

### What does the Bible say?

Thou shalt not kill. **(Exodus 20:13)**

Say to them, “As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.”

**(Ezekiel 33:11)**

You have heard that it was said, “Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.” But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also...You have heard that it was said, “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

**(Matthew 5:38-39, 43-44)**

Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her. **(John 8:3-11)**

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. **(John 10:10)**



### What does The United Methodist Church say?

We believe the death penalty denies the power of Christ to redeem, restore, and transform all human beings. The United Methodist Church is deeply concerned about crime throughout the world and the value of any life taken by murder or homicide. We believe all human life is sacred and created by God and therefore, we must see all human life as significant and valuable. When governments implement the death penalty (capital punishment), then the life of the convicted person is devalued and all possibility of change in that person's life ends... [The] gift of reconciliation [that comes through Jesus] is offered to all individuals without exception and gives all life new dignity and sacredness. For this reason, we oppose the death penalty (capital punishment) and urge its elimination from all criminal codes. **(Social Principles, ¶164.G)**



See also **Resolution #5037 “Texas Death Penalty”** in the 2016 Book of Resolutions. Adopted in 2008 upon the meeting of the General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas, this Resolution identifies the particular injustice of the death penalty in Texas, which is marked by racism, official misconduct, the execution of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and more. It should be noted that, while Texas is an egregious example, these issues are not unique to Texas.



**CHURCH & SOCIETY**

The United Methodist Church

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

# DEATH PENALTY

### What do the facts say?

- More than 70% of the world's countries have abolished capital punishment in law or practice. The U.S. is an outlier among its close allies in its continued use of the death penalty. (Death Penalty Information Center)
- In 2021, most known executions took place in China, Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria – in that order. (Amnesty International)
- Nearly eight-in-ten (78%) say there is some risk that an innocent person will be put to death, while only 21% think there are adequate safeguards in place to prevent that from happening. (Pew Research Center)
- Public support for the death penalty is at its lowest level in a half-century, with opposition higher than any time since 1966, according to the 2020 annual Gallup poll on Americans' attitudes about capital punishment (Gallup Poll, Death Penalty Information Center)
- 41% of Death Row Prisoners are Black and 14% are Latinx. (NAACP Legal Defense Fund, "Death Row USA")



### What do you say?

Take **ACTION** for justice...

- **Join** United Methodists Against the Death Penalty which connects United Methodists working for abolition and coordinates state groups working for abolition. Visit [action.umc-gbcs.org/joinnetworks](https://action.umc-gbcs.org/joinnetworks) to join our network.
- **Join** People of Faith Against the Death Penalty, a leading organization mobilizing people of faith throughout the United States to abolish the death penalty. Find state-specific resources, and more at [www.pfadp.org](https://www.pfadp.org).



If you reside in the U.S., **tell** your State Representative and Senator that the death penalty does not work in restoring victims or protecting society.

For more information contact:  
[advocacy@umcjustice.org](mailto:advocacy@umcjustice.org)

[www.umcjustice.org](https://www.umcjustice.org)

**General Board of Church and Society**

100 Maryland Ave, NE Washington, DC 20002

© 2022 General Board of Church and Society of  
The United Methodist Church