MINUTES
OF THE
THIRTY-THIRD GENERAL SYNOD
OF THE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SPECIAL EDITION
JULY 11-JULY 18, 2021

KAREN GEORGIA THOMPSON, ADMINISTRATOR
THE THIRTY-THIRD GENERAL SYNOD
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MINUTES
OF THE
THIRTY-THIRD GENERAL SYNOD
OF THE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

“ROOTED IN LOVE”

SPECIAL EDITION
July 11 – July 18, 2021

Sunday Evening, July 11, 2021
First Plenary Session

1. GENERAL SYNOD CALL TO ORDER
Moderator Penny Lowes introduced herself and Assistant Moderator Bob Sandman, called the first business session of the Thirty-third General Synod to order at 6:40 pm, and welcomed delegates, visitors, and guests.

2. INTRODUCTION OF GENERAL SYNOD ADMINISTRATOR KAREN GEORGIA THOMPSON AND REFLECTION/MOMENT OF SILENCE
Moderator Lowes introduced the Administrator of General Synod, Associate General Minister, Karen Georgia Thompson. Karen Georgia Thompson shared a brief reflection and called for a moment of silent prayer.

3. INTRODUCTION OF GENERAL SYNOD LEADERSHIP
Moderator Lowes introduced Corey Larson of the Iowa Conference as the Agenda Coordinator; Reginald Brantley of the New York Conference and Derek Ritenour of the Central Atlantic Conference as parliamentarians, and David Anderson and Kevin Peterson, both from the Pacific Northwest Conference, as leaders of the Committee Process Team. Moderator Lowes explained the committee process and the composition and role of the Agenda Coordinating Committee.

4. REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE
Moderator Lowes introduced Libby Tigner, Chair of the Credentials Committee, to bring its report.

The Credentials Committee found that the Delegation as a Whole is in compliance with the bylaws for General Synod Thirty-three.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.

21-GS-01 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the report of the Credentials Committee by consensus.

5. QUORUM DECLARED
Moderator Lowes indicated that the Registrar of the General Synod, Shameerah Lemon, reports 638 Conference Delegates, 48 UCCB Delegates, 33 HUGS Delegates, and 85 Associate Delegates, 20 Youth, and 1562 Guests registered for the meeting. In compliance with the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and Bylaws paragraphs 194, 195, 196, and 197, Moderator Lowes declared a quorum present and empowered General Synod to act upon the business of General Synod.

6. **INTRODUCTION OF NATHAN YOUNG, TECHNICAL COORDINATOR FOR GENERAL SYNOD AND INTRODUCTION TO MEET.UCC.**

Moderator Lowes called on Nathan Young to provide information on the use of meet.ucc to conduct business for this Special Edition Synod. Nathan indicated that all delegates were required to complete training on the use of meet.ucc prior to the start of General Synod and indicated that technical or process help would be available by phone, email, and via chat in Session Sync for the entirety of each plenary.

7. **ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL SYNOD AGENDA**

Moderator Lowes indicated that Bylaw 235 provides that the United Church of Christ Board shall serve as the Business Committee and Committee of Reference of the General Synod during its sessions, and as such is responsible for the agenda and schedule of all meetings of the General Synod and recommending changes therein during sessions.

Moderator Lowes called on Yvette Wynn of the New York Conference and Chair of the United Church of Christ Board to move several procedural motions.

Yvette Wynn moved the adoption of the Agenda for the Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ as available for review on the General Synod website since May 1, 2020, and at meet.ucc, and authorization for the Agenda Committee to make any necessary adjustments during sessions.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.

**21-GS-02 VOTED:** The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the agenda as included in the Report of the Board and authorized the Agenda Committee to make any necessary adjustments.

(Vote: Approved by Consent)

8. **ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL SYNOD STANDING RULES**

Yvette Wynn, on behalf of the Business Committee of United Church of Christ Board, moved for the adoption of the Standing Rules. The Rules spell out how the membership of the General Synod is constituted and lays out the framework for how business will be conducted as the body. The Standing Rules were adopted by the Board of Directors on May 1, 2020, and posted on the General Synod website.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.
21-GS-03 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Standing Rules for the Thirty-third General Synod.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 480 Yes; 0 No; 3 Abstain)

9. GRANTING VOICE WITHOUT VOTE TO RESOURCE PERSONS
Yvette Wynn, on behalf of the Business Committee, moved that voice without vote be granted to resource persons approved by the Business Committee who will be asked to make reports and speak to certain issues. The Synod Administrator’s office prepared a listing of those people as follows:

- David Anderson  Committee Process Team
- Kevin Peterson  Committee Process Team
- Suzi Townsley  Committee Process Team
- Roy Mosley  Committee Process Team
- Dennis Frische-Mouri  Committee Process Team
- Caroline Belsom  Committee Process Team
- Maria Brace  Committee Chair
- Rebecca David  Committee Chair
- Andria M. Davis  Committee Chair
- Marilyn Kendrix  Committee Chair
- Cheryl Lindsay  Committee Chair
- Crystal McCormick  Committee Chair
- Elliott Munn  Committee Chair
- Michael Vollbrecht  Committee Chair
- Valerie Smith  Associate GS Administrator
- Corey Larson  Agenda Coordinator
- Derek B. Ritenour  Parliamentarian
- Reginald Brantley  Parliamentarian
- Heather Kimmel  General Counsel
- Ken Medema  Theological Reflector
- Tami Marinella  Chief Financial Officer
- Shameerah Lemon  GS Registrar
- Nathan Young  meet.ucc
- Julie Yarborough  Association of United Church Educators
- Thom Bower  Association of United Church Educators

21-GS-04 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice without vote to the above resource persons approved by the Business Committee.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 494 Yes; 1 No; 0 Abstain)

10. INITIAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS INCLUDING INTRODUCTION OF THE SLATE FOR THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE.
Chair Yvette Wynn highlighted the work of the Board who together with the gifted officers and
amazing staff sprang into action to lead the church through uncertain times initiated by COVID-19 and a worldwide pandemic. The board addressed its routine matters of approving the National Setting & General Synod budget, Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM) allocations, Investment & Endowment draw, and audit reports, and looked at marketing and development resources to help our church connect with new people. The General Minister and President (GMP) & Associate General Ministers (AGM) worked closely with the financial ministry team to develop a 5-year plan to address financial trends. The Governance Committee proposed diversity language amendments, and new conversations opened up for the board’s engagement including calling ourselves and the National Setting to work towards becoming an anti-racist church.

Chair Wynn introduced the slate of candidates for election to the General Synod Nominating Committee Class of 2027. The names and biographies of these candidates have been posted since early July on the General Synod website and they are Lynn Jones, Laura Migarone, Thomas Mitchell, Warren Orikasa, and Sue Shear. The vote on their election will take place in the Fourth Plenary.

11. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE
Moderator Lowes indicated that the General Synod Nominating Committee’s Chair, Jean Avison of the Central Pacific Conference, would give the report of the Nominating Committee.

Jean Avison reported on the process, encouraged delegates to attend a hearing on the nominating process on Saturday, July 17, and also asked for potential nominees for future board positions. On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Jean submitted to the Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ the First and Second Reports of the Nominating Committee as posted on the General Synod website and urged the election of the nominees by the delegates to the Thirty-third General Synod.

12. COMMITTEE ON DISPOSITION REPORT/EMPOWERING BUSINESS COMMITTEE TO MAKE REFERRALS OF NEW BUSINESS FOR ACTION.
Moderator Lowes called on Marsha Williams of the New York Conference and Chair of the Sub-Committee on Disposition.

Marsha Williams indicated that the Sub-Committee on Disposition’s recommendations appear on the General Synod website under Business, then under Reports to the General Synod as the Report of the Committee on Disposition. A total of eleven proposed resolutions were received and forwarded for consideration. No proposed resolutions were submitted at the May 31 deadline. The committee recommends designating one resolution as a “Prudential Resolution,” requiring a majority vote to pass at a plenary, and 10 resolutions as Resolutions of Witness, requiring a 2/3 majority to pass at a plenary.

Seven of the resolutions are recommended for referral to committees of the General Synod and three directly to a plenary session. One resolution, Protecting Church Workers, is recommended for referral to the United Church of Christ Board. The Committee on Disposition believes that the issues this resolution raises are significant and broad, and therefore believes the best body to fully discern it and research the topics involved is the UCCB. This referral will place that resolution on the agenda at their fall 2021 board meeting to further discuss the issues raised.
If further resolutions are introduced in this plenary as new business, the Committee on Disposition will review them this evening and formulate recommendations. On behalf of the Committee on Disposition, Marsha Williams recommended that the Business Committee be delegated the task of assigning final disposition of any new business.

Marsha Williams presented the motion as follows: The Thirty-third General Synod adopts the Report of the Committee on Disposition and delegates to the Business Committee the referral of new business submitted during the first plenary of this General Synod.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.


MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 485 Yes; 2 No; 11 Abstain)

13. INTRODUCTION OF NEW BUSINESS (BY TITLE ONLY)
Moderator Lowes stated that in accordance with the Standing Rules, this is the only time in the agenda when delegates may introduce New Business and the New Business would be introduced by Title Only.

Moderator Lowes indicated that there is no new business to be referred to the Business Committee for recommended action.

14. INTRODUCTION OF HONORED GUESTS
Moderator Lowes welcomed the following honored guests:

Former General Minister and Presidents Paul Sherry and Mary Sherry, John Thomas and Lydia Veliko, and Geoffrey Black.

The following past Officers of the United Church of Christ:

Former Associate General Minister, Edith Guffey.
Former Treasurer of the United Church of Christ, Doris Powell.
Former Wider Church Ministries Executive Minister Olivia Masih White and her husband Terry White.
Former Executive Minister of Justice and Witness Ministries Linda Jaramillo.
Former Executive Minister of Justice Witness Ministries, Bernice Powell Jackson.
Former Executive Minister of Local Church Ministries, Ben Guess.

Several former Moderators of the General Synod:

The Moderator of the Fifteenth General Synod, John Krueger.
The Moderator of the Eighteenth General Synod, Charlotte Gosselink.
The Moderator of the Twenty-second General Synod, Denise Page Hood.
The Moderator of the Twenty-third General Synod, Nancy Taylor.
The Moderator of the Twenty-sixth General Synod, Merlyn Lawrence.
The Moderator of the Twenty-seventh General Synod, Marvin Morgan.
The Moderator of the Twenty-ninth General Synod Libby Tigner.
The Moderator of the Thirtieth General Synod, Brian Holeman.
The Moderator of the Thirty-first General Synod, Sue Artt.
The Moderator of the Thirty-second General Synod, Norman Williams.

Former Instrumentality Executives:

The former Executive Vice President of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, Thomas Dipko.
The former Executive of the Office of Communication, Art Cribbs, Jr.
The former Executive of the Office of Communications, Bob Chase.
The former Executive of the Office for Church in Society, Yvonne Delk.
The former Executive of the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, Mary Susan Gast.
The former Executive of the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, Loey Powell.

Also, welcome Don Hart, former President and CEO of United Church Funds.

Moderator Lowes gave thanks for these saints and with acclamation of the General Synod declared that the honored guests were granted voice in the Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

21-GS-06 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice to the honored guests by consensus.

15. INTRODUCTION OF ECUMENICAL GUESTS
Moderator Lowes welcomed Mark Pettis, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Manager for the United Church of Christ, to introduce colleagues from the Full Communion Agreement, ecumenical partner churches, and interfaith organizations. He presented a video and asked the General Synod to join in welcoming the following:

From the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Rev. Terri Hord Owens, General Minister and President, and also from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Rev. Paul Tche, President for Christian Unity and Interfaith Ministries.

From the Presbyterian Church (USA), Dr. Dianna Wright, Director of Ecumenical Relations.

From the Reformed Church in America, the Rev. Eddy Aleman, General Secretary.

From the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Kathryn Lohre, Executive for Ecumenical & Inter-Religious Relations in the Office of the Presiding Bishop.
From The United Church of Canada, the Right Rev. Dr. Richard Bott, Moderator, and also from the United Church of Canada, the Rev. Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, Executive Minister, Antler River Watershed, Western Ontario Waterways, and Horseshoe Falls Regional Councils.

From the United Methodist Church, Bishop Tracy Malone, Bishop of the East Ohio Annual Conference.

From the Unitarian Universalist Association, Jessica York, Director of Congregational Life.

From the National Council of Churches, Rev. Jim Winkler, President and General Secretary.

From the World Council of Churches, Ryan Smith, Ecumenical Program Executive in the United Nations Office.

From the World Communion of Reformed Churches, Rev. Chris Ferguson, Secretary General.

From Christian Churches Together, Rev. Carlos Malave, Executive Director.

From Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC), Bishop Teresa Jefferson-Snorton, Executive Director.

Moderator Lowes thanked Mark and welcomed all of the ecumenical and interfaith partners and with acclamation of the General Synod declared that without objection these guests are granted voice at the Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

21-GS-07 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice to the ecumenical partners by consensus.

16. INTRODUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL GUESTS AND MISSION CO-WORKERS
Moderator Lowes called on Karen Georgia Thompson, Associate General Minister for Wider Church Ministries and Operations, and Co-Executive for Global Ministries to introduce the international guests.

Karen Georgia Thompson indicated that Global Ministries nurtures relationships with almost 300 churches, Christian organizations, agencies, and faith-based institutions in more than 90 countries around the world on behalf of the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ to promote the values of Presence, Mutuality, Community, Justice and Peace. Via a pre-recorded video the following international guests and mission co-workers were introduced:

From Africa:
Ms. Joyce Steiner, Director of Programs and Advocacy, Christian Council of Ghana.

From East Asia and the Pacific:
The Rev. Joram Calimutan, Program Coordinator, Faith Partnership and Solidarity, with the Interfaith Network for the Rights of Migrants of the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants, based in
Hong Kong; and the Rev. Tafue Lusama, an ordained minister of the Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu, or Christian Church of Tuvalu.

From Europe:
The Rev. Dr. Albrecht Philipps, Coordinator for Kirchengemeinschaft of the Higher Church Council, Union of Evangelical Churches in the Evangelical Church in Germany.

From Latin America and the Caribbean:
The Rev. Lisania Sustaita Martínez, Educational Coordinator of the “Mesa Conjunta para la Misión en México” or Common Table for Mission in Mexico, a common witness of the Congregational and Disciples of Christ Churches in Mexico.

From the Middle East:
Nidal L Abu Zuluf, Manager of the Joint Advocacy Initiative of the East Jerusalem YMCA and the YWCA of Palestine.

From Southern Asia:
The Rev. Rohaan Preman Ranjan, Director for the Peace and Justice Commission of the Church of the American Ceylon Mission.

Karen Georgia Thompson introduced Joyce Steiner, Director of Programs and Advocacy, Christian Council of Ghana to offer a word of greeting on behalf of the global partners.

Moderator Lowes thanked Karen Georgia Thompson and with acclamation of the General Synod declared that without objection these esteemed International Partners are granted voice at the Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

21-GS-08 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice to our esteemed international partners in mission by consensus.

17. THREE GREAT LOVES CAMPAIGN SUMMARY
Moderator Lowes introduced David Sigmund and Kim Whisler-Vasko to share a video summary of the Three Great Loves Campaign.

18. PENSION BOARDS/NATIONAL SETTING MINSTERS FINANCIAL VITALITY INITIATIVE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN
Moderator Lowes introduced a video addressing issues of personal indebtedness and financial security facing many who serve the church indicating that the Pension Boards and the National Setting have embarked upon a unique partnership that will directly address the changes. The video introduced the “Securing the Future: Financial Justice for Ministers” campaign and the moderator called on each one to participate in advancing the quality of life for those who serve.

19. RACE AUDIT
Moderator Lowes introduced Yvette Wynn, of the New York Conference and Chair of the United Church of Christ Board, Gordon Rankin, of the New Hampshire Conference and Chair of the Council of Conference Ministers, and Traci Blackmon, Associate General Minister, to share
their collective intention of a racial diversity, equity, and inclusion audit in the National Setting and the United Church of Christ Board, toward becoming an anti-racist church. In addition to their report, they indicated that during this General Synod Join the Movement has launched and attendees are invited to join the movement by registering for updates and sharing their stories at www.jointhemovementucc.org.

20. BECOMING A CHURCH OF CONTEMPLATIVES IN ACTION
Moderator Lowes indicated that the next item of business was a resolution coming directly to floor of General Synod. The General Synod Standing Rules give this as an option for resolutions deemed noncontroversial and not needing time in a General Synod Committee for discussion and refinement.

This does not mean that these resolutions are any less important or worthy of the General Synod’s full consideration. It does mean that the Business Committee has determined that the topic is likely to receive widespread delegate support and the resolution is written to clearly articulate the desired outcomes.

The title of the resolution is Becoming a Church of Contemplatives in Action and was submitted by thirteen Local Churches of the United Church of Christ. It is a Resolution of Witness and requires a 2/3 vote for adoption.

Moderator Lowes called on Yvette Wynn, of the New York Conference and Chair of the Business Committee, to bring the Motion regarding Becoming a Church of Contemplatives in Action. On behalf of the Business Committee, Yvette Wynn moved that the 33rd General Synod adopt the Resolution on Becoming a Church of Contemplatives in Action. Yvette yielded her time to speak to the motion to Matthew Carriker and Denison Staples, proponents of the resolution.

Moderator Lowes without objection granted voice to Matthew Carriker and Denison Staples for the purpose of addressing the resolution.

21-GS-09 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice to Matthew Carriker and Denison Staples by consensus.

Discussion:
Haley Hudler (Southern New England Conference) spoke in favor

21-GS-10 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the resolution Becoming a Church of Contemplatives in Action.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 464 Yes; 19 No; 16 Abstain)

BECOMING A CHURCH OF CONTEMPLATIVES IN ACTION
A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION
WHEREAS the 21st century has seen a resurgence of Christian spiritual and contemplative practices, yet many churchgoers have not heard of or engaged in these practices in church;

WHEREAS people who leave church often find a scarcity of spiritual food there to nourish their souls, and are frequently unfamiliar with practices that cultivate self-care and love of God; and have turned to other spiritual and secular communities and organizations to fulfill this need;

WHEREAS there is a wide diversity of spiritual practices in the Christian tradition, and we aim to honor the diversity of each of these practices as they serve to build up the body of Christ;

WHEREAS with the crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, systemic racism, and the financial fallout causing greater need than ever for work for social justice, the church is called to model and share expressions of activism modeled in the contemplative spirit of Jesus;

WHEREAS Jesus said “I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit” (John 15: 5), and Christian contemplative practices hold the goal of abiding more deeply in Christ;

WHEREAS if we look at the “Tree of Contemplative Practices” as but one example of this diversity, we see that the myriad of spiritual disciplines far surpasses what the Church universal and the UCC in particular have offered to church members. As Barbara Holmes says, “Contemplative practices can be silent or evocative, still or embodied in dance or shout. Always, contemplation requires attentiveness to the Spirit of God.”;

WHEREAS being “transformed by the renewing of our minds” (Romans 12: 2) begins with honest self-examination, reflective introspection and dialogue, and intentions and commitments to change, through God’s grace;

WHEREAS the UCC is rooted in the “Three Great Loves” of neighbor, children, and creation, and authentic contemplative practices expand our capacity and commitment to love and justice, so that we might be clearer channels for God’s love to shine through and might more fully “come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.” (Ephesians 4: 13)

WHEREAS the UCC is often identified as a progressive church for activists, whereas what makes the church unique is its spiritual grounding in the love and wholeness of God,

WHEREAS the church’s foundation of divine love grounds and informs communal life in the body of Christ, as well as provides the reason for why the church expresses its witness in active forms of justice, peace, and service in the world;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages local churches to become churches of “contemplatives in action,” remembering the essential disciplines modeled by Jesus of silent prayer, meditation, and practices to commune with the Divine Mother-Father, and letting contemplative depth inspire our forming and sustaining of life-giving, spiritually-generative community and our church’s
action in the world through works of charity, social justice, peacemaking, earth-stewardship, and making disciples on the path of God’s unconditional, agape love;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages training of future clergy and lay leaders in the ways of contemplation, spiritual practice, and Christian mysticism, providing experiential grounding for the sustained life of faith; living into our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ and as children of God to see the Divine in everyone and everything in all creation, beginning with ourselves and expanding our love into ever-widening circles;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod invites local churches to commit to being a “both/and” rather than an “either/or” church- a church that prioritizes contemplation, spending time communing with God in various forms of prayer; and a church of activism that seeks to make God’s love and justice real in the world; thus a church of both contemplation and action—a church of “contemplatives in action” where our love of God through contemplative practices informs how we live and act in the world, and where our interior and exterior spiritual practices complement, ground, and inspire one another.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod calls upon all settings of the United Church of Christ to invest in curriculum and resources to support Conferences, Associations, local churches, clergy, lay leaders, General Synod and seminaries in practicing and teaching a foundational life of spiritual practices, as modeled in the life of Jesus. In this resourcing, all settings are called to remain committed to the UCC’s diversity as a Multicultural, Multiracial, and Anti-racist church, thus honoring the diversity of spiritual and contemplative practices and teachers from many and varied cultures through whom the spirit works in different ways;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod encourages all settings of the UCC seek to live out the foundation of contemplative practices in the ministry of God’s work in the world—making inclusive, participatory spiritual practices and teachings that cultivate being, introspection, reflection and growth an integral part of National gatherings, including committee work, children’s, youth and adult ministries, ecumenical partnerships, and General Synod;

FUNDING: Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Collegium of Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries of other entities with the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

21. **A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE AND RESPOND TO RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

Moderator Lowes indicated that the next item of business is a resolution also coming directly to the floor of General Synod: A Resolution to Declare and Respond to Racism as a Public Health Crisis. The resolution was submitted by The Council for Health and Human Service Ministries and the Council on Racial and Ethnic Ministries. Moderator Lowes called on Yvette Wynn to
make the motion. Yvette Wynn moved that the Thirty-third General Synod adopt the resolution, A Resolution to Declare and Respond to Racism as a Public Health Crisis, and recommended its approval. Yvette yielded her time to speak to the motion to Elyse Berry and Zillah Wesley, proponents of the resolution.

21-GS-11 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice to Elyse Berry and Zillah Wesley by consensus.

Discussion:
Andrew Roblyer (South Central) spoke in favor
Brigit Stevens (Conference Minister for Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota) spoke in favor
Marvin Morgan (Past Moderator) spoke in favor
Mike Readinger (United Church of Christ Board member) spoke in favor

21-GS-12 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution to Declare and Respond to Racism as a Public Health Crisis.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 494 Yes; 11 No; 7 Abstain)

A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE AND RESPOND TO RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS
A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS “racism is a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities,” in the words of Ibram X. Kendi.

WHEREAS without exception and across generations, racial inequities persist in every system of society—as evidenced through health care access, education, criminal justice, employment, housing, access to food and clean water, services to youth, older adults, and persons with disabilities, organizational leadership, governmental office, voting, and immigration, among many others—and thus a specific anti-racist lens is required for health equity and broader systemic change.

WHEREAS inequities based on race also intersect with other dimensions of identity—such as income, sex, gender, sexuality, citizenship and incarceration status, geographic location and housing status, ability, education, language proficiency, etc.—and thus racial justice is a necessary method from which to respond to other intersecting oppressions impacting health and equity overall.

WHEREAS public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities and environments in which they live, learn, work and play.

WHEREAS the word crisis, comes from the ancient Greek word that means “turning point,” and
comes from the verb meaning “to decide”—thus connoting a call to change and action.

WHEREAS framing racism as an issue of public health rallies and compels faith communities, organizations, and the government to address the crisis through systemic change, in the same way other threats to public health have been addressed, such as through policies, practices, enforcement, education, and support services.

WHEREAS for over thirty-five years, research has shown how racism undermines the physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational health and wellbeing of People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color, as evidenced by *The Report of the Secretary’s Task Force on Black and Minority Health (Heckler Report).*

WHEREAS Healthy People 2020, the federal government’s prevention agenda for building a healthier nation continues to name the achievement of health equity, the elimination of disparities, and the improvement the health of all groups as the nation’s overarching goal.

WHEREAS social determinants of health—the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age—have a profound impact on the health of People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color; as the effects of trauma, poverty, and environmental devastation due to structural racism cannot be overstated in this regard; as the majority of changeable contributors to healthy outcomes are found in these social determinants; as these inequities are avoidable and able to be changed through policy and the redistribution of money, power, and resources; and as this is evident nationally and globally.

