

WDC Policy on Resolutions from the WDC Policy Manual

F. Resolutions

1. Purpose of Resolutions:

Western District Conference (WDC) encourages the development of resolutions that facilitate discernment, educate, build unity, and provide an area conference understanding while acknowledging dissenting voices. Such resolutions may also provide a foundation for member advocacy to government and other entities. Resolutions are not binding on congregations of WDC unless identified as having that intent from the beginning of the process.

2. Types of Resolutions:

Resolutions may include simple resolutions (e.g., approving minutes or expressing thanks), organizational resolutions (e.g., change of bylaws or other legal matters), or church statements that reflect the area conference consensus on substantive issues regarding faith and life. The focus of this policy is on church statements.

3. Church Statements Process:

- a. Church statements should be developed to further God's mission as defined by an embraced vision in accordance with MC USA and WDC missions:

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

Western District Conference empowers its Anabaptist/Mennonite congregations to:
Witness and invite others to faith in Jesus Christ,
Dwell in just and loving relationships, and
Connect to God's mission in the world.

- b. The preferred process for developing church statements should begin with study/discussion at the congregational level with study documents prepared and distributed before being crafted for delegate action. The WDC Executive Board, commissions, standing committees, task forces, and congregations are encouraged to provide adequate preparation in order for delegates to discern action.
- c. A Resolutions Committee, appointed by the Executive Committee, will be formed at least 120 days before Assembly in preparation to receive church statements. When church statements are submitted, the Resolutions Committee will meet to discern the church statement and work with the author(s) to provide guidance and suggestion in the wording of the church statement in efforts to decrease possible confusion or unintended consequences. Any church statement shall include a written statement

containing:

- i. the purpose and/or reason for such proposed church statement;
 - ii. the intended consequences of the adoption of such church statement;
 - iii. the name and contact information of the congregation or person making such proposal.
- d. Any proposed church statement should be discerned through congregations or WDC commissions, standing committees, and task forces and submitted for consideration to the WDC Resolutions Committee a minimum of 120 days prior to annual conference sessions. The Executive Board will share substantive resolutions with delegates 90 days before Assembly for their action at the conference. The Resolutions Committee may bring simple resolutions at the Assembly and will have the authority to receive and edit ideas for such resolutions.
- e. Following the review and possible editing of the proposed church statement, the church statement will be submitted to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will engage in corporate discernment regarding the church statement's suitability for consideration by the delegate body. Executive Board considerations include but are not limited to:
- i. Does the proposed resolution enable us to join God's activities in the world?
 - ii. Does the proposed resolution enable us to live and act in ways that allow God's healing and hope to flow through us to the world?
 - iii. Does the proposed resolution advance our mission as a conference to Witness, Dwell and Connect?
- f. As a result of its discernment process, the Executive Board may take any of the following actions:
- i. forward the church statement to the delegate body for action at the annual conference sessions,
 - ii. return the church statement to the Resolutions Committee with recommendations for further review and editing, or
 - iii. not forward the church statement if it is determined that the statement does not further the purposes for which resolutions are adopted, or that such church statement does not have sufficient church-wide support, impact or interest to merit delegate assembly time devoted to such proposed church statement. If a church statement is not forwarded, the Executive Board may provide the submitter with other suggested avenues for consideration.

4. Delegate Action

For church statements forwarded to the delegate body, the Executive Board shall encourage a process of spiritual discernment among congregations and delegates that includes careful study, creates safe spaces for all voices to be heard, seeks to understand

the basis for our differing viewpoints and involves significant delegate discussion at the annual conference assembly.

A church statement is more than just a document. It is a process where we engage issues with respect and Christian love. We trust that the policies outlined above will assist us as we seek to live out the words of scripture that “Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way,” (1 Corinthians 14:40), and to be a discerning community so that we reach an understanding that “seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us” (Acts 15:28).

This WDC policy utilizes the Mennonite Church USA Resolutions Guidelines, September 2012, as a template.

-Approved by the WDC Executive Board on October 2021