

Resolution 5

CONFERENCE HEALTHCARE INSURANCE AND ABORTION COVERAGE

WHEREAS American society and American politics have given an extraordinary amount of attention to healthcare over the last two years;

WHEREAS the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church maintains healthcare insurance with BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina (BCBS-NC);

WHEREAS The United Methodist Church has official moral teaching on abortion in its Social Principles (The Book of Discipline [BOD], 2008, Paragraph 161J, pp. 105-106);

WHEREAS United Methodists, as a church, officially hold "belief in the sanctity of unborn life [that] makes us reluctant to approve abortion," and "we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother and the unborn child" (BOD, 2008, Paragraph 161J);

WHEREAS United Methodists, as a church, officially "cannot affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control," "unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection," and "oppose the use of late-term abortion known as dilation and extraction (partial-birth abortion) and call for the end of this practice" with exceptions (BOD, 2008, Paragraph 161J);

WHEREAS the Social Principle on abortion represents "a call to faithfulness and [is] intended to be instructive and persuasive in the best of the prophetic spirit" ("Preface" to the Social Principles, BOD, 2008, p. 97); as such, this Social Principle should, by assisting the North Carolina Conference to order and discipline our life together, increase our faithfulness to Jesus Christ and widen our witness to the world; and

WHEREAS there is reason to believe that the North Carolina Conference's current BCBS-NC healthcare insurance policy covers abortions that The United Methodist Church morally disapproves of;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, during the next year, the Insurance Committee will research the North Carolina Conference's BCBS-NC healthcare insurance policy to determine if the current policy's coverage is consistent with United Methodist moral teaching on abortion as stated in Paragraph 161J (BOD, 2008). If the current policy's coverage is found to be inconsistent with United Methodist moral teaching on abortion, then the Insurance Committee will attempt to negotiate with BCBS-NC a healthcare insurance policy, for the North Carolina Conference, that is consistent with United Methodist moral teaching on abortion. If such negotiation proves to be impossible, then the Insurance Committee will search for healthcare insurance policies for the conference that are consistent, or more consistent, with United Methodist moral teaching on abortion and present acceptable insurance policy proposals for 2012 (along with the BCBS-NC insurance policy proposal for 2012), for consideration, to the 2011 Session of the North Carolina Annual Conference.

Respectfully submitted by:
Rev. Paul T. Stallworth
St. Peter's United Methodist Church/Morehead City, NC
New Bern District