WHEREAS research shows that racial discrimination and the impact of implicit bias continues to persist in medicine and remains a fundamental cause of health disparities, which can also be remedied through changes in policy and education.

WHEREAS health disparities for People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color remain at unacceptable rates and breadth—as evidenced by lower life expectancy, higher infant and maternal mortality, poorer treatment for pain, cancer, cardiovascular conditions, mental health and end-of-life care, and inadequate access to and quality of health care, among many others.

WHEREAS the joint forces of racism and ableism have constructed an inaccessible society and an understanding of disability as an inherently undesirable, devalued, and diminished life experience, which has resulted in abuse, neglect, incarceration, institutionalization, and social exclusion across generations of disabled People of Color, in particular.

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the devasting reality of these racial health disparities and the social and political conditions that created them; as structural racism has been proven to be a barrier to COVID-19 treatment and prevention; as Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities have a COVID-19 mortality rate of more than 2.7 times the rate of People of European Decent; as the Navajo Nation’s infection rate has been the highest in the country; as disparities in economic stability and health care access have been linked to infection rates and death; as Communities of Color are more likely to live in multigenerational homes; as workers of African Descent are more likely to be in jobs deemed essential; and as
one in five state and federal prisoners had COVID-19.

WHEREAS police violence, state-sanctioned terror, and the systems that uphold and condone them are an integral part of this public health crisis; as People of African Descent are three times more likely to be killed by police (and are nearly one and a half times more likely to be unarmed in those killings) than those of European Descent; as research shows that the presence of high use of force by police in Communities of Color is associated with an increased risk in poorer health, high blood pressure, and diabetes, among other health concerns; as 98.3 percent of killings by police from 2013-2020 have not resulted in officers being charged with a crime; as poor data collection by law enforcement has contributed to the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women; and as People of African Descent are overrepresented on death row and are more likely to die by state execution.

WHEREAS mass incarceration and the inherently racist war on people who use drugs have targeted and ravaged Communities of Color through every measure and expression of health; as 60 percent of the 2.2 million Americans incarcerated are of African Descent or Latinx; as People of African Descent are nearly six times more likely to be incarcerated for drug-related offenses than their counterparts of European Descent, despite equal substance usage rates; as 72,000 people died from drug overdoses in 2019; as the opioid overdose crisis is fueled by socioeconomic inequities, trauma, and hopelessness, in addition to harmful prescribing practices; and as numerous governmental laws and organizational policies refuse to adopt life-saving harm reduction strategies.

WHEREAS immigration status directly influences health outcomes; as migrant detention centers have a long history of medical neglect and abuse, including preventable deaths of children; and as family separation has long-term damaging psychological and health consequences for children, families, and communities.

WHEREAS a tool of white supremacy and capitalism is to inflame and sustain racial tension and hatred in order to prevent People of European Descent, particularly those who are low-income, and People of Color from uniting as a collective force to dismantle these oppressive systems, and is also wielded in such a way, where upholding racist beliefs becomes more important than—and at the expense of—the health of European Americans that would also be improved, if not saved, by anti-racist policies.

WHEREAS the answers, strategies, and practices that have come from many People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color use public health perspectives to guide their life-saving work.

WHEREAS voting and protecting voting rights are essential for advancing health equity; as there exists a correlation between voting behaviors and poor health; and as voting establishes the policy makers who will make decisions on a systemic level.

WHEREAS there is reason to have hope; where although the magnitude and overwhelming reality of racism can evoke a sense of powerlessness, addressing social determinants of health is a practical way to move forward together on the path to justice. The church, in all of its expressions, can be a vessel for that hope to come alive. The church can be a place of trust,
connection, and collaboration with the wisdom already present in communities working for transformation; as Christ modeled that the work of the Good News is shared and can start today; and as each member of the Body has their own unique role to play, gift to give, and worth to claim.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ declares racism a public health crisis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the national setting of the United Church of Christ to enable and encourage local churches, conferences, and organizations to develop methods to:

a. Raise the church's consciousness of racism as a public health crisis from theological, bioethical, and public health perspectives.

b. Monitor and advocate for public policies that work towards health equity by addressing social determinants of health and divest in those that cause harm, violence, and death.

c. Discover ways in which current ministries and mission connect with and can address racism as a public health crisis and explore new ways of incorporating this lens into the life of the church.

d. Examine, in radical honesty, past and current organizational policies and practices in how they contribute or create barriers to health equity and racial justice.

e. Identify current and potential relationships with members of CHHSM, COREM, other health and human service organizations, advocacy groups, faith and community-based organizations, and academic institutions to collaborate on responding to racism as a public health crisis.
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the U. S. Congress and state legislatures to pass legislation that would address social determinants of health, such as The Anti-Racism in Public Health Act, which would create a “Center on Anti-Racism in Health” at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and to establish a “Law Enforcement Violence Prevention Program” at the CDC.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

22. A RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT (2015-2024)
Moderator Lowes indicated the next item of business is a resolution coming directly to the floor, submitted by the New Hampshire Conference and the Southwest Conference, entitled A Resolution to Recognize the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024). It is a Resolution of Witness and requires a 2/3 vote for adoption. Yvette Wynn moved that the Thirty-third General Synod adopt the resolution recommended its approval. Yvette yielded her time to speak to the motion to Harriet Ward and Andrew Ponder Williams, proponents of the resolution.

21-GS-13 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice to Harriet Ward and Andrew Ponder Williams to speak to the motion by consensus.

Discussion:
Haley Hudler (Southern New England Conference) offered a friendly amendment to correct grammar which Moderator Lowes accepted.


MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 483 Yes; 13 No; 16 Abstain)

A RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT (2015-2024)
A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS the human rights of African descendant people globally and in the United States continue to be challenged by the presence of racism and the legacy of whiteness, and

WHEREAS a myriad of social issues are byproducts of the racial inequities stemming from prejudice, bigotry, White privilege, White fragility, and White supremacy, and
WHEREAS the numbers of incarcerated people of African descent in the Americas continues to grow, and

WHEREAS disparities in healthcare, housing, education, the plight of women and girls, and a myriad of interconnected issues point to the need for addressing racism and calling attention to the need to protect the human rights of African descendant people.

WHEREAS in many countries, while African descendant people attained civil rights, the human rights guaranteed under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly continue to be elusive, and

WHEREAS data show that police have continued killing Black men and women at disproportionate rates, even after the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor sparked international protests against racism and police brutality, with a total of 164 Black men and women who were killed by police from January 1 to August 31, 2020, and

WHEREAS in June of 2020 four black men, Malcolm Harsch, Robert Fuller, Dominique Alexander, and an unidentified Black teenager were found hanged to death, all reported by authorities to have committed suicide, a claim disputed by their family members and many other people, and

WHEREAS the Bible and Christian theology affirm imago dei – that all people are created in the image of God; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has consistently shown leadership in advocacy and for the rights of African descendant people in the United States and globally; and

WHEREAS the United Nations declaration of the Decade calls for the promotion and protection of the rights of people of African descent; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ passed several resolutions that address the unfair treatment of people of African descent, that call for legislation and action to address injustices perpetuated against African descendant people and continues to decry the systems that support and perpetuate white privilege and white supremacy as tools that produce racism and racial inequality;

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ continues to advocate for the dismantling of racism and racist institutions through education and policy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015 - 2024);

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to increase awareness of the United Nations Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) and work ecumenically to promote the Decade;
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to utilize this Decade to intentionally address the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to adopt the Decade themes of recognition, justice and development as frameworks for its advocacy, commitments and engagement in the fight for the rights of People of African Descent.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

23. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
Moderator Lowes called on Yvette Wynn, John Dorhauer and Cameron Barr to share an update on Strategic Priorities.

Yvette Wynn, John Dorhauer and Cameron Barr presented the priorities in a pre-recorded video.

24. NOMINATION AND SPEECH OF AGM CANDIDATE
Moderator Lowes invited Davida Foy Crabtree, retired Conference Minister, to introduce Traci Blackmon.

Davida Foy Crabtree gave the nominating speech for Traci Blackmon indicating support for Traci’s candidacy in continued leadership as Associate General Minister for Local Church Ministries and for Justice and Witness Ministries. Davida indicated that Traci embodies the following virtues: closeness to God, which is authentic and real; the integrity of life; and the courage to lead.

Traci Blackmon accepted the nomination and indicated her desire is to continue to serve God and the church through her role as Associate General Minister in the United Church of Christ, giving her best to whatever task is placed before her. Traci promised to ask what is God up to in every place the UCC is found…and doing all to make certain WE show up to be involved in whatever God is up to…wherever WE are found.

Moderator Lowes declared that the nomination of Traci Blackmon was now before the Thirty-third General Synod and that the election would be held at the plenary on July 18.

25. ANNOUNCEMENTS
Moderator Lowes invited Karen Georgia Thompson to offer some closing remarks and announcements and introduce our Theological Reflection.
Karen Georgia Thompson encouraged all to stay for the Theological Reflection presented by the youth, to visit the Virtual Exhibit Hall, check out the workshops available and Educational Intensives, Optional Events, and Keynote Speaker events listed in meet.ucc, and to sign up for Speak-Out.

26. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS
The Youth Provided a Pre-Recorded Theological Reflection

27. RECESS
Moderator Lowes declared the Thirty-third General Synod to be in recess until 4:00 P.M. Friday afternoon.

Friday, July 16, 2021
4:00 p.m.
Second Plenary Session

1. CALL TO ORDER
Moderator Lowes called the Second Plenary Session to order at 4:00 p.m. The Moderator started with a thank you to Edith Guffey of Kansas-Oklahoma Conference and Ginny Brown-Daniels of the Missouri Mid-South Conference for their contribution in the planning of the 33rd General Synod, prior to the start of COVID-19. The Moderator then opened the Second Plenary with the Four Directions prayer.

The Moderator indicated that while the committees have been working diligently, none were ready to report out their work yesterday. Therefore, due to the requirement that the General Synod have at least one-half day to review any changes to resolutions coming out of committee, there would not be any committee reports during this plenary as originally scheduled. Several non-business items from the Fourth Plenary Session would be moved to the Second Plenary Session Committee Block to allow for more time for business on Sunday afternoon.

The Moderator further indicated that as committees complete their work, the updated versions of the resolution will be posted to meet.ucc and requested that delegates log in and review the changes; those considering offering any amendments or other formal motions on any resolution should submit via the meet.ucc.org website. Moderator Lowes provided detailed information to complete this procedure.

2. SPEAK OUT!
Moderator Lowes indicated we would begin plenary with the first of several Speak Outs! Speak Outs! provide an opportunity for delegates and visitors to address the General Synod for up to one minute on a topic of their choosing.

Brian Lapis, Southern New England Conference (UCC Office of Communications)
Katie Howe, Southern New England Conference (Millennials Ministries)
Elizabeth Findley Hazel, Wisconsin Conference (Value everyone)
Sonya Varn, (Pathways Theological Education)
Julie Yarborough, Central Atlantic Conference (Association of United Church Educators)
Paul Ramsey, Pension Board (Thanks for contribution to the Christmas Fund)
Angie Staniszewski, New York Conference (MJP 2033, anti-racism)
Dakota Roberts, Indiana Kentucky Conference (Lack of Accountability of Synod Resolutions)

The Moderator thanked the Speak Out! participants and provided information for Speak Out! sign-ups for future Plenaries.

3. DEVELOPMENT AND OUR CHURCH’S WIDER MISSION BASIC SUPPORT
Moderator Lowes presented Kent Siladi, the Director of Philanthropy from the Office of Philanthropy, Technology, Identity and Communications, for a presentation on Our Church’s Wider Mission.

Pre-recorded videos were shown.

The Moderator thanked Kent and reminded churches that their support is key to the success of Our Church’s Wider Mission.

4. NEW CENTER FOR ANALYTICS, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DATA
Moderator Lowes introduced Erica Dollhopf, the Director of the Center for Analytics, Research and Development Data.

Erica Dollhopf shared some of the work of churches in their adaptability and resilience in the wake of COVID-19.

The Moderator thanked Erica for her insightful report and again indicated that since there were no committee reports coming to plenary, reports that would have followed later in the program would be presented at this time, after a word from a couple of General Synod sponsors.

5. NEW CHURCH PARADE/CHURCHES NEW TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Moderator Lowes indicated it is time to celebrate the newest members of the United Church of Christ family. Moderator introduced Aaron Wade, Minister for Congregational Granting, for this much-anticipated event each General Synod. Aaron presented some of the newest ministries of the United Church of Christ via a video entitled New Churches.

The Moderator thanked Aaron and welcomed the new churches to the United Church of Christ.

6. RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL STAFF
Moderator Lowes indicated it was time to recognize the talented and devoted people who make up the National Staff of the United Church of Christ. John Dorhauer enumerated some of the accomplishments and thanked the staff, and also announced that the United Church of Christ National Office was recognized as one of the top workplaces for 2021, a place where employees have voice, where their voice matters and makes a difference. Yvette Wynn and Cameron Barr as well Penny Lowes also thanked the National Staff for their dedication and commitment.

7. RECOGNITION OF NEW AND RETIRING CONFERENCE MINISTERS
Moderator Lowes introduced Gordon Rankin, Conference Minister of the New Hampshire and Chair of the Counsel of Conference Ministers, to recognize new and retiring Conference Ministers.

Gordon Rankin recognized new and retiring Conference Ministers and also indicated a special recognition would be held to celebrate the ministry of Keith Mills, deceased.

Moderator Lowes thanked Gordon Rankin.

8. **JUST WORLD**

Moderator Lowes indicated that the United Church of Christ continues to work toward being a just and inviting church. The United Church of Christ is unique in its witness and commitment to a just world and invited General Synod to hear a word on how Local Churches might get even more involved in this important work.

The Just World video was played.

Moderator Lowes encouraged everyone to see how they and their church can embrace the Just World Covenant.

9. **25TH ANNIVERSARY OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES**

Moderator Lowes indicated that there are many incredible ministries to lift up in the United Church of Christ and introduced Global Ministries. She expressed our happiness in joining together in celebrating 25 tremendous years of God’s work around the world.

The Global Ministries video was played.

Moderator Lowes thanked Global Ministries and all partners around the world.

Sponsor Videos:
Church Building and Loan Fund
Pension Boards
United Church Funds

10. **MUSIC STRETCH BREAK**

Moderator Lowes indicated that General Synod always provides some wonderful take-aways and this year’s General Synod has given us some incredible musical offerings. The moderator introduced “Rooted in Love” by Natalie Cerna, and thereafter thanked Natalie and the worship team for bringing this beautiful music.

11. **NCC PRESENTATION ON NRSVUE**

The Moderator called on John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ and Board President of the National Council of Churches to make an exciting announcement. John Dorhauer announced that on November 18, 2021, there will be a new edition of the New Revised Standard Version Bible, the NRSVue (that is, updated edition) and indicated that e-copies of the latest translation can be pre-ordered.
The Moderator thanked John Dorhauer.

12. **SEMINARY PRESENTATIONS**
Moderator Lowes invited all to see what our seminaries and seminarians are doing throughout the United Church of Christ.

Seminary Videos were played.

The Moderator indicated that the United Church of Christ’s seminaries have a bright and bold future and wished our seminarians God’s Blessing as they embark upon their ministries in and on behalf of this beloved church.

13. **JOIN THE MOVEMENT**
Moderator Lowes invited everyone to become involved in a time of opportunity, conversation, and action and to Join the Movement.

Join the Movement was played and Invitation to Join the Movement was extended.

Moderator Lowes indicated we have a story to broadcast to the world and thanked everyone for the great reminder of who we are and who we can be as a church.

14. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
Moderator Lowes invited Karen Georgia Thompson to give the Announcements.

Announcements by Karen Georgia Thompson:
1. Committees will continue their work on Saturday between from 1 – 2 pm
2. Implementation Conversations are available on meet.ucc
3. Sign up for Speak Out! on meet.ucc and follow instructions for same
4. Videos of worship, keynotes, workshops will be available after July 19
5. The exhibit hall is open 24 hours, though not always staffed
6. Worship Bulletins and other resources are available on UCC.org
7. Keynote speaker, Rev. Adam Russell this evening at 8:00 pm

15. **RECESS**
Moderator Lowes declared the Second Plenary Session of the Special Edition General Synod to be in recess until Saturday at 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 17, 2021
Third Plenary Session

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
Assistant Moderator Sandman called the Third Plenary Session of the Thirty-third General Synod to order at 4:00 p.m. Moderator Sandman reviewed instructions for submitting motions.

2. **SPEAK OUT!**
Assistant Moderator Sandman indicated we would begin this plenary with the second Speak Out!

Kearstin Bailey, South Central Conference (Volunteer Program)
Rev. Charing Wei-Jen Chen, Illinois Conference (Queer of God)
Paul Fogle, Penn Central Conference (Dying with Dignity)
Emma Brewer-Wallin, UCC Board Member (Behavioral Covenant – Exhibit Hall)
Chad Abbott, Conference Minister, Indiana Kentucky Conf. (DACA)
Brooks Berndt, UCC Minister, Environmental Justice (Green New Deal)

Assistant Moderator Sandman thanked the participants provided information for Speak Outs! for tomorrow’s plenary.

3. STATE OF THE CHURCH
Moderator Lowes invited the General Minister and President to bring the “State of the Church address.

John Dorhauer spoke on the State of the Church.

Assistant Moderator Sandman thanked John for his challenging yet hope-filled words.

4. BREAK

5. A RESOLUTION TO ADVOCATE AND ACT TO CHANGE THE CASH BAIL BOND SYSTEM TO ELIMINATE RACIAL AND SOCIAL INJUSTICES INHERENT IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM
Assistant Moderator Sandmen asked Moderator Lowes to open with prayer prior to beginning with committee reports.

The next item of business is a resolution entitled A Resolution to Advocate and Act to Change the Cash Bail Bond System to Eliminate Racial and Social Injustices in the Present System, submitted by the Southern Conference. Moderator Sandman called on Maria Brace of the Penn Northeast Conference to present the recommended action.

Moderator Sandman then called on Tyler Ung, a delegate from the Southeast Conference, to make the motion. Tyler Ung moved on behalf of Committee Two that the Thirty-third General Synod adopt the Resolution to Advocate and Act to Change the Cash Bail Bond System to Eliminate Racial and Social Injustices Inherent in the Present System, as amended. Maria Brace spoke to the motion.

Discussion:
Tanya Sadagopan (Wisconsin Conference) spoke in favor
Charlotte Frantz (Minnesota Conference) spoke in favor
Maddie Furman (Southern Conference) questioned the role of the church in this matter

Motion to Amend
Andrew Roblyer (South Central Conference) moved to amend the resolution to change
“encourage” to “strongly urges” in line 163.
Motion was seconded by Dixie Laube, (Iowa Conference).

Moderator called for discussion on the motion to amend.

No additional discussion.

**Proposed Amendment:**
That the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages [strongly urges] the reform of the bail bond systems within individual states and the United States in order to eliminate the racial and social injustices in the present cash bail bond systems,

**Vote on Amendment**
21-GS-15 VOTED:  
MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 494 Yes; 54 No; 13 Abstain)

No further discussion.

**Vote on Main Motion**
21-GS-16 VOTED:  
The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the resolution, A Resolution to Advocate and Act to Change the Cash Bail Bond System to Eliminate Racial and Social Injustices Inherent in the Present System, as amended.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 551 Yes; 10 No; 3 Abstain)

**A RESOLUTION TO ADVOCATE AND ACT TO CHANGE THE CASH BAIL BOND SYSTEM TO ELIMINATE RACIAL AND SOCIAL INJUSTICES INHERENT IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM**  
A Resolution of Witness

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS** the U.S. has the highest rate of incarceration in the world, and African Americans, Latinos, Latinas, and indigenous peoples are disproportionately incarcerated in the United States;

**WHEREAS** since 2000, the vast majority of the jail population increase was caused by the detention of individuals prior to trial (pretrial) of which 60 to 70% were classified nonviolent minimum-security;

**WHEREAS** cash bail bonding is an over 2-billion-dollar industry;

**WHEREAS** the inability to make cash bail extracts an untold human cost on the accused due to their loss of employment, housing and, often times, family support;

**WHEREAS** there are proven instances of inadequate health care for incarcerated persons, death
and injury suffered by incarcerated persons;

WHEREAS at least 70% of inmates in local jails are not convicted of any crime;

WHEREAS persons who cannot make bail are poor and four times more likely to receive jail time with sentences three times longer than those who do make bail;

WHEREAS bail set for people of color exceeds that for whites by 35% and Latinos by 19%;

WHEREAS three out of four criminal cases in state trial courts are for misdemeanors that, if proved, would result in fines and/or less than a year in jail;

WHEREAS political contributions made by the Bail Industry in between 2002 and 2016 exceeded $5,000,000;

WHEREAS money-based systems release nearly half of the most dangerous defendants with little to no meaningful supervision;

WHEREAS the US is the only nation besides the Philippines to have a legal commercial bail bond industry;

WHEREAS corporate and/or systemic structures, or individuals which derive profit from the imprisonment of human beings serve to perpetuate the legacy of slavery, oppression and heartless greed which the United Church of Christ has long sought to expose and correct;

WHEREAS we are admonished as followers of Christ to “Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured;” (Hebrews 13:3)

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

a. That the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages the reform of the bail bond systems within individual states and the United States in order to eliminate the racial and social injustices in the present cash bail bond systems;

b. That the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ strongly urges the individual states and the United States to institute alternatives to cash bail bond systems;

c. That the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all settings of the church to raise their consciousness of the theological, social, racial, ethnic and economic inequities which make possible the existence of the unfair and unjust bail bond systems;

d. That, to accomplish these goals, the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all settings of the church to seek partnerships with other
organizations also working toward the goals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the U.S. Congress and state legislatures to reform the cash bail bond systems to be more just and humane.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

6. A COMMITMENT TO GENDER SAFETY AND EQUITY IN MINISTRY SETTINGS

This resolution was submitted by the Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ. Assistant Moderator Sandman called on the Committee Four Chair, Cheryl Lindsey of the Heartland Conference, to speak to the committee’s recommendations. Gary Barraco, a delegate from Penn Northeast Conference and member of Committee Four, moved that the Thirty-third General Synod adopt the resolution A Commitment to Gender Safety and Equity in Ministry and recommended approval, as amended. Cheryl spoke to the motion.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.

