

FEBRUARY 2021

ENLIGHTENED

Reflections on the United Methodist Social Principles
by the Young Adult Bible Study of the CCUMC

The United Methodist Church and the Rights of Various Age Groups

BY AMANDA DAM

Learning about different generations can help open our eyes and hearts to ways to create clearer communication and build relationships and understanding across various age groups. That is a great first step, but how do we tie our generational studies back to the social principles held by the United Methodist Church? One section of the Social Principles is titled ‘The Social Community’. This section gives the UMC stance on a wide variety of rights and privileges given to groups of persons.

There are many ways in which a person can be discriminated against. We may be acting in a way that is discriminatory towards other age groups without ever realizing it. This is ageism. The World Health Organization defines ageism as “the stereotyping and discrimination against individuals or groups on the basis of their age. Ageism can take many forms, including prejudicial attitudes, discriminatory practices, or institutional policies and practices that perpetuate stereotypical beliefs.” According to WHO, people who have a negative outlook on aging may have a lifespan that is 7.5 years shorter than those with positive outlooks on getting older. I am turning 30 this year, and even I can admit that it seems like this big daunting thing. It is silly the weight we put on age. Age does not have to represent anything more than the number of years we have been alive. It does not define who we are as humans, our experiences, our passions, and the impact that we can have on others and the world around us.

Multiple Generations at Work



TRADITIONALISTS Pre-1945	BOOMERS 1946-1965
Experienced: Great Depression, WWI and II, GI Bill	Experienced: Television, Moon Landing, Watergate, Vietnam War
Work is: An obligation	Work is: Expected
Aspiration: Home ownership	Aspiration: Job security
Changing Jobs: Stay for life	Changing Jobs: Loyal to employer; connecting to values
Career Paths: Slow and steady	Career Paths: Upward mobility



There are 3 sections of the Social Principles that focus on the rights of different age groups: Children, Young People, and the Aging. Here is a brief synopsis of the UMC position on each of these.

Children: The UMC affirms that children once viewed as property are now acknowledged to be full humans; supports the development of school systems and innovative forms of education; the rights to food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, and emotional wellbeing; to be protected from economic, physical, emotional, and sexual exploitation and abuse.

Young People: The UMC encourages development of policies and procedures which allow young people to be included in decision-making processes; eliminate discrimination and exploitation; allow for creative and appropriate employment opportunities.

Aging: The UMC recognizes that the elderly are often isolated from mainstream society; support social policies that integrate the aging into the life of the community; support policies for sufficient incomes and adequate pension systems, nondiscriminatory employment opportunities, education service opportunities, adequate medical care, and housing.

References:

<https://www.who.int/westernpacific/news/q-a-detail/ageing-ageism>

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/social-principles-the-social-community>



Multiple Generations at Work Cont.

GEN X 1966-1977	MILLENNIAL 1978-1995	GEN 2020 After 1995
Experienced: MTV, Nintendo, PC's Work is: A difficult challenge Aspiration: Work-life balance; independence Changing Jobs: Is expected Career Paths: Need to know options now	Experienced: Natural disasters, diversity, mobile technology Work is: A means to an end Aspiration: Freedom and flexibility Changing Jobs: Is expected Career Paths: Switch frequently and fast	Experienced: Economic downturn, Global Warming Work is: Constantly evolving Aspiration: Structure and stability Changing Jobs: Constantly Career Paths: Career "multitaskers"

"May His favor be upon you
 And a thousand generations
 And your family and your children
 And their children, and their children"

May His presence go before you
 And behind you, and beside you
 All around you, and within you
 He is with you, He is with you"

LYRICS FROM "THE BLESSING"
 SONG BY KARI JOBE,
 ELEVATION WORSHIP, &
 CODY CARNES



Spotlight on Black History Month

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February is Black History month and to honor this, we wanted to include a prayer from the United Methodist worship resources for black history month. This is a prayer written by Stephon Carlisle Void entitled "A Prayer for Justice". Stephon is a Certified Lay Servant in the South Carolina Annual Conference and is a member of New Covenant United Methodist Church in Bowman, South Carolina.

"Heavenly Father, how many more names must be added to the list? How many more hashtags must we post? How many more vigils must be held? How many more mothers must bury their children? How many marches and how many events must we hold until our nation sees that there is an epidemic of death by police?"

Father, we tell our children to keep their hands visible, always comply, don't wear a hoodie, don't walk too fast, don't walk too slow, walk in pairs to the store, be respectful, and do whatever it takes to make it home. Why do they fear us, O God? We aren't animals. We are not a threat. We are your children, just like they are. Still, we lose our lives because they fear the greatness inside of us. Night after night, we see our own gunned down because they were the wrong color, at the wrong place, at the wrong time.

Lord, we are tired; we are afraid; we are angry; and we are confused. In the midst of our pain, God, we still trust you. You said in your word, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14, NIV[i]). Lord, we are seeking your face today. We admit we are not perfect and we have not done all we can.

We are pleading for the pain to stop. We are praying to stop the tears from falling down our cheeks. We pray that our justice system no longer sees us as a target and that they soon will see us as human beings. We need your wisdom. We need your strength. We need your peace to spread, far and wide, so that our sons and daughters make it back home. We pray that your love will conquer all the fear and hatred in this country. We pray that our justice system will be equal and just --for all of us. May we soon see a day where we all are truly free. It is in your name we pray, Amen."

Reference: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/worship-resources-for-black-history-month>

Further Reading

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT GENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION

1. <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/communicating-with-woke-multicultural-generations>
2. Top 10 Ways to Communicate Across Generations - <https://www.anfonline.org/docs/default-source/top-10-resource-lists/top-10-ways-to-communicate-across-generations.pdf>
3. <https://www.umc.org/en/content/social-principles-the-social-community#aging>
4. <https://online.ndm.edu/news/communication/evolution-of-communication/>

We are happy to hear feedback from our church family! Are you enjoying the newsletter, do you have any ideas for a section for us to include? Please let us know!

"For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations"

PSALM 100:5

