



MAY & JUNE 2021

ENLIGHTENED

Reflections on the United Methodist Social Principles
by the Young Adult Bible Study of the CCUMC

The United Methodist Church and Organ Donation

AMANDA DAM

The United Methodist Church states that "We believe that organ transplantation and organ donation are acts of charity, agape love, and self-sacrifice. We recognize the life-giving benefits of organ and other tissue donation and encourage all people of faith to become organ and tissue donors as a part of their love and ministry to others in need. We urge that it be done in an environment of respect for deceased and living donors and for the benefit of the recipients, and following protocols that carefully prevent abuse to donors and their families."

Did you know that in Massachusetts you can register at any time through the RMV to become an organ donor? You can also register with 'Donate Life New England'. Once you are registered there is a heart symbol on your license to designate that you have signed up to be an organ donor. Every time you renew your license you must reconfirm that you would still like to be an organ donor. It is legal confirmation, but it is always recommended that you speak with family and your medical proxies about your wishes as an organ donor. Visit <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/register-as-an-organ-donor-at-the-rmv> for more information about registering as an organ donor here in Massachusetts.

Facts about blood and organ donation

- 17 people die each day waiting for an organ transplant
- One person can donate up to 8 life saving organs
- 25% of children in need of a transplant are under 5 years old
- Every 2 seconds someone in the US needs blood and or platelets
- One blood donation can potentially save up to 3 lives



Thoughts on Organ Donation

PASTOR JOHN LUCY

I've heard a lot of people say that organ donation is a no-brainer (haha!). "You're dead, so you won't know. Just give away your organs!" But for Christians who believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead when Christ comes again, well, it's not that simple. We will be raised in spirit and body into eternal life. What, without some of our organs? Should we keep our bodies entirely intact (they are the temple of God, after all) for the coming of the last, eternal day?

I really struggle with this one. To be honest, I am not currently an organ donor because of my theology concerning the resurrection. The Bible is pretty clear about our bodily resurrection in a variety of places and I don't want to miss out because I didn't trust in the promises of God.

On the other hand, though, I know I can argue I'm being selfish. We are created and called to be joyful and sacrificial servants of God, compassionately caring and guarding one another's life and dignity. Certainly that won't change after death, would it? Can it be possible that God would want us to live this life entirely for Him and one another, but then in death only care about ourselves? Yes, we're talking about our eternal life here, but I can see how my current stance on organ donation seems opposed to the whole point and purpose of our (eternal) life of Christian discipleship.

Perhaps it would make more sense for me to and others to serve our brothers and sisters and cooperate with God's grace in sustaining life in others, even in and after our deaths, and then trust that if we are blessed enough to be raised at the sound of the last trumpet, God will breathe life into whatever body we have remaining. Some holes in his wrists and side didn't seem to stop Jesus's resurrection. Maybe it won't for us, either. And maybe, like Jesus, we can also put our death to some good use.



"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends"

JOHN 15: 12-13





Do All The Good You Can: Give Blood

JENNIFER WHEELING

As an organ donor and an advocate for donating blood, I can't help but put in my two cents on the importance of blood donation. Thanks to donated blood, my mother was able to receive a blood transfusion that helped her feel significantly better when her platelet numbers dropped during cancer treatments. I have a college friend who is grateful for the donated blood that kept her alive during the thirty major surgeries she has endured in her lifetime. A teammate of my youngest son would not be alive today had it not been for a blood transfusion during a surgery to correct a birth defect when he was an infant.

The chances are pretty good that you also know of at least one person who has benefited from donated blood, as one in seven people entering the hospital will need a blood transfusion. And yet the chances are also pretty good that you do not donate blood: although 37% of the U.S. population is eligible to give blood, less than 10% actually does (1).

While there are many medical reasons that contribute to the low percentage of Americans who are able to donate blood (2), most people don't donate simply because they don't think to do so. If you are reading this, you now know that every two seconds, someone in this country needs blood (3). So there is a constant need for people to donate blood.

Some people may argue that they don't have time to donate. All in all, it takes about an hour to donate a unit of blood (but the part that involves the needle takes only about 10 minutes). The most often a person can donate in a year is six times (every two months), which is a total of 6 hours in a year. Stopping to consider that "a patient could be forced to pass up a live-saving organ if compatible blood is not available to support the transplant" may make it a bit easier to dog-ear a few hours out of your year for the purpose of saving as many as 36 lives (4).

As long as you are living and you qualify to be a blood donor, someone needs your blood. John Wesley said, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

Are you?

(1) <https://givingblood.org/about-blood/blood-facts.aspx>
(2) <https://blog.providence.org/healthcalling/5-surprising-reasons-you-cant-donate-blood>
(3) <https://www.umms.org/ummc/community/blood-drives/reasons-people-dont-give-blood>
(4) <https://givingblood.org/about-blood/blood-facts.aspx>

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and to not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"

JEREMIAH 29:11

May is:

- National Mental Health Awareness Month
- ALS Awareness Month
- May 31st is Memorial Day

June is:

- PTSD Awareness Month
- World Infertility Awareness
- Juneteenth
- LGBTQIA Pride Month

PLEASE KEEP ALL THOSE INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES AFFECTED BY THESE IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS THROUGHOUT THE MONTH.