21-GS-17 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the resolution A Commitment to Gender Safety and Equity in Ministry.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 544 Yes; 12 No; 3 Abstain)

A COMMITMENT TO GENDER SAFETY & EQUITY IN MINISTRY SETTINGS
A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS The General Synod of the United Church of Christ has taken a firm, unyielding stance for the human rights and safety of women, refuses to condone any form of violence against vulnerable people, and strongly encourages clergy and laity to support survivors of sexual violence; and

WHEREAS The majority of women, both cisgender and transgender, whether they identify as women or as non-binary, are objectified and subjected to the violence and degradation of sexual assault and unwanted sexual advance; and

WHEREAS Sexual harassment and gender discrimination, including attacking, undermining
and dismissing women and non-binary persons’ leadership, is a form of violence; and occurs within a national context of escalating violence against women in positions of public leadership; and

WHEREAS Women and non-binary persons risk further discrimination, violence, loss of employment, ostracism or death in daring to say no or confront the harasser, and penalty of being silenced or not believed when they dare to report; and

WHEREAS Gender expression continues to be a minefield for women and non-binary persons, who are pressured to exude the amount of femininity that makes others comfortable – “too feminine” is seen as helpless or intentionally seductive, but “too masculine” is considered confrontational and disrespectful - and women are still judged on their appearance, rather than on their skills, ideas, achievements, or other non sexual/non-gendered attributes; and

WHEREAS Women are still subject to economic violence, primarily in that they are paid less than men for the same or similar work, and this lower pay in turn reduces their pension, retirement benefits and Social Security payments; they are overcharged for “women’s products” and penalized for carrying out the responsibilities of home and family; and

WHEREAS These experiences of bias, discrimination and violence occur in ministry settings, and are experienced by clergy and lay women and non-binary persons holding positions of leadership within the Church; and

WHEREAS Such discrimination is founded in misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and racism, which are antithetical to the way of Jesus; and

WHEREAS Our society is in the midst of a cultural transformation, with the #metoo movement empowering survivors to break the silence and share their stories of rape, abuse, and sexual harassment, and women and non-binary persons have begun sharing their #churchtoo stories of how this occurs within the Church; and

WHEREAS Clergy, chaplains and faith leaders are called upon to provide pastoral care to those navigating gender discrimination, sexual harassment and violence, some of which occurs within our ministry settings; and

WHEREAS The United Church of Christ Ministerial Code of Ethics requires ministers to “not use my position, power, or authority to exploit any person”;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ, confesses its complicity, active participation with, and passive acceptance of systems of sexism, misogyny, transphobia, and gender oppression that inhibit and limit leadership; directs the United Church of Christ Board and urges all other settings of the United Church of Christ – including (but not limited to) local congregations, Committees on Ministry, and Justice and Local Church Ministries Teams – to explore ways to promote gender safety, to empower women, transgender, gender-expansive, nonbinary, genderqueer, gender fluid, gender non-conforming, and two-spirit persons (hereinafter referred to as “Included Persons”), both lay and authorized
ministers, and to raise issues regarding sexism and discrimination, reinforcing the covenants and standards of behavior which bind us together as conferences, associations, congregations, authorized ministers, lay leaders and members; and

**BE IT ALSO RESOLVED** that the Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms the physical and sexual autonomy of Included Persons: the right not to have any other person invade their personal space without permission; the right not to be touched, or abused, either emotionally or physically, in any way by another person; the right to express gender in the ways they choose; the right to communicate autonomously, without reproach or censure based on sexism, misogyny, transphobia and gender oppression; the right to expect that any such action will in no way be held against them for any reason in the workplace, including all ministry settings, or in any social situation; and

**BE IT ALSO RESOLVED** that the Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ directs the UCCB and urges all settings of the UCC to commit to gender equity and address inequities (e.g., compensation, benefits, senior leadership roles, other employment opportunities, hiring, promotion, and termination, etc.) for all Included Persons, both authorized ministers and laity who serve the Church; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-third General Synod asserts that this work must simultaneously address the threats and realities of violence that result from racism, heterosexism, classism, xenophobia, immigration status (real and assumed), ableism, and other intersectional oppressions impose on the daily life and leadership of Included Persons in the Church.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

7. **A RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING TO END 128 YEARS OF WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM**

This Resolution was submitted by the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches. Assistant Moderator Sandman called on Marilyn Kendrix of the Southern New England Conference to present the recommended action from Committee Five. Marilyn Kendrix yielded to Dakota Roberts to make the motion. Dakota Roberts, a delegate from the Indiana Kentucky Conference on behalf of Committee, moved the Thirty-third General Synod adopt the resolution A Resolution Encouraging to End 128 Years of War Between the United States of America and the Hawaiian Kingdom, as amended. Marilyn spoke to the resolution.

**Discussion:**
Kerisa Carmelo (Hawaii Conference) spoke in favor
David Jennys (South Dakota Conference) spoke in favor
William Bowens (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) spoke against
Kyle Lovett (Hawaii Conference) spoke against
Motion to Amend
Neil MacPherson (Hawaii Conference) moved to amend the second Be It Resolved clause. Seconded by Kerisa Carmelo (Hawaii Conference).

Proposed Amendment:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon the United Church of Christ’s General Counsel’s office to listen to and consider recommendations from the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches, other Native Hawaiian organizations, and Native Hawaiian voices [(and the member churches it represents)] drafting communications to local, national and international leaders and organizations calling for compliance with international humanitarian law and an end to the illegal occupation of the Hawaiian islands.

Discussion on the Motion to Amend
Kyle Lovett (Hawaii Conference) spoke against
Tanya Sadagopan (Wisconsin Conference) spoke against

Vote on Motion to Amend:
21-GS-18 VOTED:
MOTION FAILED (Vote: 56 Yes; 453 No; 46 Abstain)

Motion to Postpone Indefinitely
Kyle Lovett (Hawaii Conference) Moved to Postpone the Resolution Indefinitely. Seconded by Jess Chancey (Minnesota Conference).

Discussion on Motion to Postpone Indefinitely:
Florentino Cordova (Hawaii Conference) spoke in favor
Andrea Vassell (Central Atlantic Conference) spoke in favor
Dakota Roberts (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) spoke against
Terry Yasuko Ogawa (Southern New England Conference) spoke against

Vote on the Motion to Postpone Indefinitely
21-GS-19 VOTED:
MOTION FAILED (Vote: 213 Yes; 298 No; 40 Abstain)

Motion to Extend Debate
Thomas Gregory Gray (Southern New England Conference) moved to extend the plenary by one hour. Seconded by Matthew Hogue Smith (Heartland Conference).

Vote on the Motion to Extend Plenary by One Hour
21-GS-20 VOTED:
MOTION FAILED (Vote: 221 Yes; 305 No; 35 Abstain)

Vote on Main Motion
21-GS-21 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to
adopt A Resolution Encouraging to End 128 Years of War Between the United States of America and the Hawaiian Kingdom.

MOTION FAILED; DID NOT PASS BY REQUIRED 2/3 (Vote: 291 Yes; 188 No; 74 Abstain)*

*The Thirty-third General Synod voted to reconsider this resolution in the Fourth Plenary Session and subsequently passed the resolution.

John Dorhauer led the body in prayer.

8. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
   Assistant Moderator Sandman called on Karen Georgia Thompson for announcements.
   1. Karen Georgia shared the following numbers.
      - 2755 Registration
      - 108 Volunteers
      - 50 Workshops
      - 3 Worships
      - 2 Keynote
      - 11 resolutions
      - 10 Implementation Conversations-
        If the room is full for these go to another room
   2. One more Speak Out! on Sunday. Make your video.
   3. Workshops available until August 31.
   4. Worship will follow tomorrow’s plenary

Karen Georgia Thompson thanked all who worked together to put this virtual General Synod together.

9. **RECESS**
   Assistant Moderator Sandman declared the Third Plenary of the Special Edition General Synod to be in recess until Sunday at 2:30 p.m.

**Sunday, July 18, 2021**
**Fourth Plenary Session**
**2:30 p.m.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND SPONSOR RECOGNITION**
   Moderator Lowes called the Fourth Plenary of the Thirty-third General Synod to order at 2:30 p.m. and provided the agenda for the day and other announcements regarding time.

2. **SPEAK OUT!**

   The Moderator indicated the plenary this afternoon would begin with our final Speak Outs!

   Allyson Abrams, Central Atlantic Conference (UCC Mental Health Network – WISE)
Kearstin Bailey, South Central Conference and UCCB (Lean into Healthy Conflict)
Anthony White, New York Conference (Thank you to UCC and Shout out to UCC Board of Directors and Yvette Wynn)
Lakota Iron Rope, Indiana Kentucky Conference (Prayer of silence for indigenous children betrayed by the church)

The Moderator thanked all who participated in Speak Out!

3. **MOTION TO MOVE COMMITTEE BLOCK C TO FOLLOW SPEAK OUT!**
Moderator Lowes indicated that there was a Motion on the floor and she called on Zayna Thomley, Wisconsin Conference.

**Motion to Amend Agenda**
Zayna Thomley moved to Amend the Fourth Plenary Agenda by moving Committee Block C in its entirety to immediately follow Speak Out!
Seconded by Hank Fairman (Illinois Conference).

Discussion:
David Holston (Illinois Conference) spoke in favor
Jeffrey Dodson (Wisconsin Conference) spoke in favor
Tanya Sadagopan (Wisconsin Conference) spoke in favor
Jason Minnich (Penn Central Conference) spoke against

21-GS-22 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to amend the Agenda to move Committee Block C to immediately follow Speak Out!

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 425 Yes; 77; No; 23 Abstain)

Moderator Lowes indicated that as soon as the Agenda could be revised the delegates would consider Committee Block C in its entirety.

4. **BYLAWS AMENDMENTS**
The Moderator indicated the next order of business would be the proposed amendments to the United Church of Christ Bylaws and she called on Carla Gregg-Kearns, Chair of the UCCB Governance Committee, to speak to the proposed amendments and bring the motion.

Carla provided an overview and indicated that the proposed amendments were shared on February 24. Carla Gregg-Kearns, on behalf of the United Church of Christ Board, moved to adopt the proposed amendments to the United Church of Christ Bylaws.

**Motion to Divide**
Eric Anderson, Hawaii Conference, moved to divide the motion into two votes, Part One, Paragraph 191, lines 481-485; and Part Two, the remaining Amendments to the Bylaws. Seconded by Josiah Accola (Illinois South Conference).
21-GS-23 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 252 Yes; 198 No; 78 Abstain)

**Motion to Amend Part One**
Motion to approve the deletion in Paragraph 191, lines 481-485, from the Bylaws.

Discussion:
Libby Tigner (California-S/Nevada Conference) spoke in favor
Eric Anderson (Hawaii Conference) spoke against
John Prain (Illinois Conference) spoke against

21-GS-24 VOTED:
MOTION DID NOT PASS (Vote: 273 Yes; 225 No; 53 Abstain)

**Motion to Amend Part Two**
Motion to approve the remaining proposed amendments to the United Church of Christ Bylaws as previously presented.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.

21-GS-25 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 510 Yes; 23 No; 20 Abstain)

5. **THE ALLIANCE OF ASSOCIATE CONFERENCE MINISTERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST REQUEST TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A FORMAL GROUP**

This Resolution was submitted by the Iowa Conference, Nebraska Conference, New Hampshire Conference and the South Dakota Conference. Moderator Lowes called on Andria Davis of the South Central Conference to present the recommended action regarding the Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers. Emma Brewer-Wallin, a delegate from the Central Pacific Conference and member of the United Church of Christ Board, on behalf of Committee One moved the Thirty-third General Synod to adopt the resolution The Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers of the United Church of Christ Request to Be Recognized as a Formal Group and recommended its approval. Andria Davis spoke to the motion.

Moderator Lowes indicated it was a Prudential Resolution and requires a Majority Vote for adoption.

Discussion:
Mollie Ronge (South Dakota Conference) spoke in favor
Hillary Coleman (Pacific Northwest Conference) spoke in favor
Brigit Stevens (Conference Minister for Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota Conferences) spoke in favor
Matthew Redrich (California-S/Nevada Conference) spoke in favor
Motion to Refer
Diane Weible (UCCB) moved to refer this motion to the UCCB.
Seconded by Kim Williams (California-N/Nevada Conference).

Discussion on Motion to Refer:
Mary Nelson (Missouri Mid-South Conference) spoke in favor
Brigit Stevens (Conference Minister of Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota Conferences) spoke against
Darrell Goodwin (UCCB) spoke against

Vote on Motion to Refer
21-GS-26 VOTED:
MOTION FAILED (Vote: 168 Yes; 370 No; 12 Abstain)

Motion to Call the Question
Josiah Accola (Illinois South Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.
Seconded by Dakota Roberts (Indiana-Kentucky Conference).

Vote on Motion to Call the Question
21-GS-27 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 495 Yes; 45 No; 13 Abstain)

Vote on Main Motion
21-GS-28 VOTED:  The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the resolution The Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers of the United Church of Christ Request to be Recognized as a Formal Group.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 456 Yes; 90 No; 13 Abstain)

THE ALLIANCE OF ASSOCIATE CONFERENCE MINISTERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST REQUEST TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A FORMAL GROUP
A Prudential Resolution

TEXT OF MOTION

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ takes seriously our individual Christian covenant with God as the primal covenant from which our human covenants are derived and by which they are shaped.

WHEREAS in the above view it is “the covenantal relationship with God that creates the church and, in turn created a covenantal relationship among the people who are the church.”
WHEREAS the United Church of Christ holds seriously the call to be an open and welcoming faith community, accepting into the church body and leadership all facets of expression found in God’s people, creating a rich diversity of expression, background, culture, sexual and gender identity and expression.

WHEREAS the work of conference ministry and associate conference ministry places those doing the work at the intersection of church life, between the Local Church and the National Setting, including associations where those exist calling for “keeping communication flowing in all directions, nurturing relationships, articulating and supporting covenantal relationships.”

WHEREAS in response to “[t]he Proposal for Action adopted by the Twentieth General Synod called upon local churches, conferences and associations, those called and employed by the church, and various national bodies to act in a variety of ways in support of the fair and just compensation of all persons called and employed by the church” the AACM states it provides resources and advocacy to support ACMs in their positions.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes the establishment of the Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers, a Self-Created Group serving to support those who serve in a staff or called position doing conference ministry in the support of the conference minister and conference.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED the Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers be identified as related in covenant to the United Church of Christ, through a primary relationship as a Self-Created Group with the United Church of Christ Board.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

6. DECLARATION FOR A JUST PEACE BETWEEN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL
Submitted by various churches. Moderator Lowes called on Elliott Munn (Vermont Conference) to present the recommended action. Elliott Munn called on Kay Albright, (Heartland Conference) to speak to the motion, and Kay Albright moved that the Thirty-third General Synod adopt the resolution Declaration For a Just Peace Between Palestine and Israel, as amended. Elliott Munn spoke to the motion.

Motion to Amend
David Grishaw-Jones (New Hampshire Conference) moved to strike the words “systemic economic and political segregation of the Palestinian people” and add in their place “apartheid system of laws and legal procedures.”
Seconded by Matthew Hogue-Smith (Heartland Conference).

Proposed Amendment:
We affirm that all people living in Palestine and Israel are created in the image of God and that this bestows ultimate dignity and sacredness to all;

Therefore, we reject any laws and legal procedures which are used by one race or religion or political entity to enshrine one people in a privileged legal position at the expense of another, including Israel’s systematic economic and political segregation of the Palestinian people—[apartheid system of laws and legal procedures.]

Discussion:
Diane Weible (UCCB) spoke in favor
Andrew Roblyer (South Central Conference) spoke in favor
Hawley Brown (Southern New England Conference) spoke in favor
Billie Grace Berry (California-S/Nevada Conference) spoke in favor
Maddie Furman (Southern Conference) spoke in favor
Karen Bruno (Heartland Conference) spoke against
Barbara Hesse (Southern New England Conference) spoke against
Jeff Lukens (Southern New England Conference) spoke against
Kay Albright (Heartland Conference) spoke against

Vote on Motion to Amend the Resolution
21-GS-29 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 324 Yes; 224 No; 13 Abstain)

The Moderator indicated discussion continues on the original Motion on the floor.

Further discussion:
Dawn Sorensen (Southern New England) spoke in favor
Paul Karch (Wisconsin Conference) spoke against

Motion to Amend
Shari Prestemon (UCCB) moved to amend the resolution by adding the word “sin in” in after the word “a” in line 174 of the resolution.
Seconded by David Grishaw Jones (New Hampshire Conference).

Shari Prestemon spoke to the Motion.

Proposed Amendment:
1. We affirm that the continued oppression of the Palestinian people remains, after more than five decades of oppression of the Palestinian people, a matter of theological urgency and represents a [sin in] violation of the message of the biblical prophets and the Gospel, and that all efforts to defend or legitimate the oppression of the Palestinian people, whether passive or active, through silence, word, or deed by the Christian community, represent a fundamental denial of the Gospel.

Discussion:
James Ross II, (Southern New England Conference) spoke in favor
Jes Kast (Penn Central Conference) spoke in favor
Neal MacPherson (Hawaii Conference) spoke in favor
Guy S. Johnson (MRSEJ and Heartland Conference) spoke in favor
Venson Jordan (South New England Conference) spoke in favor
Josiah Accola (Illinois South Conference) spoke against

**Motion to Call the Question on Motion to Amend**
Dixie Laube (Iowa Conference) moved to call the question on the motion to amend.
Seconded by Susan Steinmiller (Illinois Conference).

**Vote on Motion to Call the Question**
21-GS-30 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote:  519 Yes; 21 No; 12 Abstain)

**Vote on Motion to Amend**
21-GS-31 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 398 Yes; 139 No; 14 Abstain)

Moderator Lowes indicated the discussion would now continue on the Resolution with the two amendments added.

**Motion to Call the Question on Main Motion**
Dixie Laube (Iowa Conference) moved to call the question on the resolution.
Seconded by Susan Steinmiller (Illinois Conference).

**Vote on Motion to Call the Question**
21-GS-32 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote:  519 Yes; 29 No; 8 Abstain)

**Vote on Main Motion, as amended**
21-GS-33 VOTED:  The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Declaration for a Just Peace Between Palestine and Israel, as amended.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 462 Yes; 78 No; 8 Abstain)

**DECLARATION FOR A JUST PEACE BETWEEN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL**
**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS** for over seventy years Palestinian people have faced dispossesion of their land, displacement from their homes, a harsh military occupation, severe restrictions on travel, the military detention of their children, home demolitions – over 120,000 to date and the constant threat of more – and vast inequities in access to natural, economic, and medical resources when
compared to that enjoyed by Israeli citizens living in illegal West Bank settlements, and also on a daily basis face severe restrictions on access to their olive groves, farms, and holy sites; and

WHEREAS there are more than 5.6 million Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Administration representing a global displacement of Palestinian people dating back to 1948 whose future status remains unresolved; and

WHEREAS the Israeli government has maintained an illegal military occupation of Palestinian territories since 1967 that includes the establishment of illegal Jewish-only settlements throughout the West Bank and more recently has enacted formal discrimination against its Arab citizens through the passage of the Nation State Law in 2018; and

WHEREAS provocative actions under the Trump administration, including moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, the suspension of humanitarian aid to the United Nations Relief and Works Administration, and support for Israel’s proposed illegal annexation of land in the occupied West Bank have further injured the Palestinian community and imposed serious roadblocks to peace; and

WHEREAS the Trump Administration’s Department of Education has issued a rule labeling any criticism of the State of Israel as an antisemitic act in order to suppress advocacy for Palestinian rights on university campuses, and has joined many state governments in further suppressing freedom of speech in support of Palestinian civil society’s call for boycotts, divestment, and sanctions; and

WHEREAS actions by Israel, with tacit and overt support from the United States government, have established conditions comparable to those in force under Jim Crow in the United States south between Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement, with segregation laws that enshrined systematic domination and oppression by whites over blacks. Israel’s acts of domination and oppression include, but are not limited to adoption of the Nation State Law in 2018, the building of the separation barrier, implementation of a restrictive pass system for Palestinians, the creation of Israeli-only highways through the West Bank, and imposed military detention of Palestinian children accused of crimes; and

WHEREAS the General Synod of the United Church of Christ and its officers have for over fifty years advocated for a negotiated process leading to a just peace between Israel and Palestine marked by adherence to international law and international standards of human rights and honoring the principle of self-determination and the rights of Palestinian refugees; and

WHEREAS, reminiscent of historical examples such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and Southern Africa, Israel exhibits a current-day form of settler colonialism, actively engaged in the removal and erasure of the indigenous Palestinian population, through a matrix of control that includes: the imposition of a harsh military occupation; the de facto annexation of Palestinian lands and threats of further annexation; the expansion of illegal Jewish only settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank; the contraction of Palestinian-controlled land; and the restriction of travel for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza;
WHEREAS Cry for Hope: A Call for Decisive Action issued by Palestinian Christian leaders and theologians in July, 2020, states that “the very being of the church, the integrity of the Christian faith, and the credibility of the Gospel is at stake. We declare that support for the oppression of the Palestinian people, whether passive or active, through silence, word or deed, is a sin. We assert that Christian support for Zionism as a theology and an ideology that legitimize the right of one people to deny the human rights of another is incompatible with the Christian faith and a grave misuse of the Bible”;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopts the following Declaration:

1. We affirm that the continued oppression of the Palestinian people remains, after more than five decades of oppression of the Palestinian people, a matter of theological urgency and represents a sin in violation of the message of the biblical prophets and the Gospel, and that all efforts to defend or legitimize the oppression of the Palestinian people, whether passive or active, through silence, word, or deed by the Christian community, represent a fundamental denial of the Gospel.

Therefore, we reject the notion that Israel’s occupation of Palestine is a purely political problem outside the concern of the church or that the oppression of the Palestinian people is an inevitable consequence of global or regional geopolitical interests.

2. We affirm that the biblical narrative beginning with creation and extending through the calling of the Israelites, the corrective admonitions of the prophets, the incarnation and ministry of Jesus and the witness of the apostles to the “ends of the earth” . . . speaks of God's blessing extending to “all the families of the earth.” (Genesis 12.3)

Therefore, we reject any theology or ideology including Christian Zionism, Supercessionism, antisemitism or anti-Islam bias that would privilege or exclude any one nation, race, culture, or religion within God’s universal economy of grace.

3. We affirm that all people living in Palestine and Israel are created in the image of God and that this bestows ultimate dignity and sacredness to all;

Therefore, we reject any laws and legal procedures which are used by one race or religion or political entity to enshrine one people in a privileged legal position at the expense of another, including Israel’s apartheid system of laws and legal procedures.

4. We affirm that all peoples have the right to self-determination and to their aspirations for sovereignty and statehood in the shaping of their corporate religious, cultural, and political life, free from manipulation or pressure from outside powers, and that a just resolution of conflicting claims is only achieved through the equal protection of civil rights, the fair and just sharing of land and resources, and peaceful negotiation based on international law and UN resolutions.

Therefore, we reject the use of Scripture to claim a divine right to the land as the rationale for Israel’s illegal seizure and annexation of Palestinian land as well as the imposition of so-called
peace agreements by Israel or the United States through the exercise of political and military domination that leaves Palestinians without equal rights, full citizenship, and the opportunity to thrive religiously, culturally, politically, and economically.

5. We affirm the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes if they so choose or to be compensated for their loss of property, consistent with UN General Assembly resolution 194 (1948).

Therefore, we reject the denial of this right, just as we reject efforts to manipulate internationally-agreed upon definitions of refugees to attempt to erase this right which extends across generations.

6. We affirm the First Amendment constitutional right to freedom of speech and assembly to protest the actions of the State of Israel and to uphold the rights of Palestinians, including the use of economic measures to support justice as a First Amendment right and joining the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement by individuals, institutions, corporations, and religious bodies that advocate peace with justice or participate in any aspect of the use of economic measures to support justice.

Therefore, we reject the idea that any criticism of policies of the State of Israel is inherently antisemitic, in confession that some criticism is antisemitic in intent or impact, and we oppose the efforts of U.S. federal and state governments to limit free speech on university campuses and to restrict or ban support of the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that national setting of the United Church of Christ send the text of this Declaration to Local Churches, Associations and Conferences; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that all settings of the United Church of Christ be encouraged to receive this Declaration as a prophetic call for renewed and continued advocacy for a just peace in Palestine and Israel and use it as a plumbline for taking action, including, for example:

a. Committing to hearing the voices of Palestinians regarding their situation, including the voices of Palestinian Christians through the study of Palestine Liberation Theology, attention to statements and appeals such as Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth (2009) and a Cry for Hope (2020), participation in travel seminars that expose visitors to the Palestinian community, and use of resources from Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

b. Implementing the calls of prior General Synod resolutions, including the 2015 Resolution, “A Call for the United Church of Christ to Take Actions Toward a Just Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” and the 2017 Resolution, “A Call for the United Church of Christ to Advocate for the Rights of Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation.”

c. Examining critically our use and interpretations of Scripture as well as liturgies and hymns that equate ancient Biblical Israel with the modern state in ways that promote settler colonialism and the dispossession of Palestinian land, rights, and cultural expressions.
d. Offering support and encouragement to college students and faculty members as well as the human rights groups (including Students for Justice in Palestine, Jewish Voice for Peace, American Muslims for Palestine, and many other allied groups), whose freedom to speak, witness and advocate on university campuses is threatened in any way by state or local governments, or by college administrators.

e. Advocating for the cessation of U.S. military aid to Israel until such time that Palestinian human rights, civil rights, and self-determination are fully realized and protected in compliance with international law, US laws on foreign military assistance, and the principles of human rights.

f. Supporting the full restoration of US funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency which carries out critical services by and for Palestinian refugees, and encouraging continued support for UCC partners which serve Palestinian refugees.

g. Demanding that the plight of Palestinian refugees be addressed by Israel and the international community based on United Nations Resolution 194 guaranteeing that “refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.”

