

1 **Support for the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice**

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3 **Budget Implications:** None

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5 **Rationale:** General Conference 2016 decided to withdraw membership in the Religious Coalition for  
6 Reproductive Choice (RCRC) based on misinformation about and a misunderstanding of RCRC's work.  
7 The Baltimore-Washington Conference is committed to the reproductive health of women and girls, and this  
8 resolution seeks to better equip us for that work by reconnecting us to RCRC.  
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10 **Submitted by:** Rev. Shannon Sullivan, Presbury United Methodist Church, Edgewood, MD;  
11 The Baltimore-Washington Chapter of Methodist Federation for Social Action  
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13 **Resolution:**

14 The United Methodist Church was a founding member of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice  
15 (RCRC) in 1973, and the General Board of Church and Society was a member of the Religious Coalition  
16 until General Conference 2016. Nevertheless, several United Methodist annual conferences voted on  
17 their own last year to join RCRC, choosing to continue to support RCRC's important work in spite of  
18 the misunderstandings that surfaced at General Conference 2016 leading to the vote to withdraw UMC  
19 membership. These annual conferences now join with numerous regional and national organizations as  
20 members, including the Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, eleven  
21 other Protestant denominations, Unitarian Universalism, Reform and Conservative Judaism, among others.  
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23 The Coalition member organizations of RCRC hold a wide variety of views regarding policies relating to  
24 specific issues of reproductive choice such as when life and personhood begins but, nevertheless, share  
25 common religious values. Many have official pro-choice policies, and are committed to working together to  
26 ensure reproductive choice for all persons through the moral power of religious communities. The Religious  
27 Coalition supports the right of all persons to have access to a wide range of reproductive health services  
28 including sexuality education, family planning services, contraception, abortion services, affordable and  
29 quality health and child care. The Religious Coalition's All Options Clergy Counseling program trains  
30 clergy of many faiths to assist women in discerning the course of action that they believe is best in a case  
31 of unintended pregnancy. Internationally, RCRC is an accredited nongovernmental organization with the  
32 United Nations Department of Public Information which supports international family planning services  
33 in such areas as South Africa where the Coalition works with churches on HIV/AIDS education and  
34 prevention. Overall, the Coalition's efforts help counter attempts to enact restrictive legislation that would  
35 impose specific religious views about abortion and reproductive health on persons of all faiths.  
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37 Therefore, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church  
38 go on record in support of the work of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, and  
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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Baltimore-Washington Conference become a member of the  
41 Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.  
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43 **Effective Date:**

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45 **Co-Sponsors:** Dumbarton United Methodist Church  
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47 *On March 4, the Connectional Table of the Baltimore-Washington Conference voted concurrence with this*  
48 *resolution.*  
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