring not just within the church but in the surrounding community. To do this, the church can:

- Identify the variety of racial/ethnic and cultural groups in the community. Appoint a task team to gather demographic information about the neighborhood and conduct a needs assessment among your neighbors. Present this information to the church council.
- Review current ministries of the church to determine whether or not they address the needs and interests of people who live in your community. Adjust ministries and create new ones, if necessary, in consultation with the church’s neighbors.
- Encourage church leadership to identify one or more congregations or community groups of a different racial/ethnic makeup with which an ongoing learning and working partnership can be established.

- Guide the congregation as it explores and addresses justice issues that affect the community.
- Encourage the congregation to give financial support for projects that will benefit the community where the church is located or one nearby that it wants to serve.
- Provide opportunities for fellowship at least twice a year that will help build ongoing relationships between the church and diverse members of the community.

## **Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Appointments**

Another goal for racial/ethnic inclusiveness is to cultivate a caring environment in which a viable multicultural or multiracial/ethnic ministry may occur through the appointment of a pastor from a different racial/ethnic background than the majority of the congregation. As an advocate for inclusiveness, or coordinator of this ministry, you can:

- Provide leadership to ensure that the committee on pastor-parish (or staff-parish) relations is supportive of the concept of cross-racial, cross-cultural appointment, the open itineracy concept.
- Help the congregation understand that cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are an important and beneficial part of a Christian commitment to inclusiveness.
- Seek pastoral input through sermons, Bible study, meetings, and church newsletters to provide biblical and theological insight about inclusiveness.
- Ask the church council and appropriate ministry groups to provide opportunities for the congregation to experience varied styles and forms of worship.
- Organize prayer and study groups that focus specifically on the vision of racial and gender inclusiveness for the congregation.
- Seek cultural competency training for the congregation in order to expand knowledge of cultural dynamics and communication styles that impact cross-racial and cross-cultural ministry settings.

# Models for Gender Equality and Sexual Wholeness

## Listening for the Needs

The Reverend Darlene E. R. Resling serves a joint appointment as pastor of the Highland Mills and Mountainville UMCs in southern New York. Both small, rural congregations, they have been in the area for more than 150 years.

Along with welcoming Resling as pastor, both congregations have women serving prominently as lay leaders. Resling is also very pleased with how the men's groups and women's groups support each other in the work that they do both locally and globally.

"They are constantly listening and encouraging each other and that ignites a lot of creative partnerships," she says. The women supported the Men's Ministry breakfast that sent aid to Haiti. The men returned the support to the Women's Ministry by serving their brunch last year. Both groups coordinated the church-wide yard sale in June.

Listening is an important skill cultivated by these congregations, which also make a special effort to attend to the needs of women facing domestic abuse. The churches have emergency cards for women who need help or support.

"If a person is missing one to two weeks in a row, I call to see if all is okay," Resling says. "We have a visitation team in place who will visit in case of particular needs." The congregations also collect toiletries and other supplies for the residents of Safe Homes, a women's emergency shelter in New York's Orange County (Adapted from *The Flyer*, Volume 41, Issue 8, 2010).

## Ways to Move toward Inclusiveness and Justice

The United Methodist Church recognizes that every person—woman or man—is a full and equal part of God's human family. The church is committed to ending gender inequity so that there is full and equal responsibility and participation for women in the life and mission of the church. There are many ways your congregation can work to bring about inclusiveness of and justice for women in your church and community. Here are some ideas that you can adapt to fit your situation.

- Recruit women as committee members and leaders in all aspects of congregational life, including traditional (e.g., nursery workers) and nontraditional (e.g., trustees) roles. Establish a mentoring program to develop and support women who are new to church leadership.
- Tell your district superintendent and bishop that your church will welcome a woman pastor as leader of your congregation.

- Ask pastors and lay speakers to create sermons and Bible studies on women in the Bible, and to use sermon illustrations that include the lives, challenges, and contributions of historic and contemporary women.
- Encourage the pastor and worship leaders to use gender-inclusive language in the printed bulletin and spoken word. Most official United Methodist publications use the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible or the Common English Bible, which employ inclusive language about humanity.
- Support community organizations that champion women's equality and empowerment.
- Create a sexual harassment policy to help ensure safety and justice for women and men.
- Invite speakers from advocacy centers or domestic violence shelters to speak about violence against women.
- Encourage members to review their employers' policies on gender equality in hiring and addressing sexual harassment.
- Offer worship services for discernment of gender injustice. Encourage persons who have been victimized to come forward for support and healing.