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

7. **A RESOLUTION TO BAN THE PRACTICE OF CONVERSION THERAPY**

This Resolution was submitted by the Open and Affirming Coalition and Mental Health Network. Moderator Lowes introduced Crystal Silva McCormick (South Central Conference) and Crystal Silva McCormick indicated the changes that were made in the resolution. The resolution to Ban the Practice of Conversion Therapy, as amended was moved by Jamie Lee Sprague Ballou (Southern California-Nevada Conference) moved that the Resolution to Ban the Practice of Conversion Therapy, as amended be adopted by the 33rd General Synod of the United Church of Christ. Crystal Silva McCormick spoke to the resolution.

Discussion:
Izzy Harbin (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) spoke in support
Tyler Connoley (Conference Minister for the Central Pacific Conference) spoke in support

**Motion to Call the Question**
Josiah Accola (Illinois South Conference) moved to call the question.
The motion was seconded.
Vote on Motion to Call the Question

21-GS-34 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote:  519 Yes: 24 No: 3 Abstain)

Vote on Main Motion

21-GS-35 VOTED:  The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution to Ban the Practice of Conversion Therapy.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote:  547 Yes; 5 No; 1 Abstain)

A RESOLUTION TO BAN THE PRACTICE OF CONVERSION THERAPY
A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS the medical practice known as “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” regards LGBTQ+1 persons as abnormal or defective, and attempts to change or “repair” non-conforming sexual orientation or gender identity through widely-discredited therapeutic practices; and

WHEREAS conversion therapy for adults is legal in 50 states and all U.S. territories, while conversion therapy for youth and children is still legal in 30 states; and WHEREAS many studies have shown that attempts to change or “repair” sexual orientation or gender identity are associated with compromised mental health including, among other harms, lifelong suffering as the result of internalized shame, increased risk of suicide, and difficulty in forming stable and lasting relationships; and

WHEREAS a survey of at-risk LGBTQ+ youth published by the Trevor Project in 2020 showed that 42 percent who were subjected to conversion therapy had attempted suicide, while the attempted suicide rate of transgender and non-binary youth during or after conversion therapy was even higher at 57 percent; and

WHEREAS virtually every professional association in the health care industry has declared that conversion therapy is ineffective, unethical or harmful, including the American Medical Association, the American College of Physicians, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychoanalytic Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Counseling Association, and the National Association of Social Workers; and

WHEREAS in December 2020 UCC denominational leaders joined Archbishop Desmond Tutu and more than 400 other Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Sikh and Hindu faith leaders as signatories of the statement “Declaring the Sanctity of life and the Dignity of All” which called “for all attempts to change, suppress or erase a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression—commonly known as ‘conversion therapy’—to end, and for these harmful practices to be banned”;

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ, affirming the dignity and worth of all people, deplores the practice of “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” that denies LGBTQ+ youth, children, and adults the opportunity to experience the blessings of love and human integrity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod strongly urges parents and guardians, caregivers, and authorized ministers in the United Church of Christ to protect those in their care from any practice or program that purports to “cure” their sexual orientation or gender identity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod strongly urges congregations and all other settings of the church to advocate for state and federal laws protecting youth, children, and adults from “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” by banning the practice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod encourages congregations and other settings of the church to work with ecumenical and interfaith partners to raise awareness of the harms of “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” and to advocate for banning the practice; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod strongly urges congregations and other settings to strengthen their efforts to reach their LGBTQ+ neighbors, especially youth and children, with the Good News that their sexual orientation and gender identity or expression are gifts from God.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

8. “WHO WILL SPEAK FOR THE TREES?” A RESOLUTION ON THE RIGHTS OF NATURE

This Resolution was submitted by the New Hampshire Conference. Moderator Lowes called on Michael Vollbrecht (Kansas-Oklahoma Conference) to introduce the resolution Who Will Speak for the Trees?, a Resolution on the Rights of Nature, as amended. Suzanne E. Schwarz-Green (Penn Southeast) moved that the Thirty-third General Synod adopt the Resolution Who Will Speak for the Trees? and recommended its approval as amended. Michael Vollbrecht spoke to the Resolution.

Discussion:
Edwin Perez, Jr. (Southern New England Conference and HUGS delegate) spoke in support
Alison Buttrick Patton (Southern New England Conference) spoke in support

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 518 Yes; 18 No; 1 Abstain)

“WHO WILL SPEAK FOR THE TREES?”
A RESOLUTION ON THE RIGHTS OF NATURE
A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS all rights, human and the more than human lives, depend on the flourishing and vital natural cycles of life, and healthy Earth living systems. We are all interconnected to all living beings, and when we diminish or fail to recognize the rights of the natural world, we diminish our own life. Humanity and nature are interconnected, The Rights of Nature recognizes a reciprocal and responsible human relationship with Nature;

WHEREAS The UCC has a long history of creation-care, starting with the recognition of environmental racism in the 1980s, its studies on toxic pollution (1987, 2007, 2020), responsibly and the campaign of the Three Great Loves: Neighbor, Children, and Creation (2017), programs on Green and Creation Justice Churches, and the formation of Environmental Justice Teams. The United Church of Christ Synod has passed resolutions that directly express concerns for Earthcare;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ boldly proclaims in the public square that:

• Humans need a dramatic shift from the point of view that the Earth and all her resources are available for our sole benefit.

• Nature is not ours for enslavement but was created as a mutually sustaining ecosystem, which is not to be destroyed or abused. People of faith are stewards of the land in our care. We proclaim publicly, “The Earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it” (PS. 24:1).

• The Earth is an original gift to sustain all life.

• We are indebted to the leadership and witness of Indigenous Peoples and the labor of generations of those who have actively been engaged in the conservancy and stewardship of the earth as central to their being.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ listens to the cries of the Earth, adopts this “Rights of Nature” resolution, and takes the following prophetic actions:
• Promote compassionate care, foster love, and co-live responsibly with the Earth Community of Life. Safeguard the common goods, space and shared resources of the Earth, for humanity and biokind. Uphold the rights of ecological integrity, biodiversity, and healthy bioregions. Advocate intergenerational responsibility for the biotic community of the Earth and gratitude of the natural world as divine gift. Promote the value of interdependence of humans and Nature as fundamental to sustainable life on Earth. Affirm that co-living with Nature involves distributive justice, a fair sharing and responsible participation of natural resources.

• Uphold the ecological principle that the Rights of Nature supersedes harmful and destructive property rights, for the balanced cycles of the natural world must be protected as a common good for the present and future generations of human life and biokind. Advocate for EPA regulations and protections that promote the Rights of Nature. Promote economies of life rather than unregulated extractive economies that exploit resources. Seek financial reparations and restoration to the habitats when corporations and/or government projects harm and damage habitats.

• Support the Earth Charter, the Nature Rights movement, and the movement of Indigenous Peoples to grant legal standing to nature. Urge all corporate and/or governmental land and water projects to perform environmental impact studies on minimizing damage to habitats (waterways, lands, atmosphere) and wildlife. Promote the right of local communities or environmental organizations to represent the unheard voices and cries of Nature.

• Foster respect and gratitude for Nature as a divine gift. Combat attitudes that relegate Nature to mere capital for profit or a dumping ground for toxic waste.

• Promote the Rights of Nature to be free from human harm, including the right to healthy habitats, the right to species flourishing, the right to a fair share of the bio-region and its goods, and the right to fulfil their ecological potential without human infringements.

• Prioritize renewable energies over fossil fuels and prioritize the economies of life - such as the Green New Deal - over extractive and unbridled economies that pollute and damage the Earth.

• Encourage organic farming and regenerative agriculture. Encourage the reduction of pesticides and insecticides that negatively impact the soil, aquifers, and other life. Support family farming and local farmers’ markets. Work for food justice and security for all people.

• Support the upholding of all treaties with indigenous nations, respecting their lands and kinship natural relations. Ally with and support Indigenous Peoples in their de-colonization of Nature, protecting their kinship rights and access to sacred lands.
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on all settings of the church to respond to the Rights of Nature by taking intentional actions such as:

• Participating in the Season of Creation for September Sundays; incorporating creation care into each liturgical season (Tenebrae, Easter sunrise service outdoors, and Earth Day); preaching often on Earth Justice; celebrating outdoors or bringing the outdoors into the church.

• Ritualizing environmental grief by observing occasions such as International Day for Biological Diversity (May 22), Remembrance Day for Lost Species (November 30); starting environmental grief support groups.

• Fostering love of God’s creation, organizing walks in botanical gardens and wilderness areas, planting trees, taking nature hikes, and attending summer camps.

• Studying and implementing “A Kairos Call to Action”, a 10-year mobilization plan on climate change and inequality.

• Becoming a Creation Justice Church and green church.

• Subscribing to the UCC Environmental Justice newsletters and environmental newsletters, sharing webinars, and reading and studying about creation care and climate change, as spiritual practices to equip us for creation care.

• Working for the Green New Deal (the transition to renewable energies) and the Blue New Deal (protection and restoration of oceans and waterways); advocating for the Rights of Nature and taking part in climate strikes and non-violent protests.

• Organizing locally by partnering and building community networks with conservationist and environmental groups, and finding common ground to restore damaged environments.

• Being creative and imaginative in defense of the Rights of Nature.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

9. FINANCIAL REPORT
The Moderator called upon the Chief Financial Operator, Tami Marinella, to offer our financial report.

The Financial Report is included in the Appendix of these minutes.
The Moderator called on Cameron Barr, Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, to present the Motions regarding our National Basic Support Allocation Base and the Percentage Allocation of Denominational Support. Cameron Barr moved to adopt the National Basic Support Allocation base of $4.210 million for the budget year 2022 and $3.873 million for the budget year 2023. Cameron Barr spoke to the Motion.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.

**21-GS-37 VOTED:** The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Motion regarding the National Basic Support Allocation base of $4.210 million for the budget year 2022 and $3.873 million for the budget year 2023.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 509 Yes; 5 No; 15 Abstain)

The Moderator called on Cameron Barr to make further recommendations from the Finance and Budget Committee of the General Synod. Cameron moved to delegate the determination of the percentage allocation of denominational support for the 2022-2023 biennium to the United Church of Christ Board. Cameron spoke to the Motion.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.

**21-GS-38 VOTED:** The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Motion to Delegate the Determination of the Percentage Allocation of Denominational Support for the 2022-2023 biennium to the United Church of Christ Board.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 505 Yes; 7 No; 13 Abstain)

10. **ANTIONETTE BROWN AWARD**
Bishop Yvette A, Flunder, Catalyst Award; the Rev. Linda Jaramillo, the Trailblazer’s Award; and Rev. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, Trailblazer Award.

11. **BYLAWS CLARIFYING VOTE**
Moderator clarified that we were now voting on the addition to language to the Bylaws, as in the earlier vote on Part One we noted we were voting on the deletion of language. It is Paragraph 191 and designated as Part 1(b) and it reads “a provision is added explicitly allowing electronic meetings of the General Synod as long as delegates can communicate contemporaneously with one and another.”

Discussion:
There was no discussion.
21-GS-39 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the language in the Bylaws in Paragraph 191 explicitly allowing electronic meetings of the General Synod as long as delegates can communicate contemporaneously with one and another.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 477 Yes; 2 No; 18 Abstain)

12. ELECTION OF OFFICER AND RECOGNITION
The Moderator indicated that we would now vote on the re-nomination of Traci Blackmon, as Associate General Minister.

The motion is to elect Rev. Traci Blackmon to an additional four-year term as Associate General Minister of the United Church of Christ.

Discussion:
Cameron Barr (United Church of Christ Board) spoke in favor

21-GS-40 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ approved the election of Rev. Traci Blackmon as Associate General Minister of the United Church of Christ.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 502 Yes; 15 No; 6 Abstain)

Moderator Lowes congratulated Traci and offered a prayer of gratitude.

13. ELECTION OF UNITED CHURCH BOARD/ELECTION OF GENERAL SYNOD XXXIV MODERATOR AND ASSISTANT MODERATOR/ELECTION OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Moderator indicated that we will now move into the elections for various offices of the Church.

First, the election of members to the United Church of Christ Board.

The motion is to elect the twelve individuals identified in the Report of the General Synod Nominating Committee to the United Church of Christ Board Class of 2027.

21-GS-41 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ approved the election of the twelve individuals identified in the Report of the General Synod Nominating Committee to the United Church of Christ Board Class of 2027.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 497 Yes; 7 No; 10 Abstain)

The Moderator congratulated the individuals elected.
The Moderator indicated we would now vote on the motion to elect the five identified individuals identified to the General Synod Nominating Committee.

21-GS-42 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ approved the election of the five individuals identified to serve on the General Synod Nominating Committee.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 490 Yes; 11 No; 12 Abstain)

The slate for the nominating committee is elected. Congratulations to all who have been elected.

The Moderator indicated we would now elect the Moderator of the Thirty-fourth General Synod. The motion is to elect Robert Sandman as Moderator of the Thirty-fourth General Synod.

21-GS-43 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ approved the election Robert Sandman as the Moderator of the Thirty-fourth General Synod.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 402 Yes; 77 No; 27 Abstain)

The Moderator indicated that we would now move to the election of the Assistant Moderator. The motion is to elect A. Rushan Sinnaduray as Assistant Moderator of the Thirty-fourth General Synod.

21-GS-44 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ approved the election A. Rushan Sinnaduray as the Assistant Moderator of the Thirty-fourth General Synod.

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 479 yes; 11 No; 9 Abstain)

Congratulations Rushan and thank you to all who have agreed to serve in these important leadership roles within the church!

14. MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO KEITH MILLS
The Moderator introduced Gordon Rankin to help us celebrate and remember the Rev. Keith Mills, Conference Minister of the Northern Plains Conference, who died earlier this year.

A video was played.

Thank you, Gordon. Keith’s witness and desire to serve should be an inspiration to all of us.

15. MOTION TO RECONSIDER HAWAII RESOLUTION

Motion to Reconsider
Guy Johnson (HUGS Delegate) moved to reconsider the Hawaii Resolution which was defeated last night.
Seconded by Matthew Redrich (California-S/Nevada Conference).

Discussion:
Matthew Hogue Smith (Heartland Conference) spoke in favor
Emma Brewer-Wallin (United Church of Christ Board) spoke in favor
Kelly Shiflett (Penn Central Conference) spoke against

**Motion to Call the Question**
Josiah Accola (Illinois South Conference) moved to call the question and end debate on the motion to reconsider.
Seconded by Samuel McCurry (Minnesota Conference).

**Vote on Motion to Call the Question on Motion to Reconsider**
**21-GS-45 VOTED:**
MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 411 Yes; 70 No; 15 Abstain)

The Moderator indicated we would now vote on the Motion to Reconsider the Hawaii Resolution.

**Vote on Motion to Reconsider**
**21-GS-46 VOTED:**
MOTION FAILED (Vote: 312 Yes; 175 No; 17 Abstain) (62%)*

*The Moderator ruled a supermajority vote was required to reconsider the resolution and that the motion to reconsider failed; however, that ruling was overturned in subsequent proceedings (see below).

16. **MOVEMENT MAKER AWARD**
The Moderator indicated we now have the opportunity to recognize this year’s recipients of the Movement Maker Award and to celebrate the impact they have made in their churches, communities, and in the world.

(1) Elaina Ramsey – Executive Director, Ohio Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Columbus Ohio.
(2) Vivian Lucas – Executive Director, Franklinton Center at Bricks, Whitakers, North Carolina
(3) Jamesetta Ferguson – President and CEO, MOLO Village CDC, Louisville, Kentucky
(4) Rebecca Turner – Pastor, Christ Church UCC, Maplewood, Missouri

A video was played.

Moderator: Congratulations to each of our Movement Makers recipients. May God continue to bless and strengthen you for faithful service.

17. **INVITATION TO THE THIRTY-FOURTH GENERAL SYNOD**
Moderator: Introduced Invitation to the 34th General Synod of the United Church of Christ in 2023, to be held in Indianapolis, IN.

A video was played.

Thank you from the Moderator to the Indiana-Kentucky Conference for their invitation.

18. **MOTION TO RECONSIDER HAWAII RESOLUTION**
The Moderator called on Derek Ritenour (General Synod Parliamentarian) to speak to the Motion to Reconsider a vote on Resolution 5 regarding the Hawaii Resolution.

Derek Ritenour ruled that the vote to reconsider the Hawaii Resolution did pass, as a motion to reconsider requires a majority, not a supermajority.

[This is the correct record for 21-GS-46:

**Vote on Motion to Reconsider**

21-GS-46 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 312 Yes; 175 No; 17 Abstain)]

The Moderator ruled that the Hawaii resolution would now be reconsidered and discussion was open.

Continued Discussion:
Carmen Danz (Wisconsin Conference) spoke in favor

**Motion to Amend**

Neil MacPherson (Hawaii Conference) moved to amend the resolution; the motion was ruled out of order as it was defeated when the resolution was considered previously.

Discussion Continued:
Gloria-Ann Muraki (Hawaii Conference) spoke in favor
Kyle Lovett (Hawaii Conference) spoke against

**Motion to Call the Question**

Allyson Abrams (HUGS Delegate) moved to call the question and end debate.
The motion was seconded.

**Vote on Motion to Call the Question**

21-GS-47 VOTED:
MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 326 Yes; 135 No; 11 Abstain)

Moderator Lowes offered a prayer.

**Vote on Main Motion**

21-GS-48 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Encouraging to End 128 Years of War Between the
A RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING TO END 128 YEARS OF WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM

A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS Henry Opukahaia is known as the missionary from the Hawaiian Kingdom that encouraged American missionaries to arrive in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS the first Christian nation in the pacific, the Hawaiian Kingdom constitution in 1840 began with a quote from the bible “God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on the face of the earth in unity and blessedness”; and

WHEREAS on December 19, 1842, United States President John Tyler agreed to recognize the independence of the Hawaiian Kingdom; and

WHEREAS the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom through treaties with friendly nations around the world, successfully modernized Hawaiian self-governance at the time to prosper in peace, trade and friendship through treaties with friendly nations around the world for fifty years; and

WHEREAS Rev. Rufus Anderson, the author of the three-self method (self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating) and the long-term secretary of the ABCFM (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission) arrived in Hawai`i in 1863 to tell the missionaries to create self-reliant, self-governing churches and "to devolve upon it (the Hawaiian churches) the responsibilities of self-government in ecclesiastical matters"; and

WHEREAS Rev. Anderson's advice was not followed and the government of the Hawaiian Kingdom was overthrown on January 17, 1893; and

WHEREAS on December 18, 1893, President Grover Cleveland‘s executive agreement to restore the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom was signed by Liliuokalani and received by U.S. ambassador Albert Willis; and

WHEREAS in 1991, the Eighteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ directed President Paul Sherry to issue an apology on the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy for the complicity of the church in the overthrow; and

WHEREAS in 1993 President Clinton, with senators and representatives from Hawaii, signed Public law 103-150 apologizing for the United States role in the illegal occupation; and
WHEREAS the National Lawyers Guild recommended to the Governor of the State of Hawaii “to begin to comply with international humanitarian law in its prolonged and illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Islands”; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has historically stressed the importance of Justice as a key faith component for the Church; and

WHEREAS the correction of injustices depends upon correct history based upon factual matters, and history is often based upon who writes the history and factual information available; and

WHEREAS the information included in this resolution will be available at https://ahecchurch.weebly.com/about the founding of the Hawaiian Kingdom to correct false history about the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom; and

WHEREAS various General Synods of the United Church of Christ have taken proactive stands on Justice; and

WHEREAS justice depends upon action, not just stating what is true and just and right (pono in Hawaiian);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all settings of the church, denomination officers, conferences, associations, and congregations to live into the 1993 Apology of the United Church of Christ delivered to the Native Hawaiian People by President Paul Sherry;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the United Church of Christ’s General Counsel’s office to listen to and consider recommendations from the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches, other Native Hawaiian organizations, and Native Hawaiian voices drafting communications to local, national and international leaders and organizations calling for compliance with international humanitarian law and an end to the illegal occupation of the Hawaiian islands;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirm its commitment to stand alongside and in support of the efforts of Native Hawaiians to seek redress and restitution for the war crimes of the US against the Hawaiian Kingdom including, but not limited to, the crime of denationalization;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ Board will provide the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ with a written and oral update on the progress on the implementation of this resolution.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.
IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

19. INSTALLATION OF GENERAL SYNOD XXXIV MODERATOR AND ASSISTANT MODERATOR

20. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

21. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THANKS TO GENERAL SYNOD STAFF

22. ADJOURNMENT
Moderated Lowes, declared, without objection and acclamation that the Thirty-third General Synod off the United Church of Christ is adjourned at the conclusion of our Closing Worship, which begins immediately following this plenary. Thank you all!

21-GS-49 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adjourn at the conclusion of the evening worship service.

Moderator Lowes gaveled the final business session of the Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ to a close.

