



**Free Methodist Church USA
39th General Conference
RESOLUTION**

INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete requested information, adding additional pages as necessary. Save and e-mail completed form to your Annual Conference office.

INTRODUCED BY:

ANNUAL CONFERENCE NAME: Genesis

WRITTEN BY: Charles Fick

General Conference Secretary - OFFICE USE ONLY

Resolution No. 310

Received Date: 1/2/2023

Resolution Committee Grade: B

BOA Consideration: _____

GC Consideration: _____

RELATED TO PARAGRAPH **3213**

Referred to Ministry Team Number:

SUBJECT OR TITLE: Use of Alcohol	Final Vote: Yes No
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WHEREAS:

The position paper on the use of alcohol from April 2022 (https://fmcusa.org/wp-content/uploads/PP-FMCUSA-USE-OF-ALCOHOL.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2vO_JEujSMKwSJS2bhtVdQQP1E-QU30e2ucn0D3P3It7hu2YACVMEktVg) has different language than the Book of Discipline.

And whereas Christ's first miracle is turning water into wine (John 2:9), and Paul encourages Timothy to "use a little wine" for his health (1 Tim 5:23), it is time to have a biblically consistent view of the use of alcohol in the Book of Discipline that aligns with the published position paper.

Therefore, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Book of Discipline paragraph 3213 be amended to the following (Changes in **RED**):

As Christians we believe that life is full, abundant and free in Jesus Christ (John 8:35; 10:10). Therefore, we abstain from whatever damages, destroys or distorts his life in us.

Illicit drugs are prime offenders. We avoid their use because various forms of narcotics cause untold damage to people and relationships, such drugs restrict personal development, damage the body and reinforce an unrealistic view of life.

On the one hand, though alcohol and marijuana are legal drugs in some jurisdictions, both have a history of damaging individuals, families, and society. Both are unpredictably addictive and their destructive effects cannot be fully measured. Their misuse leaves a trail of broken marriages, family violence, crime, industrial loss, ill health, injury and death. **We recognize the biblically named sin of drunkenness and reject it in obedience to God's Word (Eph 5:18). In response to these realities, the community wisdom of the Free Methodist Church has been that the safest guard against the abuse of alcohol is to abstain totally from its use.**

However, moderation with alcohol using self-control, a fruit of the Holy Spirit, is also a valid and biblical choice for believers. Christ's first miracle is turning water into wine (John 2:9), and Paul encourages Timothy to "use a little wine" for his health (1 Tim 5:23). Abstaining from wine was part of the Nazirite vows (Numbers 6:3) but it is certainly not commanded of all Christians.

Therefore, since we see both of these views in the Scriptures, we advocate both moderation with alcohol and voluntary abstinence from it. We will not legislate the particulars in any of the areas that lack clear and specific guidance in the Scriptures, including alcohol, and we encourage openness and transparency between members and leaders (pastoral and lay) in a local church about the use and abuse of alcohol.

We declare our trust in the power of the Holy Spirit to make people holy, and to guide them into patterns of living that are good and wholesome. We are committed to seek the via media (the middle way) between the extremes of legalism and license. We embrace the way of responsible grace that does not seek transformation through external constraints and controls but through the renewing and shaping work of the Holy Spirit from the inside out.

We will trust the Holy Spirit to guide earnest Free Methodists to a life that reflects the person of Christ and participates in His ongoing mission. We will commit to a culture within our churches where members focus on love of Jesus and passion for his mission that will shape their lives for maximum participation in the Kingdom of God.

We advocate abstinence from marijuana, except for medical reasons, for the sake of health, family and neighbors.

We advocate abstaining from the use of tobacco... (no further changes)