## Inclusiveness of Women: Roles and Opportunities

Three key words have come to signify the major areas of work of this ministry group on behalf of women: *advocate*, *catalyst*, and *monitor*. There are specific opportunities to live out these roles in the life of the church. Consider these opportunities.

An **advocate** speaks on behalf of women, enabling them to claim their rightful place in decision-making arenas and providing the church with the wisdom, life experiences, and perspectives of women. To be an advocate is to stand beside a person, sharing both pain and joy.

- Work with individual women, both lay and clergy, who experience discrimination as employees or volunteer leaders.
- Work with women who experience sex discrimination in carrying out designated leadership roles or in receiving services from the church.
- Advocate on behalf of an individual woman who is experiencing discrimination, harassment, or violence.
- Work to bring about changes on behalf of all women or particular groups of women: laywomen, younger women, racial/ethnic women, immigrant women, clergywomen, single women, and low-income women.

A person serving as a **catalyst** seeks to bring together previously separate and seemingly incompatible elements, revealing new perceptions, new roles, and new empowerment for women in the church and in the world.

- Take an inventory of the needs and expectations of women in your church.
- Identify and reach out to women and groups of women whose needs are not being met by the church.
- Encourage women to take responsibility for church leadership.



- Work with other church ministry groups and with women to ensure full and equal participation.

The role of a **monitor** is to examine the ongoing life and commitment of the church in areas related to inclusiveness.

- Pay attention to sermons, church publications, and meetings for biblical and other faith stories about women and that portray women as spiritual and moral leaders.
- Evaluate how gender-inclusive and exclusive language and imagery are used in worship and church media.
- Compare the number of women and men in leadership and the quality of their participation in the life of the church. Are women involved in forming policies as well as carrying out policies set by others? Are women and men represented on all church committees and ministries? Or are women pigeonholed as Sunday school teachers and kitchen workers, while men serve as ushers and finance committee leaders?
- Survey and talk with church members about their attitudes toward women in pastoral and lay leadership and inclusive language.
- Report results of monitoring annually (or every two years) to measure changes and provide opportunities for reflection on and improvement in the inclusiveness of women.

# Create and Celebrate an Inclusive Church

## Program Ideas

### Worship

- Preach sermons on issues related to racism and sexism and how to overcome them. Use stories of biblical and heroic women and racial/ethnic persons in sermon illustrations.
- Create or use litanies that reflect inclusiveness and are written by women and people of color who are preachers and theologians.
- Use gender-inclusive and expansive language in worship and prayers.
- Seek out hymns, prayers, and songs that name God and humanity. It is also acceptable to change lyrics and prayers: use “Holy God” instead of “Our Father,” or change “all mankind” to “all humanity.”
- Use music from different cultures as praise choruses, prayer responses, and anthems. Invite choirs and singing groups from different races and cultures to sing at worship services.
- Celebrate racial/ethnic heritage months. See the General Commission on Religion and Race website ([www.gcorr.org](http://www.gcorr.org)) for ideas. For Women’s History Month, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women ([www.gcsrw.org](http://www.gcsrw.org)) provides free bulletin inserts and covers during the month of March to help churches honor women’s history.

### Christian Education

- Offer Bible studies and Sunday school lessons on the theological issues of racial/ethnic inclusiveness and the need for full inclusion based on gender.
- Invite guest speakers to assemblies and other gatherings to address community issues of justice.
- Use materials that reflect the inclusive community of The United Methodist Church in pictures, stories, and quotations.
- Examine curriculum for inclusion and diversity and avoid those that pander to stereotypes. Are women portrayed as preachers, leaders, and heroes? Are people of color seen only as recipients of charity, or are they also mission workers and

leaders? Are people from outside the United States shown as “exotic” or “different,” or are their cultures and language honored and respected?