23. WORSHIP

LIST OF DELEGATES

California-N Nevada
Yolanda Austin
Hope Alexia Hilton
Theron Jones
Selulo Lagoon
Bladimer Paeste
Rajeev Rambob
Karen Routt
Melissa Tumaneng
Marvin K. White
Kim Williams

California-S/Nevada
(con’t)
Megan Menard
Kate Nam
James Penner
Matthew Redrich
Chrissy Siva
Jamie Lee Sprague-Ballou
Libby Tigner
Pat Whitacre

Central Atlantic
Cliff Barr
Alice Batcher
Terri Bright
Sam Chamelin
Hannah Eastman
Anne Findlay-Chamberlain
Bethany Fuss

Central Atlantic (con’t)
Ronald Hopson
Maeba Jonas
Dorothy King
David Lindsey
Amanda Middleton
Janese Murray
Lauren Rodgers
Edd Sewell
Trish Sheffield
John Shillingburg
Rebecca Shillingburg
Andrea Vassell

Central Pacific
Rick Davis
Valerie Garrick
Avery Payne
Lynne Smouse Lopez

California-S Nevada
Julio Agbon
Sarah Averette-Phillips
Billie Berry
Kevin Chapman
Francine Franks
Leo Lynch
Central Pacific (con’t)
Tara Wilkins

Florida
Vonsnelle Beneby
Daniel D Best
Michelle Carter
Karen Curtis-Weakley
Dyanne Edds
Michael Ford
Sheila Harvey Guillaume
Kate Howe
Sumner Hutcheson III
Lynn Jones
Brad Lutz
Chance Martinez-Colon

Hawaii
Eric Anderson
Kerisa Carmelo
Florentino Cordova
Clyde Fujikawa
Linda Kaauwai-Iwamoto
Kyle Lovett
Neal MacPherson
Miguel Morales
John Narruhn
Charlene Taketa
Kristen Young

Heartland (con’t)
Olivia Dudash
Marla Flewellyn
Kendra Fullen
Heather Giffen
Marti Godby
Halldor Gudmundsson
Tom Hathaway
Ed Heilman
Matthew Hogue Smith
Kristen Horvath-Broda
Leila Jindra
Imani Jones
Dominique Jones
Mark Katrick
Jerry Kruse
Susan Langner
David Long-Higgins
Adam Marquette
Scott May
Keith McDevitt
Rachel McDonald
Michael Melfi
Darla Metz
Jo Anne Nay
Jackie Nehls
Katie Peterson Madden
Stephanie Phillips
David Plant
John Pottmeyer
Amber Pottmeyer
Doug Ricci
Carl Robinson
Earl Rogers
Ryan Shields
Delmarshae Sledge
Will Smith
Jason Thompson
Kelsey Turner
Ashley Vaughn
Brenda Waddell
Valerie Walker
Jeremy Wanton
Melody Ward
Maureen Webber
Dale Webber

Heartland (con’t)
Claire Weihe
Becky Weihe
Gail Wells
Michelle Wilkey
Bertrice Wood
Lisa Zellner

Illinois
Carla Banks
Benna Bell
Khalil Bentley
Selena Blackwell
Darcey Carter
Wei-Jen Chen
Jana Chwalisz
Brian Cope
Chandler Drahn
Ted Engelsdorfer
Catherine Erwin
Hank Fairman
Daryn Ferriera
Jim Fisher
Joycelyn Fowler
Nancy Fraley
Regena Glenn-Caldwell
Julie Glover
Sue Harrington
Marietta Hebert-Davis
Laurie Hill
Charlene Hinckley
Alfred (David) Holston
Mark Jacobs
Muriel Jahn
Dan Jares
Michael Jones
Judy Kennedy
Rachel Kirk
Gwendolyn Kirkland
Jennifer Larson
Kyle Meers
Ted Michalsen
Steven Mund
Mary Newcomb
Stephanie Perdew
Charley Poor
Illinois (con’t)
Santina Poor
Jon Prain
Christine Raap
Bill Riegle
David Robberts-Mosser
Jagan Samuvelraj
Sally Scheib
Brandyn Simmons
Susan Steinmiller
Hannah Sundwall
Mary Swick
Lori J. Taylor
Robin Thomas
Renita Ward
Dan Watermann
Ken Webster

Illinois South
Josiah Accola
Debbie Jo Atkins
Craig Bielke
Clyde Donovan
Roger Harris
Kim Magwire
David Newfarmer
Madaline Ruez
Priscilla Self
Tarrah Vaupel
Don Wagner
Andrew Wilson

Indiana-Kentucky
Rose Austin
Daniel Beasley
Lori Bievenour
William Bowens
Deborah Dewey
Michael Erwin
Kent Gilbert
Izzy Harbin
Kyle Ingram
Lakota Iron Rope
Stephanie Johnson
Lauren Jones Mayfield
Dakota Roberts

Indiana-Kentucky (con’t)
Nicole Shaw
January Simpson
Joyce Smidley
Tim Strueh
Bob Wilkins

Iowa
Ellis Arnold
Craig Blaufuss
David Booger
Jacqueline Burnett
Lillian Daniel
Shonda Deranleau
Tad Dorsey
Abbie Greene
Stephanie Hill
Noah Jensen Tabor
John Kiernan
Kiahra King
Dixie Laube
Brian Leckrone
Kendy Miller
Seth Robinson
Matt Schneider-Adams
Janet Secor
Maxine Tone
Jared Walter
Kate West
Martha Wolf
Laura Wright

Kansas-Oklahoma
Kayla Bonewell
Steven Christofferson
Gage Church
Erik Graefe
Helena Lord
Ellen Neufeld

Maine (con’t)
Linette George
Beth Hoffman
Cindy Huggins
TJ Mack
Holly Morrison
Roy Scribner

Maine
Patricia Boyle-Wight
Joshua Brobst
Susan Burgess
David Farrington
Alexis Fuller Wright

Michigan
Robert Bond
Marian Brooks Bryant
Chris Clark
Deborah Graizer
Susan Greenwood
Elizabeth Hoy
Jeffrey Hubers
Angela Jamison
Wes Jamison
Alana Kelley
Ashley Lewis
Mary Ann Martin
Laura Miller-Purrenhage
Jessica Rozga-DeBoni
Salvatore Sapienza
Sandra Swayman
Lily Tinker Fortel
Jeremiah Wheeler

Minnesota
Ava Adams-Morris
Kristina Felbeck
Benjamin Fena
Charlotte Frantz
Kathy Itzin
Claire Itzin
Ash Koncar
Gary Kwong
Anna Larson
Tracy Lyons
Chris McFarland
Samuel McCurry
Shawn Nuebel
Ole Olson
Jean Ostrom
Justin Sabia-Tanis
Adam Thompson
Minnesota (con’t)
Jill Warner

Missouri Mid-South
Karen Aitkens
Andrea Asselmeier
Eddy DeLong
Tim Fairley
Nate Fulk
John Gandy
Betsy Happel
Ron Hill
Leslie Kemp
Tammy Linningham
Hannah Rice
Joe Rowley
Brittany Scaringello
Cayden Stephens
Allison Summers
Elaine Tebbenkamp
Christi Tennyson
Rob Van Ess
Camille Watkins
Jimmy Watson
Bella Winters

Montana-N. Wyoming
Laura Folkwein
Danielle Rogers
Lynne Spencer-Smith

Nebraska
Beverly Hays
Karen Hemmerling
Deborah Kirwan
Adam Lassen
Coral Parmenter
Beth Peterson

Nebraska (con’t)
Scott Pigsley
Alex Ritter
Randy Sanders
Sue Shear
Alex Wolf

New Hampshire
Sharon Clough
David Grishaw-Jones
Carlos Jauhola-Straight
William Jones
Bruce Kinney
Stacey Kullgren
Amanda Lape-Freeburg
Adaeze Okorie
Sandra Ponto
Patrick Quinn
Gretchen Smith
Tanya Stormo Rasmussen
Lydia Tucker

New York
Pierre Albrecht-Carrie
Jamani Blair
Sophia Bosworth Viscuso
Lynnette Colden
JJ Flag
Brittany Hanlin
Theresa Harris-Tigg
Lauren Heidenreich
Andrew Hinman
Philip Hobson
Elizabeth Pixley
Valerie Ross
Stanley Skinner
Michael Sloan
Beth Stowe
Michael Vanacore
Melva Victorino
Kris Watson
Anthony White
Curtis Whitman

Northern Plains
Jo Cassiday-Maloney
Barbara Koenig
Rick Steele

Pacific Northwest
Jerry Chang
Hillary Coleman
Mike Denton

Pacific Northwest (con’t)
Danette Koloi
Hana Reinhardt
Courtney Stange-Tregear

Penn Central
Terry Black
Andrew Boyer
Kathy Brown
Ed Dickel
Tiffany Dickel
Tony Fields
Paul Fogle
Sterling Fritz
Cindy Garis
Keegan Gill
Jes Kast
Shirley Keith Knox
JoAnn Kreeger
Phillip Landers
Gail Landers
Terry McGarry
Jason Minnich
John Pierce
Charlotte Pinnette
Irene Pouliot
Alice Rauch
Susan Rudy
Kelly Shiflet
Jerry Thomason
Kristin Vines

Penn Northeast
Gary Barraco
Christian Creyer
Stephanie Creyer
Gregory Edwards
Rachel Eichman
Kayli Freeman
James Gottwald
Brenda Hobson
Patti Hoyt
Kendra Kemp
Josh Knappenberger
Joyce Kohler
Douglas Lander
Penn Northeast (con’t)
Helena Lindquist
Teresa Martin
Tom Moyer
Mandy Muschett
Janet Newett
Anthony Newett
Laura Oesterle
Jackson Pyne
Grace Quinn
Rebecca Sausser
Suzanne Schaeffer
Bruce Stevenson
Laura Oesterle
Grace Quinn
Jessica Pyne
Diego Sanchez

Penn West
Theresa Cook
Matthew Fox
Lisa Griffin
Douglas Hearn
Donna Jarrell
Chelsea Lightbourn
Soren Thomas
Tara Thompson
Judith Tobias

Penn Southeast
Kim Adamson
Robert Ames
Edward Bibic
Liz Brunton
Mary Butash
Frances Chester
Deborah Rahn Clemens
Margaret Ernst
Selina Hamilton
Paul Hightower
Robin Hightower
Nichole Jackson
Cean James
Cathy Jones
Linda Kozlowski
Butch Kuykendall
Samuel Marutholi
Ken McDowell
Dwayne Mosier

Penn Southeast (con’t)
Suzanne Schwarz-Green
Peg Schwarz-Green
William Scott
Ruth Sheets
Cora Shenk
Sharell Shippen
Maxwell Staley
Jennie Strauch
Shawn Van Dyke

Rocky Mountain
Judy Bailie
Gayle Bosley-Mitchell
Marcus Frye
Vickie Golobic
Anthony Scott
Allyson Stauffer
Karen Winkel
Jan Zans

South Central
Peter Bauer
Philip Brocket
Ken Ehrke
Joshua Lawrence
Jan Nuun
Andrew Roblyer
Athena Self
Renee Thompson

South Dakota
Samanta Houser
Lorah Houser Jankord
David Jennys
Emily Munger
Becky Pagone
Mollie Ronge

Southeast
Ugena Whitlock

Southern
Yolanda Adams
Bruce Adams
Mary Anne Biggs
Tuere Brown
LaVerne Cofield
Maddie Furman
Barbara Harvey
Elizabeth Horton
Brenda James
Gary Leath
Gloria Lengel
Virginia Mattocks Ballard
Neil Rostick
Irwin Smallwood
Gary Smith
Roy Stokes
Kristin Vaughn
Dannie T. Williams
Dorion Winstead
Rose Wright Scott
Meghan Young

Southern New England
Sean Amato
Augustine Angba
Joseph Aoude
Olivia Arsenault
Patti Babcock
Robin Bartlett
Kentavis Brice
Hawley Brown
Amelia Bruso
Christine Burns
Alison Buttrick Patton
Jennifer Campbell
Emily Carle
Matthew Carriker
Garrison Case
Heidi Champagne
Lily Clark
Patrick Collins
Judith Cooke
### S. New England (con’t)
- Michele Davis
- Amy Destine
- Mark Diters
- Chris Doktor
- Jonathan Drury
- Caryne Eskridge
- Christopher Farrington
- David Fielder
- Connor Filkins
- Julio Filomeno
- Erika Foster Senteio
- Colleen Freeman
- Abby Gackenheimer
- Wayne Gage
- Jocelyn Gardner Spencer
- Thomas Gregory Gray
- Jacquelyn Hall
- George Harris
- Roberta Harris
- Barbara Hesse
- Debra Holmes
- Haley Hudler
- John Hudson
- Alan Hurst
- Emily Johnson
- Venson Jordan
- Tristan Jordan
- Deborah Kirk
- Patty Kogut
- Dan Krhla
- Brian Lapis
- Isaac Lawson
- Jeff Lukens
- Jenn Macy
- Andrew McKinnis
- Wendy Miller Olapade
- Frances Munro
- William Nelson
- Paul Nesbit
- Jane Newall
- Sara Ofner-Seals
- Terry Yasuko Ogawa
- Aaron Olapade
- Theodore Olsson
- Katie Ombreg

### S. New England (con’t)
- Kate Ostertag
- Mary Perry
- David Peters
- Lindsey Peterson
- Audrey Price
- Nena Radtke
- James Ross II
- Ruth Shaver
- David Shaw
- Christine Sima
- Taj Smith
- David Sonnemann
- Dawn Sorensen
- Jacob Sorensen
- Denson Staples
- David Story
- Megan Strouse
- John Taylor
- Miriam Theodore
- Paul Thomas
- Graham Van Keuren
- Stephen Varga
- Albert Whitaker
- Micaiah Wiggins
- Marcellus Wiggins
- Maya Wright

### Southwestern
- Cydne Bolton
- Rock Fremont
- Carson Hawks
- Andrew Ponder Williams

### Vermont
- Cheri Ann Broadhurst
- Doug Carter
- Abigail Diehl-Noble
- KellyAnn Donahue
- Lucia Jackson
- Alice Kitchel
- James Mills
- Josh Simon

### Wisconsin (con’t)
- Cathy Benjamin
- Kythie Boyd
- Carmen Danz
- Jeffrey Dodson
- Ted Drewsen
- Julie Eklund
- Elizabeth Findley-Hazel
- Linda Forray
- David Gaeth
- Casey Gott
- Sonny Graves
- Sue Kaiser
- Paul Karch
- Tom Kolb
- Olivia Metz
- Phil Milam
- Ron Roloff
- Tanya Sadagopan
- Laura Stalder
- Patti Steevens
- Sandy Stutten
- Nancy A. Taylor
- Zayna Thomley
- Alan Timm

### HUGS Delegates
- Allyson Abrams
- Imani Allen
- Rebekah Anderson
- Deborah Dee Brayton
- Jason Carson Wilson
- Jess Chancey
- Christopher Faulk
- John Gage
- Mimi Goodwin
- Ruth Harvey
- Luther Holland
- Richard (Dick) Hom
- Zillah Jackson Wesley
- Guy Johnson
- Marty Kuchma
- Aaron Lauer
- Jo Deen Lowe
- Marilyn Pagán-Banks
- Edwin Pérez Jr.
HUGS Delegates (con’t)
Amy Petre Hill
Mitchi Reyes
Yinessa Romero
Megan Snell
Daniel Su’a
Uamuli Sua
Sana Sunia
Foai Tanuvasa
Leaoga Lee Tanuvasa
Malaki Tauiliili
Derek Terry
Jacob Thomas
Kevin Tindell
Zillah Frances Wesley II

United Church of Christ
Board of Directors
Faufau Alaelua
Kearstin Bailey
Cameron Barr
Traci Blackmon
Brian Bodager
Emma Brewer-Wallin
Charles Buck
Carrie Call
Rachel Chapman
Eleanore Chong
Dennis Coy
Hannah Cranbury
John Dorhauer
Mark Dutell
Shernell J. Edney Stilley
Derrick Elliott
Thaddaeus Elliott
John Folk
Julia Gaughan
Kevin Graham
Carla Gregg-Kearns
Darrell Goodwin
Tim Hachfeld
Richard Harter
Alice Hunt
Eric Jackson
Onyx Kuthuru
Penny Lowes

UCCB (con’t)
Gloria-Ann Muraki
David J Nelson
Shari Prestemon
Gordon Rankin
Michael Readinger
Inez Reid
Franz Rigert
Bob Sandman
D’Angelo Smith
Kylie Steever
Paul Tché
Karen Georgia Thompson
John Vertigan
Harriet Ward
Diane Weible
Marsha Williams
Bill Worley
Yvette Wynn
Jeanette Zaragoza-De Leon
Lewis Zeidner
Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Dianne Roberts and Joyce Bathke

Heather Kimmel, Secretary
of the Board
REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE
BY LIBBY TIGNER
GENERAL SYNOD 33, JULY 11, 2021

The committee is comprised of 10 delegates, and our job is to monitor the composition of the Conference Delegations to the General Synod, for compliance with the diversity requirements set forth in the UCC Bylaws, specifically, bylaw 195 which calls for a delegation that is 20% youth and young adults, at least 50% persons who identify as female, at least 50% lay persons, and as a whole is reflective of the UCC’s commitment to racial and ethnic diversity.

It’s important to note that this bylaw is not rigid. It was written in a way that reflects our aspirational goals of diversity and inclusion, and provides grace for the times that we don’t quite reach the desired numbers. The bylaw does not require “exact compliance” but rather “substantial” compliance, and in challenging years such as this one, we rely on that grace while remaining committed to always doing better.

From our experiences with our own Conference delegations, and from conversations with colleagues around the UCC, we realized that there was an unusually high amount of attrition of delegates this year, and recruiting new delegates to replace them was more difficult than expected.

This was particularly true when trying to hold onto or recruit new delegates under the age of 30. We suspect that COVID-related computer and Zoom fatigue is driving this reality, but I also think that the relative freedom and availability of summertime opportunities this year after a year of lockdown has made recruiting youth and young adults even more challenging.

Our committee first met via Zoom on June 16, and reviewed the delegation data that was available at that time. Because the registration for this General Synod took place a little later in the year, at that point only 461 of a potential 679 conference delegates had registered, so
our evaluation at that point was really quite preliminary. We did note that there opportunities for the delegation-as-a-whole to more fully reflect the diversity requirements of the bylaws.

Letters for each Conference Minister were prepared by the Office of General Counsel and signed by me, which encouraged each conference to strive for closer adherence to the bylaws as they recruited their final delegates and got them registered. Several Conference Ministers responded to the letters and further emphasized the challenges of recruiting full and fully compliant delegations in this COVID year, despite their good-faith efforts to do so.

Nevertheless, when our committee met again last week, we noted that there was improvement in the overall diversity of the conference delegation-as-a-whole. The committee unanimously agreed that the delegation-as-a-whole is in substantial compliance with bylaw 195.

The final numbers, as reported on July 8, reveal that the delegation-as-a-whole is just under 13% youth and young adult, 57% persons who identify as female, 46% lay persons, and significantly reflective of the UCC commitment to racial and ethnic diversity.

Therefore, the Credentials Committee has found, and it is my pleasure to report, that the Delegation-As-A-Whole is in compliance with our bylaws for this General Synod 33.
THE FIRST REPORT OF
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD
TO THE THIRTY-THIRD GENERAL SYNOD

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-01 To approve the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-02 To approve Consent Agenda Items UCCB-19-10-02a-g which includes the following items of business:

UCCB-19-10-02a: Grant voice without vote to the following staff and others making presentation to the Board of Directors: Wayne Cherry, Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Nick Katzakis, Heather Kimmel, Cheryl Williams.

UCCB-19-10-02b: Grant voice without vote to Non-Director Committee Members with Special Expertise: Lawrence Bashe.

UCCB-19-10-02c: To adopt the Finance and Budget Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board approve that the Clergy Housing Allowance under Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations promulgated thereunder (“Section 107”) during calendar year 2020 for each ordained minister in good standing with his or her respective denomination and any other “Minister of the gospel” within the meaning of Section 107, who is in the employ of a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), shall be a sum equal to such employee’s good faith estimate of the amount which will be excludible under Section 107 with respect to the providing of a home by such employee for such year; however, unless and until such employee shall provide in writing the estimate described above, the amount of said Clergy Housing Allowance for such employee shall be a sum equal to one third of such employee’s gross salary compensation.
UCCB-19-10-02d: To adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board elects Libby Tigner as Chair of the Credentials Committee of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ for a term of two years, concluding with the current biennium and Libby Tigner’s term as a member of the Credentials Committee.

UCCB-19-10-02e: To adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board adopts the distribution for conference delegates to the Thirty-third General Synod, totaling 679.

UCCB-19-10-02f: To adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board adopts the recommended amendments to the United Church of Christ Board Standing Rule #8.

UCCB-19-10-02g: To receive the reports from the following task forces and committees: Church Building & Loan Fund Ad Hoc Committee, Council of Conference Ministers Task Force, Financial Health in Ministry Task Force, Personnel Committee, Southern Conference Task Force and the UCCB Evaluation Committee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JUNE 2019 UCCB MEETING

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-03 To approve the minutes of the June 2019 UCCB Meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE 32ND GENERAL SYNOD

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-04 To approve the minutes of the 32nd General Synod.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: LITIGATION UPDATE AND EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTE APPROVAL

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-14 To move into Executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-15 To return to Regular session.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-16 To approve the Executive Session Minutes from June 20, 2019.
It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-19 To move into Executive session.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-20 To return to Regular session.

**MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT**

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-22 To adjourn.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-03-01 To approve the Agenda.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-03-02 To approve Consent Agenda Items UCCB-20-10-02a-e which includes the following items of business:

**UCCB-20-03-02a:** Grant voice without vote to the following staff: Cindy Bailie, Wayne Cherry, Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Nick Katzakis, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Dianne Roberts, Cheryl Williams.

**UCCB-20-03-02b:** Grant voice without vote to Non-Director Committee Members with Special Expertise: Ron Patterson.

**UCCB-20-03-02c:** Grant voice without vote to the following special guest: Jennifer Givens, Compensation Consultant, Findley Davies, Inc. (The contribution of Jennifer Givens was determined not to be needed therefore she did not attend the meeting.)

**UCCB-20-03-02d:** To adopt the Group Exemption Compliance Report.

**UCCB-20-03-02e:** To receive the reports and agendas from the following task forces and committees as their reports to the United Church of Christ Board of their ongoing work: Audit Committee, Church Building & Loan Fund Task Force, Development Committee, Development Committee Implementation Task Force, Development Committee Legacy Giving Task Force, Finance & Budget Committee, Investment & Endowment Committee, Marketing Committee, UCCB Evaluation Committee.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 2019 UCCB MEETING

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-03-03 To approve the minutes of the October 2019 UCCB Meeting.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-03-06 To move into Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-03-07 To return to Regular Session.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-03-08 To adopt the Executive Compensation Policy effective August 31, 2020.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-05-01 To approve the Agenda.

GRANT VOICE WITHOUT VOTE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-05-02 To grant voice without vote to: Cindy Bailie, Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Nick Katzakis, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Dianne Roberts, Valerie Smith, and Cheryl Williams.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE UCCB MARCH 2020 MEETING

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-05-03 To approve the minutes of the March 27, 2020 meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-06-01 To approve the Agenda (Supporting Document UCCB-20-06-01 Agenda 5.21.2020).
GRANT VOICE WITHOUT VOTE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-06-02  To grant voice without vote to Cindy Bailie, Larry Bashe, Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Nick Katzakis, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Ron Patterson, Dianne Roberts, and Cheryl Williams.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE UCCB MAY 2020 MEETING

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-06-03  To approve the minutes of the May 1, 2020 meeting of the United Church of Christ Board (Supporting Document UCCB-20-06-02 Minutes 05.01.2020).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-08-01  To approve the Agenda (Supporting Document UCCB-20-08-01 Agenda).

GRANT VOICE WITHOUT VOTE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-08-02  To grant voice without vote to Nick Katzakis, Heather Kimmel, Dianne Roberts, Cheryl Williams.

APPROVAL OF UCCB JUNE 2020 MEETING MINUTES

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-08-03  To approve the minutes of the June 2, 2020 Special Meeting of the United Church of Christ Board (Supporting Document UCCB-20-08-02 Minutes 06.02.2020).

ELECTION OF MARK DUTELL TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-08-04  To elect Mark Dutell to the United Church of Christ Board Class of 2021, on the nomination of the General Synod Nominating Committee, to fill an unexpired term vacated by the resignation of Doug McClelland. (Supporting Document UCCB-20-08-03 Mark Dutell Biography).
CONSIDERATION OF BANKING AUTHORITY RESOLUTIONS

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-08-05 To adopt the resolutions relating to granting banking authority to the Chief Financial Officer for United Church of Christ Board, Justice and Witness Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), and Wider Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) as shown on the following Supporting Documents:

i. UCCB-20-08-04 UCCB Banking Authority;
ii. UCCB-20-08-05 JWM Banking Authority;
iii. UCCB-20-08-06 LCM Banking Authority; and
iv. UCCB-20-08-07 WCM Banking Authority.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-01: To approve the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-02: To approve Consent Agenda Items UCCB-19-10-02a-g which includes the following items of business:

UCCB-20-10-02a: Grant voice without vote to the following staff and others making presentations to the UCCB: Cindy Bailie, Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Heather Kimmel, Dianne Roberts, Kent Siladi, Brian Tracy, Cheryl Williams.

UCCB-20-10-02b: Grant voice without vote to Non-Director Committee Members with Special Expertise: Lawrence Bashe, Ron Patterson.

UCCB-20-10-02c: Appoint Brian Tracy, Acting Chief Financial Officer of the United Church of Christ, as Treasurer for the United Church of Christ Board, Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), Justice and Witness Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), and Wider Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ).

UCCB-20-10-02d: Receive the Group Exemption Compliance Report.
Authorize the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards-United Church of Christ to provide supplementation of small annuities, effective January 1, 2021 based on an income level of $34,800 with three-fourths of that amount, $26,100, as the level applicable in determining supplementation for a deceased member’s surviving spouse/partner.

Approve that the Clergy Housing Allowance under Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations promulgated thereunder ("Section 107") during calendar year 2021 for each ordained minister in good standing with their respective denomination and any other “Minister of the gospel” within the meaning of Section 107, who is in the employ of a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ, shall be a sum equal to such employee’s good faith estimate of the amount which will be excludible under Section 107 with respect to the providing of a home by such employee for such year; however, unless and until such employee shall provide in writing the estimate described above, the amount of said Clergy Housing Allowance for such employee shall be a sum equal to one third of such employee’s gross salary compensation.

To receive the minutes and written reports from the following Task Forces and Committees: CCM/UCCB Task Force, Development Committee, Living Together as One Task Force, Ministry Committee and the UCCB Evaluation Committee.

APPROVAL OF UCCB AUGUST 2020 MINUTES

It was VOTED:

To approve the minutes of the August 13, 2020 Special Meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.

To move into Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

To return to Regular Session.

To move into Executive Session.
EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-13 To return to Regular Session.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-20 To go into Executive Session for a litigation update and executive session minute approval.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-21 To return to Regular Session.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-22 To approve the October 26, 2019 UCCB Executive Session minutes.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-23 To go into Executive Session. The Officers were recused.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-24 To return to Regular Session.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-25 To approve the October 27, 2019 UCCB executive session minutes and the March 27, 2020 executive session minutes.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-12-01 To approve the Agenda.

GRANT VOICE WITHOUT VOTE

It was VOTED:
UCCB 20-12-02 to grant voice without vote to Cindy Bailie, Cynthia Gaffney, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Dianne Roberts, Brian Tracy, Cheryl Williams.
APPROVAL OF UCCB OCTOBER 2020 MEETING MINUTES

It was VOTED:
UCCB 20-12-03 To approve the minutes of the October 2, 2020 Meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-12-06 By acclamation, the body moved into Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-12-07 To return to Regular Session.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-02-01 To approve the Agenda.

