

GAMBLING

What does the Bible say?

God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them. **(Genesis 1:27a)**

Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, 'I will never leave you or forsake you.' **(Hebrews 13:5)**

But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. **(1 Timothy 6:9-10)**

I came that you might have life and have it abundantly. **(John 10:10)**



What does the United Methodist Church say?

Gambling, as a means of acquiring material gain by chance and at the neighbor's expense, is a menace to personal character and social morality. Gambling fosters greed and stimulates the fatalistic faith in chance. Organized and commercial gambling is a threat to business, breeds crime and poverty, and is destructive to the interests of good government. **(Book of Resolution #3250 Gambling)**



We oppose the legalization of pari-mutuel betting, for it has been the opening wedge in the legalization of other forms of gambling that has fostered the growth of illegal bookmaking. We deplore the establishment of lotteries and their use as a means of raising public revenues. **(Book of Resolution #3250 Gambling)**

We reject the practice of gambling because it focuses society's attention on the acquisition of monetary goods at the exclusion of all else and enriches a small minority at the expense of the larger majority. **(Social Principles 162.E)**



CHURCH & SOCIETY

The United Methodist Church

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

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What do the facts say?



- Studies show that a person is twice as likely to have a gambling addiction if he or she lives within 50 miles of a casino.¹
- “Players” with household incomes under \$10,000 bet nearly three times as much on lotteries as those with incomes over \$50,000.²
- In 2022, per capita spending on state lotteries was \$316.47, but a lottery ticket buyer is 5 times more likely to be eaten by a shark than to win the lottery.³ Gambling disorder involves repeated, problem gambling behavior.⁴ Sports betting leads to problem gambling at a rate twice that of other gambling. In 2018 the Supreme Court struck down a federal law that limited sports betting primarily to Nevada. 45% of sports betting is now online putting easy access to gambling in the hand of anyone with a smartphone.
- Casinos target seniors by marketing special deals during the day that include fixed schedule transportation. Seniors who gamble are often on a fixed income and are particularly vulnerable to dipping into their retirement to play.
- Due to the virtual nature of online gambling, it is hard for players to verify the authenticity of sites they are using.⁵

¹ National Opinion Research Council, ² Natl. Gambling Impact Study Report, ³ US. Census Bureau, ⁴ American Psychiatric Association, ⁵ Gainsbury, S., Park, J., Suhonen, N. Consumer attitudes towards internet gambling: perceptions of responsible gaming policies, consumer protection, and regulation of online gambling sites. *Computers in Human Behavior*.

What do you say?



Take **ACTION** for justice...

- **Remind** your state and federal legislators that gambling is contrary to good governance. It preys upon those who can least afford to lose money. Our goal of being good stewards of what belongs to God should lead us to make decisions that do not promote inequity and addiction. This should be particularly true as inequity and addiction disproportionately affects the poor, the elderly, and other vulnerable populations who are enticed to gamble what they cannot afford out of a desire to be lifted out of poverty or to alleviate loneliness.
- **Learn** more about how gambling affects your state and its spending decisions. Visit www.stoppredatorygambling.org for the latest information on gambling prevention advocacy activities.
- **Acknowledge** that the world and everything in it belongs to God and make decisions regarding the resources you control accordingly.

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