### **Mission Outreach**

- Make a difference in the world by providing financial, volunteer, and other forms of support to projects that work to end racism and sexism.
- Offer opportunities for the entire church to use the mission study materials produced by United Methodist Women. Each year offers studies on geographical, spiritual growth, and issue-oriented themes.
- Organize participation—including children and youth—in rallies, vigils, and protest marches to speak up for justice.
- Find and offer opportunities to host or participate in dialogues that explore race, racism, gender, and sexism and ways to achieve understanding, solidarity, reconciliation, and meaningful interracial relationships. Visit [www.everyday-democracy.org](http://www.everyday-democracy.org) for resources and guidance.

### **Youth**

- Offer young people the vision of a community where diversity and inclusiveness are welcomed.
- Plan mission opportunities for young people to serve and be served by people of a different racial/ethnic group.
- Organize social events (sports, board games, movies, concerts) and invite teen girls and boys from different racial/ethnic backgrounds to participate together and to help select, plan, and promote the events and activities.
- Work with age-level coordinators to plan programs for teenage girls that promote self-esteem, assertiveness, and leadership skills and that teach teenage boys sensitivity and appreciation for equal participation in ministry.
- Engage both girls and boys in such ministries as ushering, worship helpers, soup kitchen and clean-up duty, working with younger children, physical games and play, and classes on etiquette and manners. Don't force them into activities and roles based solely on gender.
- Provide education about sexual and physical abuse and sexual harassment, including discussions about date rape, abstinence, responsible dating, and other important issues.
- Monitor church activities and communication among youth to identify, discuss, and correct inappropriate or offensive speech, behavior, and activities.
- Engage youth in a study of historic persons and events that challenged the practices of racism and sexism locally and nationally.

### **Children**

- Include pictures, stories, and languages that are inclusive of men, women, boys and girls from different cultures and ethnicities when working with children.

- Open Sunday school and Vacation Bible School to children in the community who are of different races and ethnic backgrounds.
- Use missionary visits to familiarize children with the songs, stories, and life experiences of children from other cultures.
- Select plays, songs, poetry, and Bible stories that demonstrate God's gift of gender and racial/ethnic inclusiveness.
- Teach children, using age-appropriate language and materials, about sexual and physical abuse.
- Develop a "safe sanctuary" policy for your congregation to keep children, youth, and vulnerable adults safe from sexual abuse and harassment. Include requirements for training staff and volunteers who work with children and do background checks.

### **Recruitment of Church Leaders**

- Nominate and encourage women to serve in positions that may be traditionally held by men—and vice versa.
- Be intentional about having gender equity in the selection of worship leaders, committee chairpersons, Sunday school teachers, and Bible study leaders.
- Provide support and advocacy for the inclusion of racial/ethnic persons and women in church and community leadership roles.
- Train leaders to recognize and address sexism and racism, and to welcome and interact more effectively with people from other cultural contexts.

## **Checklist for an Inclusive Church**

As the ministry group(s) working to bring about the full and equal participation of women and racial/ethnic persons in the life of the church, leaders may use this checklist to begin examining behaviors and attitudes toward inclusiveness by race, ethnicity, culture, and gender.

### **Attitudes**

\_\_\_\_\_ Leaders show by words and actions that they regard all persons as equally beloved creations of God, made in God's image, and worthy of God's blessings.

\_\_\_\_\_ A variety of races, ethnicities, cultures, and life circumstances are included in all facets of the church's life, such as stories and illustrations in sermons and Christian education materials.

\_\_\_\_\_ Leaders in the congregation receive training on sexism, racism, and classism in order to encourage ministries of inclusion within a diverse community.

\_\_\_\_\_ Experts and leaders are sought from diverse backgrounds for duties in the life of the church. For example, women and racial/ethnic persons are recruited when the church needs attorneys, building contractors, architects, workshop leaders, and guest preachers.

\_\_\_\_\_ Leaders face the reality that sexual abuse and racial/gender harassment may happen, even in a faith community. Therefore, they welcome resources and education

about sexual abuse and develop effective policies and procedures to help the church prevent and address sexual misconduct.

## **Education**

\_\_\_\_\_ Church leaders know and teach that the congregation is connected to the larger United Methodist Church and that the larger Church is diverse—globally, nationally, and locally.

\_\_\_\_\_ Church school members use curriculum that reflects the diversity of the Christian community and society in graphics, photos, languages, and experiences.

\_\_\_\_\_ Pictures and symbols representing women and men from many racial/ethnic, cultural, and gender heritages of both the church and society are visible in the church (banners, art, figurines).

