

all individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or any other form of differentiation, as full and equal participants in the life and work of the Church (§4).

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this body affirms its commitment to seeking unity and compassion in the midst of diversity and disagreement and to working together to share the love of Christ with the world, calling upon all United Methodist congregations and organizations to work together to create a Church that truly reflects the persevering, saving, and sanctifying love of God, knowing that the Holy Spirit will guide and lead us in the way that is faithful to our calling and best for the future of the Church (§§6, 130, 131; BOR 8002).

### Rationale:

The United Methodist Church emphasizes unity within diversity, upholding historical doctrines while addressing current societal needs. Amidst schism, this resolution celebrates our connection, emphasizing global relevance by building bridges of compassion, understanding, and rejecting discrimination. It prioritizes Christ's teachings to reflect God's love driven by the Holy Spirit's guidance.

### R9999

Petition Number: 20844-CB-R9999; Christy, Scott - Evanston, IL, USA for New Federation of Asian American United Methodists.

#### **Addressing racial-ethnic discrimination and gender-based violence in the Asian American context**

New National Federation of Asian American United Methodists (NFAAUM) condemns increasing discrimination against racial-ethnic minorities, especially Asian Americans during Covid-19 and beyond. New National Federation of Asian American United Methodists (NFAAUM) calls upon The General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) to develop leadership training materials especially culturally- appropriate, language-specific resources for the racial/ethnic minority communities to address hate and violence.

Gender-based violence is a shadow pandemic. New Federation of Asian American United Methodists (NFAAUM) calls upon The General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR), The General Commission on

the Status and Role of Women (GCSROW), and United Women of Faith (UWF) to provide action-oriented training to address gender violence, and trauma-healing resources to racial/ethnic minority women and girls who still experience the continued impact of Covid-19.

We call upon the Annual Conferences to challenge their respective local churches to be informed on these issues and to engage in advocacy efforts to stand against discrimination against racial/ethnic minorities and to address gender-violence.

### R9999

Petition Number: 20845-CB-R9999; Arroyo, Giovanni - Washington, DC, USA for General Commission on Religion and Race.

#### **Overcoming Ableism and Audism**

We live for a day in which those who are nondisabled will not oppress those who are disabled, and those who hear with their ears will not oppress those who do not. We hope for the day when all, regardless of disability or deafness, will experience inclusion and belonging in the Body of Christ. Ableism and audism are barriers to the coming of that day; they are an injustice that undermines the witness of the Church in the world.

□ Ableism is the negative bias and discrimination towards persons with disabilities that limits full participation through attitudinal barriers (e.g., lack of disability awareness and hospitality), architectural barriers (e.g., stairs, narrow doorways) and programmatic barriers within faith communities. Ableism is prejudice against disabled bodies in preference of normal bodies.

□ Audism is the negative bias and discrimination towards persons who are d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing that limits their discipleship and leadership potential due to communication barriers (e.g., not having captions or sign language interpreters), the lack of cultural awareness (hindering diversity and inclusion), and the impediment of hospitality by faith communities.

#### **The Theological Imperative**

Our faith presents us with three imperatives in combatting ableism and audism.

Invitation: In Jesus' parable of the Great Banquet, the king commands, "Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame" (Luke 14:21) "so my house may be full" (Luke 4:23). This is a proclamation to value disabled and d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons and to include them in the life of the Church.

Preparation: When an invitation is issued, preparations must be made. When Isaiah prepared the people to return from exile, he urged them, “Clear a path in the desert! Make a straight road for the Lord our God. Fill in the valleys; flatten every hill and mountain. Level the rough and rugged ground. Then the glory of the Lord will appear to all to see” (Isa. 40:3-5). For disabled and d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, returning from exile means freedom from discriminatory attitudes and barriers. Making the path smooth is not for God’s benefit, but for those who have difficulty navigating rough ground. The coming of the Messiah includes the divine call to work for full accessibility so that persons of all embodiments may return from exile.

Formation: The resurrected body of Jesus Christ still bears the signs of wounds that are the marks of disability. Therefore, what many commonly understand as disability or differences in embodiment are incorporated into God’s very nature in Christ’s Ascension (Luke 24:36-53). Our formation as Christ’s disciples includes recognizing and lifting up the gifts of all embodiments and working against all forms of prejudice that deny access to human flourishing for all persons.

#### **The Call to Thought, Action, and Service**

These imperatives are a call to United Methodists to free ourselves from ableism and audism.

We call upon each United Methodist General Agencies, and all who create church publications, policies, and programs, to:

1. Utilize the resources for promoting awareness and inclusion such as those developed by the Disability Ministry Committee and the Committee on Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Ministries along with the caucuses: The Association of Ministers with Disabilities of The United Methodist Church and The United Methodist Congress of the Deaf.

2. Each agency or entity will assign a group or individual the responsibility of reviewing church documents to eliminate ableism and audism in teaching, policy, worship resources, and official statements.

3. Integrate ableism and audism awareness into diversity and inclusion resources and training for ordained clergy, candidates for ordination, local licensed pastors, deaconesses and home missionaries, and laity.

4. Faithfully engage in and support anti-ableism and anti-audism advocacy by all United Methodists.

We call on local churches, annual conferences, and episcopal leaders to:

1. Implement an Annual Conference staff or volunteer accessibility coordinator position to support local church and annual conference commitments to accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities and who are d/Deaf

and hard-of-hearing through awareness, accessibility, and inclusion training.

2. Intentionally promote and engage in Disability Awareness Sunday (§265) and Deaf Awareness Sunday services and/or activities to educate congregations about ableism and audism. These events should utilize persons from the disability and d/Deaf communities along with resources from the Disability Ministries Committee, the Committee of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Ministries along with the caucuses: The Association of Ministers with Disabilities of The United Methodist Church and The United Methodist Congress of the Deaf to tell of contributions of disabled and d/Deaf persons of the Body of Christ.

3. Include anti-ableism and anti-audism concepts in diversity and inclusion training including confirmation, Bible studies, and youth group activities. This may include the use of special bulletins, multimedia promotion, sign language classes, guest speakers, and observances of national disability or d/Deaf awareness-related commemoration dates.

4. Live into the Social Principles (§162) by including persons with disabilities and person who are d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing in worship, discipleship growth, mission work, leadership roles, pursuit of ordained ministry, and outreach ministries so all may utilize their gifts.

### **R9999**

Petition Number: 20846-CB-R9999; Larson, Mary - Seal Beach, CA, USA.

#### **The Right to Reproductive Health Care**

“The United States Supreme Court has overturned decades of legal precedent with their decision to end the constitutional right to abortion. In doing so, the Court has rolled back the fundamental right of Americans to receive evidence-based reproductive health care. This decision is putting the lives and welfare of millions at risk.

Due to centuries of racism and systemic oppression, the consequences of the Court’s decision will be felt most acutely by Black, Latino and Indigenous communities, people with disabilities, those living in rural areas, and young people.

Generations of activists, both within and beyond the faith community, have tirelessly worked to achieve civil and human rights for all Americans. This has included the right to receive reproductive health care. The United Methodist Church cannot sit idly by while a campaign deigned to roll back this right continues.

It is important now, more than ever, that the UMC