



# SOCIAL PRINCIPLES: A RESOURCE FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY



## POLITICAL COMMUNITY

The Political Community is divided into three parts: the preface which connects the topic to Wesleyan history, scripture, and theology; Government Responsibilities which describes the impact government plays in the lives of people and communities; and Basic Rights and Freedoms, which lists basic rights and freedoms at risk and details the commitment of the church to protect the dignity and worth of all people and creation.

Topics Included in the Political Community:

- Church and Governments
- Restorative Justice
- Criminal Justice
- Health Care
- Elders & the Aging
- Men & Boys
- Migrants, Immigrants & Refugees
- Sexual Orientations & Gender Identities
- Civil Disobedience
- The Death Penalty
- War and Military Service
- Children & Young People
- Women & Girls
- Indigenous, Native & Aboriginal Communities
- People with Disabilities
- Religious Minorities

## Read the Political Community and Discuss

Use the following questions to guide personal study or facilitate small group discussions within your church. Focus on linking the issues to your local church and community, while keeping the broader global context in mind.

### Explore Ways to Move From Discussion to Advocacy Translating Faith Into Action

- Consider your local context. What are some basic rights and freedoms that are at risk in your community? What is the church doing to address the issue?
- Reflecting on John Wesley's commitment to prison reform and the challenges distinct to our contemporary context, how can churches effectively advocate for criminal justice reform? How might we support the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals who have been incarcerated, embodying principles of justice, mercy, and restoration?
- What is the role of the faith community in engaging with government and in civic matters? How is your church engaged in matters that impact your neighbors and the vulnerable?

### Additional Resources:

John Wesley, "The Circumcision of the Heart"

Faith & Facts Cards (updated and released in 2025)

Faith & Justice Youth Curriculum (updated and released in 2025)

Civil & Human Rights Page:

<https://www.umcjustice.org/what-we-care-about/civil-and-human-rights>

Health & Wholeness Page:

<https://www.umcjustice.org/what-we-care-about/health-and-wholeness>

Women & Children Page:

<https://www.umcjustice.org/what-we-care-about/women-and-children>

Peace with Justice Page:

<https://www.umcjustice.org/what-we-care-about/peace-with-justice>

United Nations & International Affairs (United Nations Ministry):

<https://www.umcjustice.org/who-we-are/united-nations-ministry>

UNITED METHODIST  
**SOCIAL  
PRINCIPLES**  
As Adopted by General Conference Charlotte, 2024