\_\_\_\_\_ Church leaders and members have studied The United Methodist Church’s “Charter for Racial/Ethnic Justice,” using the study guide prepared by United Methodist Women (<http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/what-we-do/service-and-advocacy/mission-focus-issues/racial-justice/charte>).

\_\_\_\_\_ Church leaders have been trained in cultural competency and model these skills within the congregation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Lay and clergy leaders in the church have studied “Women Called to Ministry,” a six-part study on the history of women’s leadership and preaching in Christian history and the contemporary United Methodist Church.

\_\_\_\_\_ Staff and leaders of the congregation do business with establishments that are owned or managed by women and racial/ethnic persons and when purchasing goods and services for the congregation.

## **Worship**

\_\_\_\_\_ All members have opportunities to serve in various aspects of the worship service—as ushers, liturgists, readers, preachers—in ways that model inclusiveness.

\_\_\_\_\_ Women and men are invited as guest preachers based on their abilities. Women are not invited solely to speak for a Mother’s Day service or African American pastors to preach during Black History Month but at other times as well.

\_\_\_\_\_ Staff and leaders use a range of inclusive language and images from the Bible, tradition, and experience when speaking of God.

\_\_\_\_\_ The congregation has opportunities in worship to experience music, liturgy, stories, wisdom sayings, and prayers that reflect a diversity of cultures and both genders.

## **Leadership**

\_\_\_\_\_ All members of the congregation with appropriate skills and interests have opportunities to share their gifts in the church’s ministries and committees as members and leaders.

\_\_\_\_\_ The church welcomes and embraces women and men as pastors appointed to the congregation, regardless of their ethnicity, culture, and gender.

\_\_\_\_\_ All persons are welcomed to work in positions that fit their gifts without limiting them to stereotypical roles. For example, men can staff the kitchen; women can manage and count money.

\_\_\_\_\_ The church responds to the needs of all its members by providing child care, accessible facilities, and directional signs as evidence of its hospitality.

## **Community**

\_\_\_\_\_ The congregation has opportunities on a regular basis for socializing, worship, mission work, and celebration with persons from varied backgrounds and experiences.

\_\_\_\_\_ Community-building opportunities include sharing meals, serving on athletic teams, and working on community projects together.

## **Mission and Outreach**

\_\_\_\_\_ Church organizations advocate for the dignity and rights of all persons in the community.

\_\_\_\_\_ Preparation for and work in mission trips in another country include orientation about the cultural norms and etiquette in the host nation, and workers are encouraged to learn at least to say, “please” and “thank you” in that nation’s or culture’s language.

\_\_\_\_\_ Outreach programs include projects that encourage members to form lasting relationships with persons from a variety of racial/ethnic backgrounds.

\_\_\_\_\_ Ministry groups and the congregation work together on issues of justice in regard to racism and sexism in the community.

\_\_\_\_\_ Creating an inclusive church and community becomes every member’s agenda and not only the work of a few persons.

## **Personnel**

\_\_\_\_\_ The committee on pastor-parish relations (or staff-parish relations) has developed a process for ensuring equal and equitable employment hiring practices in regard to women and racial/ethnic persons. The committee should intentionally recruit women and racial/ethnic pastors and staff— preferably more than one—for traditionally male and white roles so that the congregation can experience diversity and inclusiveness among its leadership.

\_\_\_\_\_ The committee on pastor-parish relations (or staff-parish relations) has developed sexual and racial/ethnic harassment prevention policies and provides training for all staff and the congregation.

\_\_\_\_\_ The committee on pastor-parish relations (or staff-parish relations) has developed a local church policy on sexual misconduct and has educated the congregation on these matters. A sample policy and guidelines are available at [www.umsexualethics.org](http://www.umsexualethics.org).

\_\_\_\_\_ Church leadership has been trained in cultural competency and specifically is prepared to model for the congregation respectful and responsive dialogue when it comes to cross-racial/cross-cultural ministries.

# Resources

## Contact Us

For ongoing assistance in carrying out the work of inclusiveness, two general church agencies serve the needs of advocates at the conference, district, and local church level. Please contact these commissions with your questions and struggles. Please also share with them your joys and successes on the journey to inclusiveness. One advocate's story can inform, nurture, and encourage another.