GRANT VOICE WITHOUT VOTE

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-02-02 To grant voice without vote to Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Dianne Roberts, Brian Tracy, Cheryl Williams.

APPROVAL OF UCCB DECEMBER 2020 MEETING MINUTES

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-02-03 To approve the minutes of the December 14, 2020 Meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-02-04 To move into Executive Session.

Officers and staff excused for remainder of meeting; Alisa Lewis and Heather Kimmel to remain.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-02-05 To return to open session.
It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-02-07 To move into executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-02-08 To return to open session.

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-02-09 To approve the Executive Session minutes of the 12.14.2020 Meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-03-01 To approve the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-03-02 To approve Consent Agenda Items UCCB-21-03-02a-e which includes the following items of business:

UCCB-21-03-02a: Grant voice without vote to the following staff and guests, including Quanita Roberson and Tenneson Woolf and others making presentation to the UCCB: David Anderson, Donyale Copeland, Patrick Duggan, Cynthia Gaffney, Heather Kimmel, Kevin Peterson, Dianne Roberts, Kent Siladi, Brian Tracy, Cheryl Williams.

Supporting Document: UCCB 21-03-GOV-03Credential Comm Nominee Bios 02.22.21

UCCB-21-03-02b: To adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board elect the following people to the General Synod Credentials Committee, each for a term commencing on the date of election and ending at the conclusion of General Synod 2023: Cynthia Borrego-Hogan, Jeffrey A. Dodson, Thomas Kolb, Hannah Rice, and Tyler Ung.

Supporting Document: UCCB 21-03-GOV-03Credential Comm Nominee Bios 02.22.21

UCCB-21-03-02c: To adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board approve the election of Sivia Sasa, Brenda V. Smith, and Cameron Trimble to the Board of Directors of the United Church of Christ Church Building and Loan Fund.

Supporting Document: UCCB-21-02-GOV-04 Sivia Sasa Bio 02-16-21;
Supporting Document: UCCB-21-02-GOV-05 Brenda V. Smith Bio 02-16-21;
Supporting Document: UCCB-21-02-GOV-06 Cameron Trimble Bio 02-16-21
UCCB-21-03-02d: To adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board approve Angel Cepeda Velazquez to be eligible for election to the Board of Trustees of The Pension Boards – United Church of Christ, Inc. when a vacancy occurs. 
*Supporting Document: UCCB-21-02-GOV-07 Angel Cepeda Velazquez Memo 02-16-21; Supporting Document: UCCB-21-02-GOV-08 Angel Cepeda Velazquez Resume 02-16-21*

UCCB-21-03-02e: To adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board elect Robert F.R. Peters, Jr., Rochelle A. Stackhouse, and Laura J. Thomson to the UCC Historical Council, each for a first term of six years commencing on the date of election, and Carolyn Call and K. Ray Hill each for a second term of six years commencing on the date of election. 
*Supporting Document: UCCB-21-02-GOV-11 Historical Council Nominee Bios 02-22-21*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 5, 2021 SPECIAL MEETING OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

It was VOTED: 
**UCCB-21-03-03** To approve the minutes of the February 5, 2021 meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.

It was VOTED: 
**UCCB 21-03-09** To move into Executive Session.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

It was VOTED: 
**UCCB-21-03-10** To return to Regular Session.

It was VOTED: 
**UCCB-21-03-11** To approve the Executive Session minutes from October 2 and 3, 2020.

It was VOTED: 
**UCCB-21-03-12** To move into Executive Session with Officers excused.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

It was VOTED: 
**UCCB-21-03-13** To approve the executive session minutes from the February 5, 2021 meeting with noted changes to attendance.
ASSOCIATE GENERAL MINISTER RENOMINATION COMMITTEE REPORT

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-06 To nominate Rev. Traci Blackmon for election by General Synod as Associate General Minister.
*Supporting document: UCCB-20-10-AGM_Renom_01_Final_Report*

AUDIT COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
*Supporting documents:*
UCCB-20-08-AU-03_2019_Audited_Financial_Statements
UCCB-20-08-AU-04_Financial_Overview

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-14 To accept the report of the Audit Committee and General Counsel’s recommendations regarding the Conflict of Interest report.

CHURCH BUILDING AND LOAN FUND TASK FORCE
It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-18 To accept the recommendation of the Church Building and Loan Fund Task Force as set forth in the Task Force report. 

**ACTIONS BY COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**CONSIDERATION OF HAWAII CONFERENCE RESOLUTION**

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-03-09 To adopt the resolution submitted by the Hawaii Conference on commemorating the 200th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in the Hawaiian Islands and celebrating the ongoing relationship between the United Church of Christ and the Hawaiian host culture.

**CANCELATION OF IN-PERSON GENERAL SYNOD 2021**

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-06-04 The in-person General Synod 2021 is canceled and will be a virtual General Synod instead.

**CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY ASSESSMENT, TRAINING, AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY**

It was VOTED
UCCB-20-08-06 To approve the Request for Proposal for Institutional Equity Assessment, Training, and Recommendations Regarding Racial Justice and Equity. 
(Supporting Documents UCCB-20-08-08 Background for RFP on Institutional Equity Assessment; UCCB-20-08-09 RFP on Institutional Equity Assessment)
CREATION OF GMP COMPENSATION AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:  
UCCB 21-03-04  
To create a GMP Compensation and Evaluation Committee, which will oversee the GMP’s compensation and the annual evaluation of the GMP; the Personnel Committee and the GMP Evaluation Committee are dissolved; the Governance Committee shall recommend amendments to the UCCB Standing Rules in accordance with this vote at the next UCCB meeting.

CLOSING HARVEST

It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-03-14  
To celebrate the continued work with the Strategic Priorities of the National Setting in the biennium 2019-2021 and receive the summary Review of the work as a resource for continuity to those who will follow in the next biennium.  
*Supporting Document UCCB Strategic Priorities Review*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:  
UCCB-19-10-09  
The United Church of Christ Board approves the resolution permitting the General Minister & President to delegate authority to enter into contracts.  

Text of Resolution:

Whereas, pursuant to United Church of Christ Bylaws paragraph 217(d), the General Minister & President oversees the administration of the National Setting offices; and  

Whereas, pursuant to the United Church of Christ Bylaws paragraph 217(d), the General Minister & President may from time to time delegate administrative responsibilities as the needs of the Church and good judgment dictate; and  

Whereas, the General Minister & President, as President of the United Church of Christ Board corporation and of the Covenanted Ministries, is empowered under the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ Board corporation and the Covenanted Ministries to sign all deeds, mortgages, bonds, agreements, notes, and other instruments requiring the President’s signature; and
Whereas, the United Church of Christ Board as the board of directors for the United Church of Christ Board corporation and the Covenanted Ministries, is empowered to assign other such powers and duties to the President from time to time; and

Whereas, the efficient administration of the National Setting occasionally requires the General Minister & President to delegate signing authority to additional individuals for contracts, agreements, and purchases entered into by the United Church of Christ Board and the Covenanted Ministries in the ordinary course of business; and

Whereas the delegation of such authority is expressly contemplated by the United Church of Christ Bylaws;

Therefore, be it resolved that the United Church of Christ Board, acting on behalf of the United Church of Christ Board and the Covenanted Ministries, assigns to the President the power to delegate signing authority for contracts, agreements, and purchases entered into by the United Church of Christ Board and the Covenanted Ministries to National Setting employees, pursuant to a written grant of authority by the President to such employee, consistent with the needs of the Church and good judgment.

n1: United Church of Christ Board corporation Bylaws Art. III(B)(3); Justice & Witness Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) Art. III(C)(2); Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) Bylaws Art. III(C)(2); Wider Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) Bylaws Art. III(C)(2).

n2: Id.

It was VOTED:

UCCB-20-03-04 To adopt the recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board, as the board of directors for Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), successor to the American Missionary Association, approve the request of Fisk University, a historically related university, to release the use restriction on a parcel of property donated to the University by the American Missionary Association in 1908, as further described in the Supporting Documents, and to authorize Heather Kimmel, General Counsel and Secretary to Local Church Ministries, to take all steps necessary to effectuate the release.

FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE
It was VOTED:  UCCB-19-10-06  The United Church of Christ Board approves the National Basic Support allocation base of $5,126,202 for 2020 and the funding to the Office of the General Minister & President, the Covenanted Ministries and the Pension Boards allocation as follows: Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP) $3,345,621 or 65.25%, Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) $863,511 or 16.85%, Local Church Ministries (LCM) $186,000 or 3.63%, Wider Church Ministries (WCM) $435,000 or 8.49% and The Pension Board $296,080 or 5.78%.

It was VOTED:  UCCB-19-10-07  The United Church of Christ Board approves the proposed 2020 Combined Unrestricted Funds Budget with a total of $19,278,894 in Revenues and $19,278,894 in Expenses for the Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP), Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM), Local Church Ministries (LCM), and Wider Church Ministries (WCM).

It was VOTED:  UCCB-19-10-08  The United Church of Christ Board authorizes the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards-United Church of Christ to provide supplementation of small annuities, effective February 1, 2020 based on an income level of $33,700 with three-fourths of that amount, $25,275, as the level applicable in determining supplementation for a deceased member’s surviving spouse/partner.

It was VOTED:  UCCB-20-05-07  To approve the General Synod Budget.

It was VOTED:  UCCB-20-05-08  To adopt the following rates by zone to be used in calculation for the 2021 Conference Delegate travel pool as follows:

1. 0 – 499 Miles $.05
2. 500 – 999 Miles $.06
3. 1,000 – miles $.07
4. Hawaii Conference $1,273 per voting delegate

It was VOTED:  UCCB-20-05-09  To adopt the recommendation of the Finance and Budget Committee for General Synod 2021 registration fees as follows:
Early Bird registration remove early bird
Delegates, National Staff, Conf. staff, Ecum, etc. $300.00 based on 1716 reg.
Youth 13-18 years $175.00
Youth 6-12 years $ 65.00
Youth 5 and, Conference Volunteers $ 70.00
Single Day (Fri, Mon, or Tues) $100.00
Saturday only (can only charge if added programs) $125.00
Three Day Registration (Fri-Sun; Sat-Mon; or Sun-Tues) $200.00
Exhibitor (Vendors only) $125.00
Seminarrians $175.00

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-16 To recommend that the United Church of Christ Board approve the proposed 2021 Combined Unrestricted Funds Budget with a total Revenues of $18,501,915 and total Expenses of $18,501,915 for the Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP), Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM), Local Church Ministries (LCM), and Wider Church Ministries (WCM).
Supporting documents:
UCCB-20-09-FB-03 Combined IS BS--2020-08-31
UCCB-20-09-FB-04 2021 Combined Budget

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-17 To recommend that the United Church of Christ Board approve the National Basic Support allocation base of $4,576,173 for 2021 and the funding to the Office of the General Minister & President, the Covenanted Ministries and the Pension Boards allocation as follows: Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP) $2,933,172 or 64.1%, Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) $980,000 or 21.4%, Local Church Ministries (LCM) $100,000 or 2.2%, Wider Church Ministries (WCM) $300,000 or 6.6% and The Pension Board $263,001 or 5.7%.
Supporting document: UCCB-20-09-FB-05 2021 NBS Allocation

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-26 To reappropriate $95,525 from the UCCB 2020 Governance budget to provide a year-end bonus distributed equally to staff of the NS in gratitude for their service through the difficulties and disruptions caused by COVID-19.
It was VOTED:
UCCB 20-12-04  To approve three tiers of registration for the 2021 General Synod:
Delegates, $175; Visitors, $100; Youth, $150.

It was VOTED:
UCCB 20-12-05  To approve the 2021 General Synod Budget as proposed, with total
Revenues of $925,000 and total Expenses of $718,500. (Supporting
Document UCCB-20-12-FB-03 General Synod 2021 Budget)

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-03-07  To receive the preliminary and unaudited Combined Operating Income
Statement and Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2020, as presented.
(Supporting Document UCCB 31-03-FB-03 Combined IS & BS.pdf)

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-03-08  To adopt and recommend to General Synod for adoption: 1) A projected
National Basic Support allocation of $4,210 million for the budget year
2022 and $3873 million for the budget year 2023; and 2) That the
percentage allocations for 2022 and 2023 be based on the recommendation
of the United Church of Christ Board.
(Supporting Document UCCB-21-03-FB-04 OCWM NBS 2022-2023.pdf)

FINANCIAL HEALTH IN MINISTRY TASK FORCE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-19  To recognize that the Pension Boards is the best vehicle for addressing
clergy indebtedness and to dissolve the task force.
(Supporting document: UCCB-20-10-FinHealthTF-01_Final_Report)

GMP EVALUATION COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-21  To approve a $20,000 increase in compensation for the General Minister
and President and request that the Personnel Committee bring an executive
compensation policy for review at the spring UCCB meeting.
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-05 Acting as General Synod ad interim, to elect Faufau Alaelua, as nominated by the General Synod Nominating Committee, to the 2025 class of the United Church of Christ Board.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-10 To approve the following people eligible for election to the Board of Trustees of The Pension Boards – United Church of Christ, Inc. when vacancies occur: Kenneth Makuakane, Charmaine Penn Johnson, and Scott G. Young.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-11 To elect the following people (new members) to the Office of Communication, Inc. Board, each for a term of three years commencing on the date of election and ending upon the election of a successor at the October 2022 meeting of the UCC Board: Lawrence T. Richardson and Jessie Palatucci.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-12 To designate the Special Committee on Development as a Standing Committee of the United Church of Christ Board, and to authorize the Secretary of the United Church of Christ Board to amend the United Church of Christ Board Standing Rules to reflect this designation.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-13 To release or continue to hold as confidential the following Executive Session Minutes as indicated below:
March 8 and 9, 2018 Executive Session Minutes—Hotel:
Release the minutes and hold the attachment confidential per the terms of agreement with a third party.
March 8, 2018 Executive Session Minutes—Legal:
Hold the minutes confidential and review in the future due to ongoing legal matters.
March 8, 2018 Executive Committee Executive Session Minutes:
Hold confidential permanently due to personnel issues.

June 2018 Special Meeting Executive Session Minutes:
Release the minutes.

October 19, 2018 2nd and 3rd Business Session Executive Session Minutes:
Hold confidential permanently due to personnel issues.

October 20, 2018 4th Business Session Executive Session Minutes:
Release the minutes.

October 20, 2018 5th Business Session Executive Session Minutes:
Hold confidential permanently per the terms of agreement with a third party.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-03-05  To table the proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of the United Church of Christ Thirty-third General Synod.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-05-04  To take the motion to approve the General Synod Standing Rules amendments off the table.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-05-05  To adopt the proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of the United Church of Christ Thirty-third General Synod as shown on Supporting Document UCCB-20-03-GOV-04.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-05-06  To adopt the proposed amendments to the United Church of Christ Board Standing Rules as shown on Supporting Document UCCB-20-03-GOV-06.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-20-10-07  To elect the following people to the Office of Communication, Inc. Board of Directors, each for a term of three years commencing on the date of election and ending upon the election of a successor at the October 2023 meeting of the UCC Board of Directors: Cynthia Bailie, Mike Denton, Sara Fitzgerald, Hyo-Jung Kim, Brian Lapis, Marti Weston, and Earl Williams.

Supporting documents:
UCCB-20-09-GOV-05 (OC Nominee Bios) Rev 09-04-20
UCCB-20-09-GOV-06 (OC Board Demographics) 09-04-20
It was VOTED:
**UCCB-20-10-08**
To recommend the proposed amendments to the United Church of Christ Bylaws to the General Synod.
*Supporting documents:*
*UCCB-20-09-GOV-04 (Sept 8 2020 Draft UCC Bylaws - Redline) 09-10-20*
*UCCB-20-09-GOV-07 (Sept 9 2020 Memo-UCC Bylaws Amendments) 09-10-20*

It was VOTED:
**UCCB-20-10-09**
To hold confidential the March 7, 2019 executive session minutes related to litigation update and release the June 20, 2019 executive session minutes related to the resolved legal issue involving Minnie’s Seaside Rest.

It was VOTED:
**UCCB-20-10-10**
To hold confidential in perpetuity the March 8, 2019 executive session minutes related to a personnel matter.

**INVESTMENT & ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE**

It was VOTED:
**UCCB-19-10-17**
To approve the draw rate of 4.75% on the unrestricted investment portfolio of the based on the average balance of the preceding 20 quarters.

It was VOTED:
**UCCB-20-10-15**
To recommend that the UCCB approve a draw rate of 4.75% on the unrestricted investment portfolio based on the average balance of the preceding 20 quarters for the year 2021.
*Supporting document: UCCB 20-09-IE-03 UCF REPORT*

It was VOTED:
**UCCB 21-03-06**
To approve the recommendation of the Investment and Endowment Committee to liquidate the holdings now managed by SASCO and transfer those funds to United Church Funds.
MINISTRY COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-19-10-18 To approve the Governance Committee and the Ministry Committee forming a joint subcommittee to hold conversations with stakeholders regarding the issues raised in Resolution 8 about the Exhibit Hall.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-02-06 To accept the recommendation of the Personnel Committee to set the salary of the General Minister and President at $203,000, which it finds to be reasonable, competitive, and not excessive in compliance with the UCCB Executive Compensation Policy. (Supporting Document: UCCB-20-03-PER-01 Executive Compensation Policy)

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISPOSITION COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-03-05 To adopt the amended Report of the Subcommittee on Disposition. (Supporting Document: UCCB-21-03-SoD-01 – Amended Report of Subcommittee on Disposition)
ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD AD INTERIM

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was VOTED:
21-04-ExComm-01: To approve the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 3, 2020 MINUTES

It was VOTED:
21-04-ExComm-02: To approve the October 3, 2020 Executive Committee Minutes.

APPOINTMENT OF TAMI MARINELLA AS TREASURER

It was VOTED:
21-04-ExComm-03 To appoint Chief Financial Officer Tami Marinella as Treasurer of Justice and Witness Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ); Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ); United Church of Christ Board corporation; and Wider Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ).

BANKING AUTHORITY RESOLUTIONS

It was VOTED:
21-04-ExComm-04 To approve the banking authority resolution for Justice and Witness Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) as set forth in Supporting Document UCCB-21-04-ExCom-03_JWM_Banking_Authority_Resolution.

It was VOTED:
21-04-ExComm-05 To approve the banking authority resolution for Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) as set forth in the Supporting Document UCCB-21-04-ExCom-05_LCM_Banking_Authority_Resolution.

It was VOTED:
21-04-ExComm-06 To approve the banking authority resolution for United Church of Christ Board corporation as set forth in the Supporting Document UCCB-21-04-ExCom-07_UCCB_Banking_Authority_Resolution.
It was VOTED:

21-04-ExComm-07  To approve the banking authority resolution Wider Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) as set forth in Supporting Document UCCB-21-04-ExCom-09_WCM_Banking_Authority.
Moderator/Assistant Moderator Nominees

Moderator
Robert (Bob) Sandman is a lay member of Lakeview UCC in Maineville, Ohio. Bob has an MBA and a Master’s Degree in economics. He is a retired professor of business and economics. In addition, he has held positions in printing and publishing at the American Baptist Board of Educational Ministries and as a textbook editor at South-Western Publishing. Bob was previously the moderator of Collenbrook United Church, Lakeview UCC, North Windham Union Church UCC, and the Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association. He taught History and Polity for SONKA. He has been Treasurer of the Maine Conference, a member of the Maine Anti-Racism Resource Team, a General Synod Delegate Committee Chair, a corporate member of the Board for Homeland Ministries, a delegate to the Executive Council, and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Office of General Ministries. His skills include strategic thinking, public speaking, analysis of business and economic data, publishing, and project management.

Man, 60+, Layperson, Hispanic/Latino/Latin

Assistant Moderator
A. Rushan Sinnaduray is the Founding and Lead Pastor of The Oasis United Church of Christ in Jefferson City, Missouri. Within the Missouri Mid-South Conference, he serves on the Western Association Committee on Ministry and has served on the Associate Conference Minister Search Committee for the Conference. Rushan was born and raised in Sri Lanka and has lived and worked in New Zealand, Canada and the USA. He was ordained in 2008 and has served churches in New Hampshire, Connecticut and Missouri. He is passionate about church planting, church vitality, youth ministry and music. Rushan and his spouse, Arushini, have two children: Aran (10) and Alisha (7).

Man, 40-49, Holds Ministerial Standing, Asian/Asian American (Sri Lankan Tamil)
At Large Class of 2027 Nominees

**Joyce Bathke** is a member of Faith United Church of Christ in Wentzville, MO. Joyce is a retired Chief Operating Officer for the St. Louis Regional Chapter of the American Red Cross. Joyce served Wider Church Ministries Board under the former governance structure and completed her last two years serving on the new UCCB Finance Committee. Joyce currently serves on the Missouri Mid-South Conference Council and chairs the Personnel Committee. As a member of the Eastern Association, she serves on the Committee on Ministry. Joyce attended Washington University with a BS-Liberal Arts.

**Woman, 60+, Layperson, White/Europe American**

**Jasmine Coleman Quinerly** is the Houston Association Minister in the South Central Conference. She is also Minister of Missions at Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, Houston, Texas. She serves the United Church of Christ as member of the Committee of Ministry of the Houston Association and Settegast Heights Apartment Complex Board of Directors. She has served six years on the Board of Directors of Back Bay Mission, in Biloxi, Mississippi including one term as board president. This mission project follows international mission work in Mexico and Guatemala. Jasmine has provided leadership with the Southern Regional Women’s Retreat, AAWIM, CHHSM and AM 21.

Jasmine provides worship to an assistant living facility and enjoys providing birthday parties for the residents since being ordained. At Pilgrim Congregational UCC in Houston, she supports the weekly worship, pastoral visits and plans mission projects for the church and community. Jasmine is bi-vocational and practices commercial and residential real estate sales and appraisals. Presently she is an instructor of real estate sales, appraisal ethics for both local and national organizations. Jasmine provided leadership on the national examination development for the real estate appraisal industry, peer review for the State of Texas, and has developed a real estate appraisal curriculum.

Rev. Quinerly is the proud mother of Verrene Quinerly of Dallas, Texas and Reggie Quinerly of California and has 2 granddaughters.

**Woman, 60+, Holds Ministerial Standing, Black/African American, HUGS**

**Tom Croner** is a life-long member of Trinity United Church of Christ in Berlin, PA, serving there in numerous capacities along with the Penn West Conference board and committees. He feels blessed to be the 7th generation caretaker of the family farm dating back to 1780, working with his son in preparation for the 9th generation. His BS degree from Penn State in Ag Economics and Rural Sociology has allowed him to serve farmer owned food production, and manufacturing organizations by building consensus and envisioning the future through respectful conversations. He is anxiously awaiting God’s next assignments.

**Man, 60+, Layperson, White/European American**
Courtney Dobbins is a current Doctor of Pharmacy candidate at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. She works as a Pharmacy Intern and a Peer Coach and holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemical and Biological Engineering from the University of Colorado Boulder.

Courtney grew up at the United Church of Christ in Longmont, CO where she was inspired to be involved with youth trips and summer camps. Her favorite place to be is LaForet, the UCC camp owned by the Rocky Mountain Conference. Courtney has served four years on the Rocky Mountain Conference Board of Directors - two as the Youth Representative and two as the Finance Committee Chair. Now, Courtney enjoys teaching Sunday School to the middle school aged group and counseling summer camps at LaForet!

Woman, 19-29, Layperson, White/European American, LGBTQAI+

Mark Dutell is a retired Human Resource Executive with 35 years of diversified experience in all areas of Human Resources. Mark career includes 30 years of progressive responsibility at Gates Corporation, a global automotive and industrial rubber manufacturer with over $3 billion annual revenues and 60 plus locations in 20 countries.

As a member of the executive team, Mark participated in the development of overall company strategy including growth strategies, budgets, capital investments, new products and service development.

As the Senior Vice President of Global Human Resources he led the organization objective to improve financial performance through a Human Capital Strategy that emphasized associate learning and involvement. Specific competencies include: talent management, positive associate relations, compensation and benefits, human resource information systems, health safety and environment, and policy development.

Since retiring in 2010, Mark has pursued a retirement objective to “keep my exposure to the world growing rather than shrinking” through community enrichment classes at Denver University, travel, and volunteer work.

