Tools for Justice

The *Book of Resolutions* states that “food is not merely another market commodity. Food is essential to life and is sacred culturally to all people. A preferred agriculture must have three attributes:

- It must be just.
- It must be participatory.
- It must be sustainable.

A just, participatory and sustainable agriculture would meet basic human needs for food and fiber, regenerate and protect ecosystems, be economically viable, enhance the quality of life for farm families, be supportive of rural communities, be socially just and be compatible with spiritual teachings that recognize the earth as a common heritage and responsibility.”¹

¹The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church 2012, Resolution 3392, “Rural Communities in Crisis.”
Tools for Justice

Buy locally grown and produced food whenever possible, reducing the carbon emissions caused by transporting food around the world.

Support local, state and national legislation to move our country to a more sustainable path, especially when it comes to diminishing use of fossil fuels and industrial output of greenhouse gasses, including agribusiness.

Support gifts to mission and the United Methodist Women Carbon Fund, which will help all of us understand the cost of our emissions and support sustainable practices in our mission projects, our educational experiences and our advocacy in the United States and globally.

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.” When this is not the case, people always have, and will, move to survive.

—Social Principles, The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, ¶163E.

The Charter for Racial Justice, first adopted in the 1980 General Conference, calls on us to challenge systems that institutionalize racism and cause unequal outcomes regardless of intent. We call on the church to actively work to dismantle these systems of white privilege and institutional racism.

In The United Methodist Church’s Social Principles¹ United Methodists are called to practice restorative justice. United Methodists are called to seek alternatives to retribution when people commit crimes. In seeking to restore right relationships among all God’s people, we commit to looking at global distribution of wealth, power and racial privilege, which lie beneath poverty, inequality, punitive criminal justice policies and global migration.

¹The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2008, ¶164H, “Criminal and Restorative Justice.”
Support national policies that:

- Institute legalization programs for migrants that restore and protect civil and labor rights, keep families together and strengthen communities, and implement programs that place all migrants on a path to citizenship, not a select few.

- Make the enforcement and protection of international human rights law central to criminal justice and immigration policy.

- Stop profiling, raids and wrongful imprisonment.

- End mandatory sentencing, especially for nonviolent offenses.

- Investigate and end abuses in public and private corporate prisons, detention centers and jails; stop expansion of detention centers; and work to reduce the number of current facilities.

- Stop the militarization of poor communities of color by police, including drift-net arrest policies; end militarization of borders; take legal responsibility for the deaths of migrants in transit due to current border policies and provide redress to families who have lost loved ones; and end “prevention through deterrence” border policies that lead to deaths.

- Enable people to work:
  - Remove the barriers to employment for formerly incarcerated persons and invest in education and job creation that will lead to good livelihoods for poor communities of color. End suspension of citizen rights due to felony convictions and support reentry programs to hire former prisoners. End felony disenfranchisement for all when they are released from prison.
  - Repeal employer sanctions that criminalize undocumented migrants seeking to work and end the e-verify program. End the use of Social Security “no-match” letters and the prosecution of so-called ID theft.

Join Detention Watch Network Expose and Close Campaign, which documents the current state of the immigration detention system, at www.detentionwatchnetwork.org.

#ExposeAndClose

Read The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander, available from United Methodist Women Mission Resources.

Find out if your state is exploring privatization of state prisons. Challenge this move through advocacy.

Work to change unequal drug laws that disproportionately incarcerate people of color.

Join the Not One More Campaign at www.notonemoredeportation.com, which calls on the Obama Administration to cease deportations.

#Not1More