### **The General Commission on Religion and Race**

Suite 400

100 Maryland Avenue, NE

Washington, DC 20002-5620

Voice: (202) 547-2271

Fax: (202) 547-0358

E-mail: [info@gcorr.org](mailto:info@gcorr.org)

Website: [www.gcorr.org](http://www.gcorr.org)

### **The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women**

Suite 1009

77 W. Washington St.

Chicago, IL 60602

Voice: (312) 346-4900 or (800) 523-8390

Fax: (312) 346-3986

E-mail: [gcsrw@gcsrw.org](mailto:gcsrw@gcsrw.org)

Websites: [www.gcsrw.org](http://www.gcsrw.org) and [www.umsexualethics.org](http://www.umsexualethics.org)

## General Resources

*The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church.* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016). This basic reference for our church's organization offers information on local church structures as well as annual conference and general church structures.

*The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church.* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016). Includes statements adopted by the church's General Conferences on contemporary moral, social, and spiritual issues, including issues of racial and gender justice.

*Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation, 2017–2020.* (Nashville: Cokesbury, 2016). A set of booklets (including this volume) that provides guidance for persons leading ministry groups and fulfilling administrative roles in the local church. Also available online in digital format.

*When the Church Speaks: A Guide to the Social Principles.* A booklet that gives the social policies of The United Methodist Church as set forth by General Conference.

Monitoring forms to help you evaluate church meetings, worship services, and other events for gender and racial inclusiveness are available at [www.gcorr.org](http://www.gcorr.org).

## On Racial Justice and Antiracism

Resources produced and distributed by the General Commission on Religion and Race:

*Confronting the Sin*, by Elaine Jenkins (available in English and Spanish).

*The Gift of Diversity*, by Eric H. F. Law.

*The Ministry of Racial Reconciliation.* A Comprehensive Plan for Making Cross-Racial /Cultural Appointments in The United Methodist Church.

*Overcoming Racism's Economic Legacies*, by J. Phillip Wogaman.

*Truth and Wholeness: Replacing White Privilege with God's Promise* (2008). This 16-minute video explores the concern of white privilege as a key aspect of racism that allows the white majority population to discriminate against and exert control over racial /ethnic minority groups. A companion booklet is included. Coproduced with the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (now the Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships).

## Other Resources Recommended by the General Commission on Religion and Race

*The Africana Worship Book*, volumes I, II, and III, edited by Valerie Bridgeman Davis and Safiyah Fosua (Discipleship Resources).

*Breaking the Bonds: A Workshop on Internalized Racial Oppression.* (Minneapolis: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2003).

*Inclusion: Making Room for Grace*, by Eric H. F. Law (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000). *Many Faces, One Church: A Manual for Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Ministry*, by Ernest Lyght, Glory Dharmaraj, and Jacob Dharmaraj (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006).

*Meeting God at the Boundaries: Cross-Cultural—Cross-Racial Appointments*, by Lucia Ann McSpadden (General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 2003). Companion volume, *A Manual for Church Leaders* (2006).

*Quest for Inclusiveness: Firsthand Perspectives on Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Ministry in The United Methodist Church*, by Dr. Austin Frederick, Jr. (John Wesley Press of the Southwest Texas Conference, UMC, San Antonio, 2005).

*The Racial and Ethnic Presence in American Methodism: A Bibliography*, compiled by C. Jarret Gray Jr. *Steps Toward Wholeness: Learning and Repentance* (A Study Guide



for United Methodist Congregations in Preparation for an Act of Repentance for Racism and Pan-Methodist Conversations on Union). Prepared by Carolyn Henninger Oehler, PhD (General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns and the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church, 1999).

Visit [www.gcorr.org](http://www.gcorr.org) for more resources distributed or recommended by the General Commission on Religion and Race.

## On Gender Justice, Sexual Ethics, and Antisexism

*Disruptive Christian Ethics: When Racism and Women's Lives Matter* by Traci C. West (Westminster John Knox, 2006).

"Fiduciary Duty and Sacred Trust" by Darryl W. Stephens in *Living the Sacred Trust: Clergy Sexual Ethics* (General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 2010; [www.gbhem.org](http://www.gbhem.org)).

*The Flyer*, quarterly newsletter of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW), 77 W. Washington St., Suite 1009, Chicago, IL 60602. Available by subscription from GCSRW. Past copies available online at [www.gcsr.org](http://www.gcsr.org).