Mark currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Rocky Mountain Conference UCC as the Chair of the Personnel Committee. He has served on the Board of Directors of a local YMCA and local bank. In 17 years as a member of his local congregation, the Kirk of Bonnie Brae in Denver Colorado, he has served as Moderator, Council member, and Capital Campaign Chair. He has also served on a variety of committees including, mission, open and affirming, social justice, property, pastor search, and COVID response.

Man, 60+, Layperson, White European American, Disability
Richard (Dick) Hom is currently serving his second term as the Moderator of the Pacific Islander & Asian American Ministries (PAAM) of the United Church of Christ. As Moderator, Dick was instrumental in implementing many policies and procedures to update PAAM such as a financial policies & procedures, funding for youth and young adult programming, leadership training and providing grants to address racism and racial disparities to all six regions of PAAM. Dick is also a member of the Council of Racial & Ethnic Ministries (COREM) of the UCC.

Dick is a strong supporter of the Northern California Nevada Conference and is a former moderator and current Association board member and has been instrumental in helping to raise over $40K for disaster relief for the Conference.

As a retired small business owner, Dick has served on the Board of Directors of the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce and served as a trustee for the Pacific School of Religion. As a long-time active member of the Chinese Congregational Church in San Francisco, Dick has served in many capacities such as moderator of the church council, chairperson of the Board of Deacons and many various committees. His biggest legacy is as the co-founder of the Summer Adventure Camp for Kids (SACK) day camp program for low-income kids in the Chinatown area. Founded in 1969, the program is still active today.

Man, 60+, Layperson, Asian/Asian American (Chinese), HUGS

Tracy Keene is an active lay leader at Old South Church in Boston, where he has been a member since 2007. He currently serves on the Church Council and is the Chair of (G)RACE Speaks, a standing committee of the church that deals with all matters of race/racism. He also serves on the Ordination Discernment Committee and has served on a pastor search committee. He was previously a member of First Congregational Church in Poughkeepsie, NY. Tracy works as the Director of Theater & Facilities Operations at the Loeb Drama Center at Harvard University, overseeing the infrastructure and the day-to-day operations of facilities on campus. Prior to his arrival at Harvard, Tracy worked for 23 years in the field of performing arts management at major performing arts institutions in New York City and San Francisco. Tracy volunteers as a co-leader for his daughter’s Girl Scouts Troop and serves as a regional delegate to Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts. He currently serves as president of the Campus Childcare Center, a non-profit organization that manages the childcare centers on the campus of Harvard University. He serves as President of the Massachusetts Historic Conference of the United Church of Christ and also on the Board of Directors for the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ. He holds memberships with the International Facilities Management Association and the International Association of Venue Managers. Tracy holds a BA in Drama from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Man, 50-59, Layperson, Black/African American, LGBTQAI+
Kristie Nardini earned her bachelor’s degree in social work from Western New England University and her masters in Community Engagement from Merrimack College. She has served South Church in Andover, MA where she has facilitated their fellowship committee, served as a Deacon, helped lead a volunteer software management search, and currently serves as the co-lead for the Human Resources Ministry team. Professionally, Kristie works at a renowned animal hospital where she created a volunteer program from the ground up and serves as their Volunteer Coordinator. She is passionate about volunteer engagement, mental health advocacy, and program development. Kristie has a particular interest in engaging more young professionals in the UCC. She loves to write and blog in her spare time to connect with others in a meaningful way.

**Woman, 19-29, Layperson, White/European American**

Lawrence T. Richardson is a pastor, prophet, digital evangelist, and author. He is a graduate of St. Catherine University and Liberty Seminary, where he was trained in Sociology, Communications, Pastoral Care, Evangelism, and Christian Ministry. Rev. Richardson has also completed certifications for Antiracism Facilitator Training, Our Whole Lives Sexuality Training, Church Planting, Digital Media Strategy, and Executive Leadership Coaching.

Rev. Richardson is on staff as lead minister at Linden Hills UCC, is a media trainer for Auburn Seminary, and works as an executive clergy coach for Convergence US. Rev. Richardson also has active partnerships with the Evangelical Church of Germany, collaborating on digital ministry projects. The author of I Know What Heaven Looks Like and a member of the International Sociology Honors Society, Rev. Richardson writes about and advocates for LGBTQ people, people of color, and the flourishing of all; with his works appearing in Huffington Post Religion, The Root, Believe Out Loud, The Salt Collective, Rachel Murr's *Unnatural: Spiritual Resiliency in Queer Christian Women*, Austen Hartke's *Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians*, and numerous national and international publications. Rev. Richardson has received awards and commendations for his service, including the Humanitarian Award from Black Transmen Inc. and the Stellar Award for his work in global communication.

When he is not ministering, researching, or writing about what he researches, Pastor Lawrence loves reading, trying different cuisine, traveling, spending time with family, and empowering people to live life from a place of joy, abundance, faith, and gratitude.

**Man, 30-39, Holds Ministerial Standing, Black/African American, HUGS, LGBTQAI+**
Bethany Ruhl is the Manager of Spiritual Wellness at Saint Luke’s Crittenton Children’s Center, which serves children experiencing mental health crisis in the Kansas City area. She is a Board-Certified Chaplain and recently graduated with a Master of Counseling Degree. During her time at Crittenton, Bethany received a grant to create a new chapel space, and she commissioned a local artist to create a series of social justice murals with Crittenton patients. Bethany chairs the Crittenton Ethics Committee and was recently named an Ethics Champion by the Center for Practical Bioethics. Bethany specializes in mental health and trauma-informed care. Bethany grew up in Lawrence, Kansas where she first found the United Church of Christ in college, and she is now a proud member of Southwood UCC in Raytown, MO, as well as the Missouri Mid-South Conference. Before entering the ministry, Bethany was a world traveler and spent time living and teaching abroad France & Germany. She speaks French and has a Master’s Degree in French Literature. During her seminary career Bethany won several social justice awards for her work with women’s issue and racial justice issues. A significant life experience for her was working in the drug & trauma treatment program of a women’s prison during seminary. During her free time, Bethany enjoys pot-lucking with her friends, long conversations in coffeeshops and thrift stores. She also enjoys perusing famer’s markets with her Italian Greyhounds Lulu and Anubis."

Woman, 30-39, Holds Ministerial Standing, White/European American

Daniel Su’a is currently a member of the CYYAM (Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries) where he committed himself as a youth to the work of the council and to uphold the priorities of the church. He had the privilege to attend the 2019 General Synod as a delegate representing the Rocky Mountain Conference as a “Youth Delegate.” His roles in life revolve around helping others, whether that is in the church or in the community. In the community, he worked for a charter school called Ascent Academy. There, Daniel was one of the teachers in the Special Education Department. He was tasked with working one on one with 12-15 students from the 7th-9th grade. He helped students with homework, in class support, and helped students socialize with their peers. His roles can also be translated to his own church youth; he helped his father’s ministries by being the Choir Conductor and also the Sunday School Music Director. One of his goals is to become a Youth Pastor in the UCC and help the youth of tomorrow’s church.

Some of Daniel’s accomplishments include a Bachelor’s Degree in Social and Behavior Science with an emphasis in Ethnic Studies from the University of Utah. He is currently employed by the 3rd District Court of Utah as a Judicial Assistant. In his free time, he likes to play music. Whether it’s playing the bass guitar for a band or practicing his piano skills, and also reading and socializing with friends.

Man, 19-29, Layperson, Pacific Islander (Samoan)
Elizabeth (Beth) Walker has been a member of Old First Reformed UCC in Philadelphia for over 25 years. She retired from the full-time practice of law in June 2018 to commit her time and attention to the work of building community and promoting the transformation of our court system to be one focused on restorative justice. She does this work through POWER, an interfaith organization advocating for social justice. Beth is currently serving as Moderator of the Philadelphia Association. She also serves on the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference Nominating Committee and the Zachariah Walker Racial Justice Team. In the National Setting, Beth is on the Board of Directors of the Cornerstone Fund, a financial ministry affiliated with the United Church of Christ, currently serving as Chair of the Board. In addition, Beth is serving on the Manual on Church Working Group created pursuant to a Resolution of the 32nd General Synod Resolution tasked with providing clarity about Local Church covenant and autonomy, parameters for Local Church accountability and the oversight of Local Churches along with a Manual on the Local Church, akin to the Manual on Ministry. At Old First, Beth serves as Director of Community Engagement. She is involved in the Outreach Ministry to the Homeless and is on a Joint Venture Ministry Team working on the construction of permanent supportive housing for 34 previously homeless individuals on the church property.

Woman, 60+, Layperson, White/Europe American

Carenina Williams is a member of Peoples Congregational UCC in Washington, DC. Ms. Williams currently serves as a Principal of Sundance Bay, and has over 18 years of real estate investment and finance experience. She has acquired and/or asset managed over $1.8 billion in real estate assets throughout the United States. Previously, Ms. Williams served as COO of a short opportunistic equity hedge fund that focused on generating alpha through single-name shorts in the consumer discretionary and consumer staples sectors. Previously, Ms. Williams was a Principal of Acquisitions and Asset Management at Artemis Real Estate Partners responsible for developing and implementing acquisition and asset management activities, primarily for the separate account for New York State Common Retirement Fund. Prior to Artemis, Ms. Williams served as Principal, Investments for Capri Capital Partners, LLC (“Capri”), where she was responsible for origination, investment structuring, and asset management of equity and structured finance investments for over $1 billion in assets, across the firm’s various separate accounts and commingled funds. Ms. Williams began her career at Goldman Sachs within the Investment Banking Division’s Retail and Corporate Finance Practice Groups.

Ms. Williams graduated with honors from Harvard University (AB Economics) and has an MBA from Harvard Business School. She is a member of the Urban Land Institute – Silver Retail Counsel. She serves as a Trustee and Chair of the Investments/Finance Committee for Peoples Congregational UCC and is a Member of Leadership Now Project.

Woman, 40–49, Layperson, Black/African American, HUGS
Motion from the Subcommittee on Disposition

March 5, 2021

The Subcommittee on Disposition moves:

The United Church of Christ Board, sitting as the General Synod Committee on Disposition, adopts the Amended Report of the Subcommittee on Disposition.

Report of the Subcommittee on Disposition

The Subcommittee on Disposition recommends:

The United Church of Christ Board, sitting as the General Synod Committee on Disposition, receives the items of business submitted to the Thirty-third General Synod and recommends disposition as follows:

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Background: From Standing Rules of the Thirty-Third General Synod, Paragraph XI

Disposition Options:

A. Items that are expected to be routine, non-controversial, or dealt with in a special hearing will be reported directly to the plenary session by the Business Committee. This might include, but is not limited to, such items as the budget, amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws, statements of commendation, recognition, and celebration, and certain Resolutions. The Business Committee may place some of these items on a Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda will be approved by delegates in the opening plenary of the General Synod. Proponents of Resolutions placed on the Consent Agenda will have two minutes to speak to their Resolution before the Consent Agenda is moved. Items may be removed from the Consent Agenda by a majority vote of the General Synod. If a Resolution is removed from the Consent Agenda, it will be assigned to a committee or considered in a plenary session of the General Synod.

B. All proposed pronouncements and proposals for action shall be assigned to committee.

C. Items that are complicated or controversial that require background discussion and study, that merit and need a hearing process, or that have a system-wide impact will be assigned to a committee. The proposer shall supply a resource person to the committee.

D. Any proposed business item that reiterates or reaffirms previous action shall normally be referred by the General Synod to the body or bodies implementing such action. A referral for implementation is, in itself, a statement that the General Synod is already on record with the intent of the business item and that the policy base for implementation is already in existence.

E. Items addressing issues addressed by one of the two preceding General Synods shall be referred by the General Synod to implementing bodies.

F. If a proposed motion differs significantly from previous policy or action of the two preceding General Synods, it shall be assigned to a committee. The burden of proof is on those submitting the proposal to explain how it is different.

Definitions:

1. Resolution of Witness: A Resolution of Witness is an expression of the General Synod concerning a moral, ethical or religious matter confronting the Church, the nation, or the world, adopted for the guidance of the Officers, Covenanted, Associated or Affiliated Ministries, or other bodies as defined in Article VI of the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ; the consideration of local churches, Associations, Conferences and other bodies related to the United Church of Christ; and for a Christian witness to the world. It represents agreement by at least two thirds of the delegates voting that the view expressed is based on Christian conviction and is a part of their witness to Jesus Christ. The text of the proposed resolution should be so phrased as not to bring into question the Christian commitment of those who do not agree.

2. Prudential Resolutions: A Prudential Resolution establishes policy, institutes or revises structure or procedures, authorizes programs, approves directions or requests actions by majority vote.
The following resolution has been received by the Office of the General Minister and President prior to the deadline established by the Standing Rules of the Thirty-third General Synod.

Receipt and release of this resolution for pre-Synod consideration by delegates and other interested parties should not be considered an indication it will come before the General Synod. This resolution is now being researched by the Board of Director’s Subcommittee on Disposition and its staff, before consideration by the full Board of Directors in March 2021. Any resolution must meet all of the requirements of the General Synod Standing Rules (see Standing Rule 11). The Board of Directors will decide in March whether this resolution meets those requirements and make a determination as to its disposition.

THE ALLIANCE OF ASSOCIATE CONFERENCE MINISTERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST REQUEST TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A FORMAL GROUP

A Prudential Resolution

Submitted by the:
Iowa Conference
Nebraska Conference
New Hampshire Conference
South Dakota Conference

SUMMARY

The Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers (AACM) seeks to be recognized as a Self-Created Group according to United Church of Christ By-Laws, Article VI., existing to be a supportive expression of the Living Christ, in relationship with one another and with the Body of Christ, in all its forms. The term “Associate Conference Minister” is used ubiquitously in AACM documents to refer to all persons who serve in the role either designated as associate conference minister or all the various titles of those functioning in similar job responsibilities and expectations. AACM serves to support those who serve in a staff or called position doing conference ministry in the support of the conference minister and conference.

BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORICAL GROUNDING

The fundamental biblical grounding for the proposed recognition of the Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers is found in Christ’s farewell discourse in the Gospel of John, “…that all of them may be one,” John 17:21 (NIV). For centuries, this has been a scriptural basis for uniting Christians throughout the world.

In the context of the challenges of today’s secularizing culture and the opportunities created by increasingly powerful means of communication, we have been inspired by the Deutero-Pauline ambition, “…that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith…and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:12-13 (NIV). To us, this means that we are called to outgrow an attitude of “going it alone” that has been prominent in our polity for more than three hundred years (since the 1648 Cambridge Platform). It means that we are called to build a stronger and larger network of covenants
through which we can become stronger as the body of Christ serving across the breadth of the United Church of Christ. It means that we can be much stronger by capitalizing on the many ways we are increasingly interdependent in today’s world. This means building and maintaining a covenental and collaborative relationship with all United Church of Christ Associate Conference Ministers through the existence and support of the AACM.

The Alliance seeks to live out its purpose of:

- Building and maintaining a covenantal and collaborative relationship with all United Church of Christ Associate Conference Ministers.
- Developing and maintaining a covenantal and collaborative relationship with the United Church of Christ Council of Conference Ministers, officers of the Church, UCC Covenantal partners, and UCC Board of Directors.
- Being a resource to share information and best practices to promote excellence in our various ministries.
- Being a collective voice of advocacy for concerns important to the role and work of the Associate Conference Minister as they relate to the life of the United Church of Christ.

We believe that discerning God’s will and God’s call to us is best done in community, gathering, listening and sharing with one another. This we have done through meeting and sharing ideas at AM21 in 2018 and 2019 intentionally discerning a call to unite for the intention of being a resource to share support, information and best practices to promote excellence in our various ministries.

TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ takes seriously our individual Christian covenant with God as the primal covenant from which our human covenants are derived and by which they are shaped. ¹

WHEREAS in the above view it is “the covenantal relationship with God that creates the church and, in turn created a covenantal relationship among the people who are the church.”²

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ holds seriously the call to be an open and welcoming faith community, accepting into the church body and leadership all facets of expression found in God’s people, creating a rich diversity of expression, background, culture, sexual and gender identity and expression.

WHEREAS the work of conference ministry and associate conference ministry places those doing the work at the intersection of church life, between the Local Church and the National Setting, including associations where those exist calling for “keeping communication flowing in all directions, nurturing relationships, articulating and supporting covenantal relationships.”³

WHEREAS in response to “[t]he Proposal for Action adopted by the Twentieth General Synod called upon local churches, conferences and associations, those called and employed by the church, and various national bodies to act in a variety of ways in support of the fair and just
compensation of all persons called and employed by the church” the A ACM states it provides
resources and advocacy to support ACMs in their positions.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church
of Christ recognizes the establishment of the Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers, a Self-
Created Group serving to support those who serve in a staff or called position doing conference
ministry in the support of the conference minister and conference.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** the Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers be identified as
related in covenant to the United Church of Christ, through a primary relationship as a Self-
Created Group with the United Church of Christ Board.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance
with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other
entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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4 Fair & Just Compensation: A Report to the Twenty-first General Synod 97-GS-50 62-65
The following resolution has been received by the Office of the General Minister and President prior to the deadline established by the Standing Rules of the Thirty-third General Synod.

Receipt and release of this resolution for pre-Synod consideration by delegates and other interested parties should not be considered an indication it will come before the General Synod. This resolution is now being researched by the Board of Director’s Subcommittee on Disposition and its staff, before consideration by the full Board of Directors in March 2021. Any resolution must meet all of the requirements of the General Synod Standing Rules (see Standing Rule 11). The Board of Directors will decide in March whether this resolution meets those requirements and make a determination as to its disposition.

**A Resolution to Advocate and Act to Change the Cash Bail Bond System to Eliminate Racial and Social Injustices Inherent in the Present System**

Submitted by the Southern Conference

**SUMMARY**

This resolution calls on the United Church of Christ to advocate and act to change the Cash Bail Bond System in the individual states and United States of America to be more just to the economically disadvantaged.

**BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE**

Isaiah 42:5-7 “Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it: ‘I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.”

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners . . . .”

Matthew 25: 31-33, 41-46 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. . . . Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For . . . I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me. They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”
Hebrews 13:3 “Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured;"

**HISTORICAL GROUNDING AND CONNECTION TO THE UCC**

1. Considerable empirical evidence demonstrates that the cash bail system is corrupt, unfair and ineffective. The cash bail system requires pretrial defendants to pay hundreds to thousands of dollars to the courts, as secured through bail bondsmen, and usually requires low income individuals to agree to usurious terms for borrowing such funds. Lacking such funds, individuals are subject to incarceration prior to their trials, which then costs the state up to one hundred dollars per day for each individual. As such, several municipalities and states throughout the U.S. have successfully enacted other approaches to pretrial requirements for defendants accused of misdemeanors and some lesser felonies (1).

2. The United Church of Christ has a long record of advocating reform of the cash bail bond system.
   
   I. Forty-six years ago (1973), the United Church of Christ’s Advising Body of the General Synod adopted the following CRIMINAL JUSTICE-PENAL REFORM statement as amended on Excessive Bail (73-GS-38)
   
   “The Ninth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:
   i. Denounces the practice of setting excessive bail, especially in the case of political activists
   ii. Calls upon the Criminal Justice Priority Team of the United Church of Christ to develop viable revisions and alternatives to cash bail and transmit those to our membership, to congressmen, and legislators.
   iii. Make available staff consultative and financial support for local programs which share this goal, and for Conferences which in cooperation with other agencies are working toward this goal; said support may come in the form of a pilot project in one or more conferences.”

   II. Forty-eight years ago (1971), the United Church of Christ endorsed the following goals and objectives: “The Eighth General Synod adopts the following Goals and Objectives for the priority, Racial Justice. To urge enactment of state and federal laws reforming the bail system. It should be provided that those defendants who would ordinarily purchase corporate bail will deposit their money with the court and they will recover 90% of this money after the completion of their cases. The acceptance to this nominal bail or personal recognizance bonding should be encouraged, especially where the defendants are employed. The court shall give priority to the trials of all cases where the defendants have failed to post bail. No person should be held in prison without bail longer than sixty days after indictment or the termination of the first term of criminal court after his indictment.”

3. The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina has adopted a resolution asking for cash bail bond reform:
The 203rd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina Act 2018-12 Resolution 203.12 “On examining the need for bail reform within the criminal justice system: Resolved, the 203rd Annual Convention of the Diocese of North Carolina supports actions to reform, and commits to examine, current judicial pretrial release procedures within our own state. The consideration of current pretrial release practices will be conducted in partnership with organizations currently engaged in the study of the money-bail system and steps will be taken in support of needed reforms. Pretrial-release practices will be considered for consistency with the teachings of Jesus concerning the equitable treatment of all people. Further, this consideration of the money-bail system of pretrial release is in keeping with the mandate of our baptismal covenant to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.”

4. States and jurisdictions across the country have changed or are investigating the ability to change bail bond systems toward systems that do not punish individuals for poverty itself. Results indicate that financial savings are available for individuals and the legal system, and defendants continue to appear for their court days².

I. A recent study reports results of reform to the cash bail bond system in Philadelphia, PA (over the 2018 year) as successful and has been outlined by Jessica Smith, W.R. Kenyan, Jr. Distinguished Professor of Public Law and Government at UNC School of government, on her blog posting³.

II. In a previous posting Ms. Smith lists the need for a change to pretrial adjudication being based on four main problems: public safety (wealthier individuals can buy their way out of incarceration); costs to taxpayers; fairness; and racial and ethnic disparities.

5. A comprehensive compilation of the research on pretrial alternatives to cash bail, based on nationwide research with ensuing recommendations for states, was published in February, 2019 by the Harvard Law School. This Guide to bail reform warns against the use of risk assessment tests that are too general, and often have inherent racial and economic biases. Instead, risk assessments which are validated for each location-specific population, and which are developed by an entity who will not profit from the use of algorithm is advised as necessary⁴.

I. More than 100 civil rights, faith, labor, legal and data science groups released a shared statement of concerns about the use risk assessments⁵.

6. An earlier set of cash bail guidelines for NC were published in 2016⁶:

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS the U.S. has the highest rate of incarceration in the world, and African Americans, Latinos, Latinas, and indigenous peoples are disproportionately incarcerated in the United States⁷;

WHEREAS since 2000, the vast majority of the jail population increase was caused by the detention of individuals prior to trial (pretrial) of which 60 to 70% were classified nonviolent minimum-security⁸;
WHEREAS cash bail bonding is an over 2-billion-dollar industry⁹;

WHEREAS the inability to make cash bail extracts an untold human cost on the accused due to their loss of employment, housing and, often times, family support¹⁰;

WHEREAS there are proven instances of inadequate health care for incarcerated persons, death and injury suffered by incarcerated persons¹¹;

WHEREAS at least 70% of inmates in local jails are not convicted of any crime ⁸,¹²;

WHEREAS persons who cannot make bail are poor and four times more likely to receive jail time with sentences three times longer than those who do make bail¹³, ¹⁴;

WHEREAS bail set for people of color exceeds that for whites by 35% and Latinos by 19% ¹,¹⁵

WHEREAS three out of four criminal cases in state trial courts are for misdemeanors that, if proved, would result in fines and/or less than a year in jail¹⁶;

WHEREAS political contributions made by the Bail Industry in between 2002 and 2016 exceeded $5,000,000¹⁷;

WHEREAS money-based systems release nearly half of the most dangerous defendants with little to no meaningful supervision¹⁸;

WHEREAS the US is the only nation besides the Philippines to have a legal commercial bail bond industry;

WHEREAS corporate and/or systemic structures, or individuals which derive profit from the imprisonment of human beings serve to perpetuate the legacy of slavery, oppression and heartless greed which the United Church of Christ has long sought to expose and correct;

WHEREAS we are admonished as followers of Christ to “Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured;” (Hebrews 13:3)

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

a) That the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages the reform of the bail bond systems within individual states and the United States in order to eliminate the racial and social injustices inherent in the present cash bail bond systems,

b) That the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all settings of the church to raise their consciousness of the theological, social, racial, ethnic and economic inequities which make possible the existence of the unfair and unjust bail bond systems,
c) That, to accomplish these goals, the Thirty Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all settings of the church to seek partnerships with other organizations also working toward the goals.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the U.S. Congress and state legislatures to reform the cash bail bond systems to be more just and humane.

