

## **A Resolution Concerning Healthcare for the Poor in Alabama in 2016**

WHEREAS, Jesus requires us to look to the needs of “the least of these,” and;

WHEREAS, the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church in the Social Principles (Paragraph 162, V) states: “Providing the care needed to maintain health, prevent disease, and restore health after injury or illness is a responsibility each person owes others and government owes to all,” and;

WHEREAS, systemic and pervasive poverty in Alabama leaves more than 300,000 adult Alabamians unable to qualify for healthcare coverage allowed under the Affordable Care Act because their incomes fall below Federal poverty guidelines, yet they do not qualify for current Alabama Medicaid coverage, and;

WHEREAS, more than 185,000 working Alabamians who are employed in low-paying jobs would benefit from Medicaid expansion, and;

WHEREAS, the Legislature has also failed to fully fund the existing Medicaid program, further jeopardizing programs that affect the health care needs of children and mothers, the future of rural hospital care, the sustainability of sufficient doctors for the state, and basic health care needs for the neediest of Alabamians, and;

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act is funded almost entirely by the federal government, and;

WHEREAS, fully funding the state’s Medicaid program and fully participating in the Affordable Care Act would provide broad healthcare for the vast majority of Alabamians, create 31,000 new jobs, and stimulate Alabama’s economy;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church strongly encourages the Alabama State Legislature and the Governor of Alabama to fully fund the state’s Medicaid program and move quickly to expand healthcare in the state to the fullest opportunity under the Affordable Care Act so that healthcare needs of the “least of these” shall be met, and;

LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Governor of Alabama and every member of the Alabama State Legislature.

*Submitted by the Conference Board of Church and Society*