*Healthy Disclosure: Solving Communication Quandaries in Congregations* by Kibbie Simmons Ruth and Karen A. McClintock (Alban Institute, 2007).

*The Journey Is Our Home. A History of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women* by Carolyn Henninger Oehler (order print copies by calling (312) 346-4900 or email [gcsr@gcsr.org](mailto:gcsr@gcsr.org)).

*Making a Way Out of No Way: A Womanist Theology* by Monica Coleman (Fortress Press, 2008).

*New Feminist Christianity: Many Voices, Many Views* edited by Mary Hunt and Diann Neu (Skylight Paths Publishing, 2010).

*Rock, Shepherd, Friend: Enriching Our Images of God*, a local church study guide on inclusive language, prepared by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

*The Sacred Selves of Adolescent Girls: Hard Stories of Race, Class, and Gender* edited by Evelyn L. Parker (Pilgrim Press, 2006).

*Sex in the Forbidden Zone* by Peter Rutter (Fawcett Crest, 1989).

*Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches* by Carolyn Holderread Heggen (Herald Press, 1996).

*Sexual Violence: The Sin Revisited* by Marie M. Fortune (Pilgrim Press, 2005).

*Telling Their Stories: The History of Women in the Local Church, A Resource Packet* by the General Commission on Archives and History (<http://www.gc.ah.org/resources/womens-history>).

*Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World* by Serene Jones (Westminster John Knox, 2009).

*Walk Together Children: Black and Womanist Theologies, Church, and Theological Education* edited by Dwight N. Hopkins and Linda T. Thomas (Wipf and Stock, 2010).

“Women Called to Ministry,” a six-session curriculum for local churches that traces the history of women preachers, teachers, and prophets from the Old and New Testaments through the contemporary church. Published by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (<http://gcsrw.org/wc2m>).

Visit [www.umsexualethics.org](http://www.umsexualethics.org) for resources and information on sexual misconduct in ministerial relationships between adults.

## **UMC Agencies & Helpful Links**

General Board of Church and Society, [www.umc-gbcs.org](http://www.umc-gbcs.org), 202-488-5600; Service Center, 1-800-967-0880

General Board of Discipleship (d/b/a Discipleship Ministries), [www.umcdiscipleship.org](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org), 877-899-2780; Discipleship Resources, <http://bookstore.upperroom.org>, 1-800-972-0433; The Upper Room, [www.upperroom.org](http://www.upperroom.org), 1-800-972-0433; email: [info@umcdiscipleship.org](mailto:info@umcdiscipleship.org).

General Board of Global Ministries, [www.umcmmission.org](http://www.umcmmission.org), 1-800-862-4246 or 212-870-3600; email: [info@umcmmission.org](mailto:info@umcmmission.org)

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, [www.gbhem.org](http://www.gbhem.org), 615-340-7400

General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, [www.gbophb.org](http://www.gbophb.org), 847-869-4550

General Commission on Archives and History, [www.gcuh.org](http://www.gcuh.org), 973-408-3189

General Commission on Religion & Race, [www.gcorr.org](http://www.gcorr.org), 202-547-2271; email: [info@gcorr.org](mailto:info@gcorr.org)

General Commission on the Status & Role of Women, [www.gcsrw.org](http://www.gcsrw.org), 1-800-523-8390

General Commission on United Methodist Men, [www.gcumm.org](http://www.gcumm.org), 615-340-7145

General Council on Finance and Administration, [www.gcfa.org](http://www.gcfa.org), 866-367-4232 or 615-329-3393

Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting (General Commission on United Methodist Men), [www.gcumm.org](http://www.gcumm.org), 615-340-7145

The United Methodist Publishing House, [www.umph.org](http://www.umph.org), 615-749-6000; Curric-U-Phone, 1-800-251-8591; Cokesbury, [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com), 1-800-672-1789

United Methodist Communications, [www.umcom.org](http://www.umcom.org), 615-742-5400; EcuFilm, 1-888-346-3862; InfoServ, email: [infoserv@umcom.org](mailto:infoserv@umcom.org); *Interpreter Magazine*, [www.interpretermagazine.org](http://www.interpretermagazine.org), 615-742-5441

United Methodist Women, [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org); 212-870-3900

**For additional resources, contact your annual conference office.**