

ETHICAL INVESTING RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church urge strong moral standards ranging from opposition to pornography as “a form of sexual misconduct” to such human rights violations as “the creation of a racial hierarchy in any culture” (1) (<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/the-nurturing-community> and (2) <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/the-social-community>), and

WHEREAS the United Methodist Church has supported ethical investing since its first General Conference in 1972 and both the Discipline and the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church support financial policies reflective of our fundamental moral standards, and recommends researching the social, environmental, political and economic impact of church investments so as to make informed decisions about where to properly place our money, (3) (*¶ 717, The Book of Discipline 2016 and (4) <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/economic-community>), and

WHEREAS the United Methodist Church is a founding member of the Interfaith Coalition for Corporate Responsibility, which supports moral and responsible business practices (5) (<https://www.iccr.org/>), and

WHEREAS the largest investment portfolio in the United Methodist Church is its pension fund, which under the direction of Wespath has made public their guidelines for adhering to the United Methodist Discipline’s call for ethical investing,(6) (<https://www.wespath.org/assets/1/7/4631.pdf>), has endeavored to put those guidelines into practice and has made their subsequent investment decisions widely known, and,

WHEREAS the United Methodist church, both through General Conference action and decisions by Wespath, has authorized dialogue with entities and corporations that may be in violation with our ethical concerns as stated in our United Methodist Book of Discipline, and has likewise supported screening against further investment when such practices continue. (7) (<https://www.wespath.org/assets/1/7/4631.pdf>)

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the _____ Conference of the United Methodist Church encourages all United Methodist related institutions with investment portfolios to develop investment guidelines that adhere to the broad understanding of the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church, so that even as we conscientiously avoid making money from the production of alcohol or tobacco we also avoid investments that help sustain long term military occupations or systematic denials of human rights, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the _____ Conference of the United Methodist Church recommends conscientious oversight of local church investments by duly elected boards of trustees or a designated proxy, (8) (¶ 2533.5, 2512.3e, The Book of Discipline 2016 and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the aforementioned guidelines be made known to the public well as any changes to investments as a result of such guidelines, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the _____ Conference of the United Methodist Church supports efforts to engage in dialogue with entities and corporations with problematic practices, and re-consider its investment if ethical problems continue, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the _____ of the United Methodist Church supports the right of the church to make investment policy decisions based on ethical considerations of its own choosing, and opposes efforts by governments to suppress legitimate and non-violent means by which churches and individual Christians can resist participating in un-ethical conduct through investments.

1. 2016 Book of Discipline, Social Principles ¶161
2. 2016 Book of Discipline, Social Principles ¶162
3. 2016 Book of Discipline, Administrative Order, General Provisions, ¶ 717
4. 2016 Book of Discipline, Social Principles ¶163
5. (<https://www.iccr.org/>)
6. (<https://www.wespath.org/assets/1/7/4631.pdf>)
7. (<https://www.wespath.org/assets/1/7/4631.pdf>)
8. (¶ 2533.5, 2512.3e, The Book of Discipline 2016)

**In the investment of money, it shall be the policy of The United Methodist Church that all general boards and agencies, including the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and all administrative agencies and institutions, including hospitals, homes, educational institutions, annual conferences, foundations, and local churches, make a conscious effort to invest in institutions, companies, corporations, or funds with policies and practices that are socially responsible, consistent with the goals outlined in the Social Principles. All United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to seek investments in institutions, companies, corporations, or funds that promote racial and gender justice, protect human rights, prevent the use of sweatshop or forced labor, avoid human suffering, and preserve the natural world, including mitigating the effects of climate change. In addition, United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to avoid investments in companies engaged in core business activities that are not aligned with the Social Principles through their direct or indirect involvement with the production of anti-personnel weapons and armaments (both nuclear and conventional weapons), alcoholic beverages or tobacco; or that are involved in privately operated correctional facilities, gambling, pornography or other forms of exploitative adult entertainment. The boards and agencies are to give careful consideration to environmental, social, and governance factors when making investment decisions and actively exercise their responsibility as owners of the companies in which they invest. This includes engaging with companies to create positive change and hold*

them accountable for their actions, while also considering exclusion if companies fail to act responsibly.