

## Petition 2015-03

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES: 2

SUGGESTED TITLE: **Affirm Christian Principles for Bioethics**

DISCIPLINE PARAGRAPH: *Discipline ¶ 162*

GENERAL CHURCH BUDGET IMPLICATION: None

GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS: Yes

WHEREAS, ALL human beings, at all ages and stages of life, are loved by God and bear God's own image; and

WHEREAS, new technologies have posed new bioethical challenges of which previous generations could scarcely dream; and

WHEREAS, many such challenges raise the question of our willingness to value human life at its earliest stages, without raising the same concerns about women's rights that are involved in abortion debates; and

WHEREAS, wherever human beings who bear God's image are devalued or threatened, Christians should promote solutions that are life-affirming for all; and

WHEREAS, since 1997, hundreds of "snowflake babies" have been born, beginning life as discarded "excess embryos" at various medical and scientific laboratories and then being implanted in the womb of unrelated adoptive mothers who wanted to give them a chance to develop into full-grown children; (Sydney Lupkin, "Family Has Baby From Adopted Embryo," ABC Good Morning America, 12 March 2014; <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/family-baby-adopted-embryo/story?id=22882192&singlePage=true>; accessed 26 February 2015); and

WHEREAS,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2015 session of the Indiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church hereby charges its Conference Secretary, using the rationale stated above, to petition, in a timely and appropriate manner, the 2016 General Conference to amend Paragraph 162 of The Book of Discipline by adding a new section *O* after current section *N*, re-lettering subsequent sections accordingly, so that the new section would read as follows:

**¶ 162 O) *Bioethics***—We recognize the image of God in all human life. Therefore, we cannot support medical or scientific practices that treat any human life at any stage, including embryonic, as a mere commodity who is categorically unworthy of any respect or protection. We support embryo adoption programs that both give couples the chance to become adoptive parents and rescue so-called "excess embryos" by giving them a chance to develop into full-grown babies, children, and adults.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 2015 session of the Indiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church hereby charges its Conference Secretary, because of the fifty-word limit on the printed rationales in the public listings of General Conference

petitions, to include with this petition the following rationale: “Treating any human life as beyond God’s image and love is contrary to Christ’s example of pushing boundaries to extend his love to marginalized humanity. We want to advance science and medicine, but within the boundaries of Christian ethics. The Church must offer such prophetic witness for modern bioethical challenges.”

Submitted to Indiana Annual Conference 2015 by

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