

What does the Bible say?

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free. **(Luke 4:18)**

Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. **(Hebrews 13:3)**

When all the prisoners of the land are crushed under foot, when human rights are perverted in the presence of the Most High, when one's case is subverted—does the Lord not see it? **(Lamentations 3:34-36)**



What does The United Methodist Church say?

In the love of Christ, who came to save those who are lost and vulnerable, we urge the creation of a genuinely new system for the care and restoration of victims, offenders, criminal justice officials, and the community as a whole. **(Social Principles ¶164.H)**

A justice system that reflects God's desires for the world is one that is healing and restorative. Those who have been victimized by crime and the communities in which they reside need healing. Healing can come as safety and security are restored and the broken bonds of mutuality and shared existence are mended. Those who commit crimes must be held accountable through making amends to those they have caused to suffer, and they must be given the opportunity to return to their full place in society and community. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #5031, "Criminal Justice")**

We support measures designed to remove social conditions that lead to crime, and we encourage continued positive interaction between law enforcement officials and members of the community at large. **(Social Principles ¶ 164.H)**

Retributive systems of justice form barriers to the realization of the vision of restorative justice because they are tainted with explicit and implicit racial and ethnic bias, they punish children as harshly as adults, and they accommodate a two-tiered system that serves those with wealth and subjugates those without. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #5031, "Criminal Justice")**



CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES



CHURCH & SOCIETY

The United Methodist Church

Living **FAITH** Seeking **JUSTICE** Pursuing **PEACE**

CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

What do the facts say?

- The United States has the highest reported incarcerated population -2.2 million people in the world, increasing 500% over the last 40 years. The U.S represents only 5% of the world's population yet has 25% of the world's prisoners.¹
- Nearly one in three U.S. adults has a criminal record. For those seeking employment, on average only half are as likely to hear back from an employer as a person without a record. For black men with records, only one in three will receive a callback. Often stereotypes, bias and overzealous licensing requirements create major barriers to employment for people with criminal records.²
- During traffic stops, black and Hispanic drivers are three times more likely than white drivers to be searched by police. Black drivers are also twice as likely as white drivers to be arrested during a traffic stop despite the fact that police generally have lower "contraband hit rates" when they search black versus white drivers. Black men are also nearly six times as likely to be incarcerated as white men and Hispanic men are 2.3 times as likely.³



¹ Institute for Criminal Policy Research Children's Defense Fund, ² National Employment Law Project

³ The Sentencing Project

What do you say?

Take **ACTION** for justice...

Join the Civil and Human Rights Network which connects United Methodists with information about mass incarceration and advocacy opportunities for reform. Visit umcjustice.org.

Follow the Interfaith Criminal Justice Coalition on social media. Church and Society created an interfaith advocacy coalition to educate and reform unfair and inhumane criminal justice policies. Find more about the coalition's work on Facebook and Twitter.

Visit your local prison or jail and build relationships with our sisters and brothers inside. Support families of the incarcerated and those who have recently been released.



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