**FUNDING**
The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION**
The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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The following resolution has been received by the Office of the General Minister and President prior to the deadline established by the Standing Rules of the Thirty-third General Synod. Receipt and release of this resolution for pre-Synod consideration by delegates and other interested parties should not be considered an indication it will come before the General Synod. This resolution is now being researched by the Board of Director’s Subcommittee on Disposition and its staff, before consideration by the full Board of Directors in March 2021. Any resolution must meet all of the requirements of the General Synod Standing Rules (see Standing Rule 11). The Board of Directors will decide in March whether this resolution meets those requirements and make a determination as to its disposition.

A RESOLUTION ON PROTECTING WORKERS AT CHURCHES AND OTHER RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

A Resolution of Witness

Submitted by the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ, and the New Jersey Association of the Central Atlantic Conference

SUMMARY

This resolution invites United Church of Christ settings to discern and implement appropriate measures to protect their employees, and to be attentive to the ways that religious freedom, including the ministerial exception defense to legal claims of discrimination, gives churches and religious institutions wide latitude in decisions impacting their employees.

BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND ETHICAL RATIONALE

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be God’s servants to our neighbors, and to proclaim good news, dwelling in the promises of forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, and taking courage in striving for justice and peace. In response to our common calling, United Church of Christ members have supported the expansion of rights and recognition for historically marginalized communities in our society. At the national level, these efforts include advocacy for the Civil Rights Act, for immigrant farmworkers, for redress and reparations for Japanese-Americans interned during World War Two, for communities fighting environmental racism, for the Americans with Disabilities Act, and for the Family and Medical Leave Act, among many others.

Freedom of religion is a cornerstone of American society, and United Church of Christ members and institutions are mindful that our voice in advocating for change is “one among many”; we communicate our witness in the spirit of offering, aware that our advocacy is empowered by our ability to live into the values we promote. Because of the separation of church and state, the United States has become a religious pluralism and the United Church of Christ rejoices in the religious diversity of our neighbors.

The First Amendment celebrates individual conscience by guaranteeing the free exercise of religion. In accordance with the First Amendment, the Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld expansive protections for the free exercise of religion. Under the rubric of limiting
government involvement with religious organizations, the Supreme Court has also held that religious institutions have broad authority to manage their own internal affairs.\textsuperscript{13}

With such freedom comes great responsibility.\textsuperscript{14} “For, dear brethren, you have been given freedom: not freedom to do wrong, but freedom to love and serve each other.”\textsuperscript{15} The United Church of Christ values religious freedom, and recognizes the moral responsibility that comes with it. Seeking to create justice and peace within our own institutions, our faith calls us to great care in the exercise of our freedom of conscience.\textsuperscript{16}

**HISTORICAL GROUNDING**

The treatment of employees is a critical area of church autonomy. In 2012 the Supreme Court, following lower courts, recognized the ministerial exception which exempts religious institutions from legal liability for many if not all discrimination claims filed by ministers.\textsuperscript{17} This exception applies to the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Family and Medical Leave Act, and state-law equivalents. These laws generally protect employees from being fired, from being paid less for the same work,\textsuperscript{18} and from being sexually harassed or harassed on the basis of any other protected category. These laws also protect those who advocate against discrimination in the workplace from retaliation.

When a church or other religious institution faces a discrimination lawsuit by a ministerial employee, it may invoke the ministerial exception to dismiss the lawsuit.\textsuperscript{19} Thus, the ministerial exception is primarily a legal defense.\textsuperscript{20} Using the ministerial exception as a defense is also an ethical decision with moral implications, especially for a church tradition that fights for inclusion and civil rights. Churches and religious institutions can promote diversity by specifically seeking candidates of particular underrepresented backgrounds for ministerial positions, because if these practices are challenged as discriminatory, they may use the ministerial exception in their defense.

In 2020, the Supreme Court expanded the scope of the ministerial exception to include employees with duties that can be considered religious and in furtherance of the institution’s religious mission, even if they do not exercise positions of leadership or have special training or credentials: the exception now applies to “any employee who leads a religious organization, conducts worship services or important religious ceremonies or rituals, or serves as a messenger or teacher of its faith.”\textsuperscript{21} The religious institution’s own definitions of its religious purposes will be accorded considerable deference by the courts.\textsuperscript{22} This applies to all religious and religious-affiliated institutions including nursing homes, hospitals,\textsuperscript{23} and schools.\textsuperscript{24} For example, secular teachers at a religious-affiliated school can be considered ministers if they open the day with required prayers, attend school-wide worship, and occasionally prepare students for other religious activities;\textsuperscript{25} and therefore they do not have legal protections against discrimination.\textsuperscript{26}

This dissenting opinion of Justice Sonia Sotomayor, joined by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, highlights the vast ethical implications behind this freedom and responsibility that has been given to religious institutions:
Two employers fired their employees allegedly because one had breast cancer and the other was elderly. Purporting to rely on this Court’s decision in *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC*, the majority shields those employers from disability and age-discrimination claims. In the Court’s view, because the employees taught short religion modules at Catholic elementary schools, they were “ministers” of the Catholic faith and thus could be fired for any reason, whether religious or nonreligious, benign or bigoted, without legal recourse. The Court reaches this result even though the teachers taught primarily secular subjects, lacked substantial religious titles and training, and were not even required to be Catholic.  

At churches and religious institutions throughout the country, more than one hundred thousand people who have been hired into non-clergy positions with the understanding that anti-discrimination legal protections would apply, may learn that they are “ministers” for purposes of the ministerial exception, and therefore legally subject to discrimination.

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS** the exercise of religious freedom that churches have in charting their own employment practices calls for great intentionality in protecting workers;

**WHEREAS** speaking in the context of religious employment, St. Paul wrote in his first letter to the Corinthians: “we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ;”

**WHEREAS** religious freedom allows churches wide latitude in managing policies and staff, yet the ethical commitments to love our neighbors and serve the most vulnerable, require us to inhabit the world of the marginalized and understand how the law speaks differently to those who have the law enacted upon them;

**WHEREAS** given that the law of religious freedom opens a broad gateway for religious institutions to choose their own policies, churches must strive to follow the high standard of righteousness that is our calling;

**WHEREAS** protecting employees can come in many forms, and churches and religious organizations can identify the forms of discrimination that their faith prohibits and, in consultation with experts, develop anti-discrimination policies that flow from that process;

**WHEREAS** churches can develop personnel policies that meaningfully protect workers and implement alternative resolution processes;

**WHEREAS** having the legal power to utilize the ministerial exception to preclude the discrimination claims of those who work in our institutions does not always mean that churches must use it, for example, churches may be able to clarify before hiring or before a lawsuit arises which positions do not advance core religious functions and are thus not ministerial for purposes of the ministerial exception;
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages each Conference, each Association, each Local Church, each Affiliated and Associated Ministry, and each affiliated and historically affiliated organization, to study the privileges afforded to churches and religious institutions through the First Amendment including the ministerial exception;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod invites all settings of the church and affiliated ministries to discern the extent and nature of ethical protections for their employees consistent with their understanding of Christian faith and teaching and to implement those measures that they deem appropriate;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the national setting of the United Church of Christ send the text of this Resolution to Local Churches, Associations and Conferences.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

1 United Church of Christ Statement of Faith
5 General Synod Resolution on Environmental Racism in East St. Louis, Illinois (GS19 1993), https://www.ucc.org/a_movement_is_born_environmental_justice_and_the_ucc.
8 The U.C.C. Office of Communications, “OC Inc.”, fought for the rights of individuals to have a say in Federal Communications Commission proceedings. The legal right of all citizens to participate in FCC proceedings was the result of advocacy by Rev. Parker and OC Inc.
9 “E pluribus unum”
10 https://www.ucc.org/ecumenical_interfaith-relations.
15 Gal. 5:13.
16 General Synod Resolution Affirming and Supporting the Authorized Ministries of Under-represented Clergy in Local Congregations: A Call for Greater Representation and Economic Justice (GS31 2017); General Synod Resolution Calling the United Church of Christ to be an Anti-racist Church (GS24 2003); see also Auburn

17 Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 565 U.S. 171 (2012). The lower courts are divided on whether hostile work environment claims are also excluded through the ministerial exception, and the Supreme Court has not yet addressed this question.

18 Deuteronomy 24:15: “You shall pay them their wages daily, before sunset...”; Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 (which amended the Civil Rights Act to strengthen enforcement of the equal pay for equal work provision).

19 The church’s basis for discriminating does not need to have any relationship with its religious beliefs. The discrimination can be motivated purely by sexism, racism, ageism or homophobia — or it can be motivated by a desire to save money, by discharging sick employees.

20 There are also some courts that decline to hear discrimination claims on the basis that the court does not have jurisdiction.


22 Our Lady of Guadalupe, p. 2066; as stated by Justice Sonia Sotomayor in her dissenting opinion: “In foreclosing the teachers’ claims, the Court...collapses [the determination of who is a minister] into a single consideration: whether a church thinks its employees play an important religious role. Because that simplistic approach has no basis in law and strips thousands of schoolteachers of their legal protections, I respectfully dissent.” (p. 2072).

23 The ministerial exception might even apply for institutions that used to have a religious affiliation that has since been severed (Penn v. New York Methodist Hospital, 884 F.3d 416 (2d Cir. 2018)).

24 Justice Sotomayor’s dissent cautioned the new definition may encompass all “coaches, camp counselors, nurses, social-service workers, in- house lawyers, and media-relations personnel” in churches and other religious institutions. P. 2082.


26 In Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Supreme Court held there is no legal recourse for Catholic school teachers fired on account of their age or because of having cancer (or any other legally protected category), so long as their employers show that the teachers had religious responsibilities and that these responsibilities were important to the religious mission of the school. A “friend-of-the-court” brief in support of the teachers, arguing that the ministerial exception should not apply to them, was submitted by 70 civil rights organizations including the American Association of People with Disabilities, the American Federation of Teachers, the Center for Constitutional Rights, the Human Rights Campaign, and the National Organization for Women Foundation. https://civilrights.org/edfund/2020/03/11/70-civil-rights-groups-urge-supreme-court-to-protect-rights-of-workers-at-risk-of-discrimination/.

27 Dissent of Justice Sotomayor, p. 2071-2072.

28 See Dissent of Justice Sotomayor, p. 2082.

29 1 Cor. 9:12.


31 “To whomever much is given, will much be required; and to whom much was entrusted, more will be asked.” — Luke 12:48. “With great power there must also come -- great responsibility.” See also Marvel Comics, Amazing Fantasy #15 (1962).
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Becoming a Church of Contemplatives in Action

A Resolution of Witness

Submitted by

Agape Spiritual Community, Waltham, MA
Canaan Congregational Church, Canaan, MA
First Church Williamstown, Williamstown, MA
Sheffield United Church of Christ, Old Parish Church, Sheffield MA
Park Congregational United Church of Christ, Toledo, OH
Immanuel United Church of Christ of Catonsville, MD
The First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn, IL
South Congregational Church, Pittsfield, MA
Christ Church United, Lowell, MA
First Church Cambridge, Cambridge, MA
Keene Valley Congregational Church, Keene, NY
First Church Pittsfield, UCC, MA
Vergennes Congregational Church, Vergennes, VT

SUMMARY

This Resolution calls for the United Church of Christ to be a church of “contemplatives in action”. The United Church of Christ is known historically as a denomination for its bold leadership on social justice, peace, and environmental concerns. This resolution seeks the church’s integration of action for justice alongside intentional commitment to the life of prayer. Through fostering spiritual practices that deepen us in love for God, neighbors, ourselves, and all creation, this Resolution would empower the UCC to more fully root its collective life of activism for justice in the prayerful life of contemplation. By declaring its support for this resolution, the General Synod will emphasize the necessity of experiential grounding in the love of God alongside our common witness for justice and peace, while resourcing the wider church in the diversity of spiritual disciplines.

BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORICAL RATIONALE
The church’s great commandment from Jesus is to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Jesus rooted his ministry of teaching, healing, and solidarity with the marginalized through a life of prayer, solitude, silence, and intimate relationship with God. The three synoptic gospels tell how his ministry begins with a transformational time of solitary testing in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13). Periodically Jesus can be found stealing away from the busyness of the crowds to pray (Luke 5:16). Jesus’s public witness of creating inclusive community, exemplifying self-giving love and service, forming disciples, making peace and engaging in nonviolent resistance to the powers—that-be is all made possible because of his prayerful “union with the Father” (John 10:30). His life of integrated contemplation and action touches all aspects of Christian life individually and communally.

Jesus said that we are the light of the world (Matthew 5: 14), sent to bear lasting spiritual fruit (John 15:16), and that “the things that I do, you also will do, and even greater than these.” (John 14: 12). Just as Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1: 15) made visible in the world, the church’s vocation is to incarnate Christ, in order that God’s love, justice, and peace be made manifest. Thus, as Franciscan teacher Richard Rohr writes, “like Christ, you are an incarnation of matter and spirit operating as one. This… is how all of us continue the mystery of incarnation in space and time.”

The United Church of Christ, as a denomination, has been a courageous leader in actions for social justice, peacemaking, environmental stewardship, and solidarity with those most marginalized. At the same time, the UCC has not historically emphasized to the greatest extent possible the fostering of spiritual, contemplative practices to love God and ourselves, and to see God in all things, all people, and creation.

The UCC affirms that “God is still speaking.” To hear God’s still-speaking voice, the church must follow the contemplative exemplars of our Christian tradition in ceasing from endless activity and stilling our individual and collective bodies so that we are willing and ready to listen. As Thomas Merton wrote, “God is present and . . . alive and awake in the fullness and depth and breadth of all the silences of the world.” Jesus and the Scriptures teach that the Divine is heard first in the stillness of the soul. Jesus said that the kin-dom of God is within us (Luke 17:21). The Psalmist implored us to remember to “be still and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46: 10) Jesus retreated from the crowds, listening to the “still, small voice” (1 Kings 19: 12) to escape the temptations of ego, power, and acclaim. The single-minded vision of Jesus, grounded in prayer and divine relationship, modeled putting God first above earthly concerns and riches (Matthew 6: 25-34).

A contemplative consciousness changes us to become more aware of ourselves, the interdependent nature of all life, and the presence of the Divine in our lives and world. Such a grounding in the love of God allows us to “[receive and be] present to the moment and to the now . . . without your ego deciding whether you like it or not. Reality does not need you to like it in order to be reality.” This consciousness is what the broader Christian tradition affirms as “mysticism.” “Mysticism… refers to a universal and unifying view of the world. One of the quintessential insights of the mystics through the centuries is that the entire cosmos is … embedded in webs of relationship that are interconnected, interdependent, and constantly being
It is just this type of unifying perspective that is needed in our time of crisis and division.

Contemplation without action fuels narcissism, and action without contemplation is a recipe for bitterness and spiritual depletion. As Rev. Traci Blackmon said at her talk at the Thirty Second UCC General Synod. "The reason we're having so much trouble with the work out there is because we haven't done the work in here… Jesus is not just asking us to be courageous. Jesus has a bigger ask. Jesus is asking us to be transformed… and be changed from the inside out." Christian mystics throughout the ages report that contemplative encounters with God are restful and rejuvenating to our souls or inspiring us towards creative action. “Those caught up in the intimacy with God explain that the experience expands their knowledge, awakens palpable and actionable love, and is either a profoundly restorative resting in divine presence or a "fire shut up in the bones" that inspires action. The action can be restorative of personal relationships or proactive for the needs of the community.”

Contemplation is a holistic commitment to spiritual awakening. “Contemplation,” Joan Chittister says,… “brings us to see the big picture. It brings us to see beyond our own boundaries, beyond our own denominations, beyond even our own doctrines and dogmas and institutional self-interest, straight into the face of a mothering God from whose womb has come all the life that is… We become connected to everything, to everyone…. Zeal for justice consumes us. Then, action and prayer are one.”

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS the 21st century has seen a resurgence of Christian spiritual and contemplative practices, yet many churchgoers have not heard of or engaged in these practices in church;

WHEREAS people who leave church often find a scarcity of spiritual food there to nourish their souls, and are frequently unfamiliar with practices that cultivate self-care and love of God; and have turned to other spiritual and secular communities and organizations to fulfill this need;

WHEREAS there is a wide diversity of spiritual practices in the Christian tradition, and we aim to honor the diversity of each of these practices as they serve to build up the body of Christ;

WHEREAS with the crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, systemic racism, and the financial fallout causing greater need than ever for work for social justice, the church is called to model and share expressions of activism modeled in the contemplative spirit of Jesus;

WHEREAS Jesus said “I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit” (John 15: 5), and Christian contemplative practices hold the goal of abiding more deeply in Christ;

WHEREAS if we look at the “Tree of Contemplative Practices” as but one example of this diversity, we see that the myriad of spiritual disciplines far surpasses what the Church universal and the UCC in particular have offered to church members. As Barbara Holmes says,
Contemplative practices can be silent or evocative, still or embodied in dance or shout. Always, contemplation requires attentiveness to the Spirit of God.\textsuperscript{9}.

WHEREAS being “transformed by the renewing of our minds” (Romans 12: 2) begins with honest self-examination, reflective introspection and dialogue, and intentions and commitments to change, through God’s grace;

WHEREAS the UCC is rooted in the “Three Great Loves” of neighbor, children, and creation, and authentic contemplative practices expand our capacity and commitment to love and justice, so that we might be clearer channels for God’s love to shine through and might more fully “come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.” (Ephesians 4: 13)

WHEREAS the UCC is often identified as a progressive church for activists, whereas what makes the church unique is its spiritual grounding in the love and wholeness of God,

WHEREAS the church’s foundation of divine love grounds and informs communal life in the body of Christ, as well as provides the reason for why the church expresses its witness in active forms of justice, peace, and service in the world;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages local churches to become churches of “contemplatives in action,” remembering the essential disciplines modeled by Jesus of silent prayer, meditation, and practices to commune with the Divine Mother-Father, and letting contemplative depth inspire our forming and sustaining of life-giving, spiritually-generative community and our church’s action in the world through works of charity, social justice, peacemaking, earth-stewardship, and making disciples on the path of God’s unconditional, agape love;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages training of future clergy and lay leaders in the ways of contemplation, spiritual practice, and Christian mysticism, providing experiential grounding for the sustained life of faith; living into our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ and as children of God to see the Divine in everyone and everything in all creation, beginning with ourselves and expanding our love into ever-widening circles;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod invites local churches to commit to being a “both/and” rather than an “either/or” church- a church that prioritizes contemplation, spending time communing with God in various forms of prayer; and a church of activism that seeks to make God’s love and justice real in the world; thus a church of both contemplation and action—a church of “contemplatives in action” where our love of God through contemplative practices informs how we live and act in the world, and where our interior and exterior spiritual practices complement, ground, and inspire one another.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod calls upon all settings of the United Church of Christ to invest in curriculum and resources to support Conferences, Associations, local churches, clergy, lay leaders, General Synod and seminaries in practicing and...
teaching a foundational life of spiritual practices, as modeled in the life of Jesus. In this
resourcing, all settings are called to remain committed to the UCC’s diversity as a Multicultural,
Multiracial, and Anti-racist church, thus honoring the diversity of spiritual and contemplative
practices and teachers from many and varied cultures through whom the spirit works in different
ways;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod encourages all settings of
the UCC seek to live out the foundation of contemplative practices in the ministry of God’s work
in the world—making inclusive, participatory spiritual practices and teachings that cultivate
being, introspection, reflection and growth an integral part of National gatherings, including
committee work, children’s, youth and adult ministries, ecumenical partnerships, and General
Synod;

FUNDING: Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with
the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Collegium of Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries
of other entities with the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

5 Traci Blackmon, UCC General Synod 32 Community Worship June 23 2019, found at 1 hour 47 minutes and 1 hour 51 minutes at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IqgPgjIBT6U
7 Joan Chittister, Prophets Then, Prophets Now, disc 1 (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2006), MP3 download., from RR Daily Meditation July 5, 2019)
8 http://www.contemplativemind.org/practices/tree
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A RESOLUTION TO BAN THE PRACTICE OF CONVERSION THERAPY

A Resolution of Witness

Submitted by the Open and Affirming Coalition and the Mental Health Network

SUMMARY

This Resolution urges congregations and other settings in the United Church of Christ to advocate for a ban on “conversion” or “reparative” therapy—a medical practice legal in all 50 states that attempts to change or “repair” the sexual orientation or gender identity of LGBTQ+ persons in the belief that their orientation or identity is a mental illness. The Resolution further urges congregations and other settings to strengthen their efforts to reach their LGBTQ+ neighbors, especially youth, with the Good News that their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression are gifts from God.

BACKGROUND

Conversion therapy has existed in one form or another since the late 19th century. While the practice has caused demonstrable harm to the mental and physical health of LGBTQ+ persons, conversion therapy continues to be legal throughout the United States. According to practitioners of conversion therapy, the sexual orientation or gender identity of LGBTQ+ persons is a disease, defect or developmental disorder. This claim has been repudiated by every professional association in the field of health care, many of which have advocated for a ban on the discredited practice.

According to a report published the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law (June 2019), 698,000 adults in the United States have experienced conversion therapy, and 20,000 LGBTQ+ youth will be subjected to conversion therapy if state legislatures refuse to act.

Also according to the Williams Institute (June 15, 2020), LGBTQ+ people who were subjected to conversion therapy have shown a greater risk of suicidal thoughts and attempted suicide than LGBTQ+ people who had never experienced this therapy, including

- 92% greater odds of lifetime suicidal ideation,
• 88% greater odds of attempting suicide,
• 75% greater odds of planning to attempt suicide.\(^7\)

The consensus of the mental health care profession was summed up in the “Position Statement on Attempts to Change Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, or Gender Expression” released by the American Psychoanalytic Association in 2012. They found:

“Psychoanalytic technique does not encompass purposeful attempts to “convert,” “repair,” change or shift an individual’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such directed efforts are against fundamental principles of psychoanalytic treatment and often result in substantial psychological pain by reinforcing damaging internalized attitudes.”\(^8\)

**BIBLICAL & THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE**

The biblical tradition affirms that all human beings are made “in the image of God.” (Gen. 1:27)
The church’s witness affirms that “in Christ Jesus, you are all children of God through faith” and that “all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 26-28) We are therefore to “love our neighbor as ourselves” (Lev. 19:9-18 and Matt. 22:40) and act with empathy towards all others (cf. the “Golden Rule” in Lev. 19:18 and Matt. 7:12).

The capacity to love and seek love is God’s gift to all human beings. Love is a reflection God’s inner life as Trinity—the three divine persons whose love cannot not be contained but is poured out in God’s acts of creation and redemption. Human love in its many expressions is therefore God’s design for humanity, and is offered to all without regard to sexual orientation or gender identity. The psychological and spiritual damage inflicted by “conversion therapy” on LGBTQ+ people, especially youth, violates the image of God that is embodied in every human being, harms our neighbor, and denies to others the grace we claim for ourselves.

**HISTORICAL GROUNDING**

For nearly five decades, General Synods of the United Church of Christ have repeatedly affirmed the dignity, humanity and rights of LGBTQ+ persons. This Resolution follows the trajectory set by a number of resolutions and pronouncements adopted by previous General Synods since 1975, including “Resolution Deploring the Violation of Civil Rights of Gay and Bisexual Persons” (11th General Synod 1977), “Resolution Calling on United Church of Christ Congregations to Declare Themselves Open and Affirming” (15th General Synod 1985), “Resolution Deploring Violence against Lesbian and Gay People” (17th General Synod 1989), “Prevention of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth Suicide” (22nd General Synod 1999), “Affirming the Participation and Ministry of Transgender People within the United Church of Christ and Supporting their Civil and Human Rights” (24th General Synod 2003) and “Equal Marriage Rights for All” (25th General Synod 2005). Common to all of these actions is the belief, grounded in our faith, that LGBTQ+ persons share in the image of the Creator, and like all other persons deserve protection from violence, deprivation of rights, and any other violation of their dignity as human beings.
TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS the medical practice known as “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” regards LGBTQ+1 persons as abnormal or defective, and attempts to change or “repair” non-conforming sexual orientation or gender identity through widely-discredited therapeutic practices,9 and

WHEREAS conversion therapy for adults is legal in 50 states and all U.S. territories, while conversion therapy for youth and children is still legal in 30 states,10 and

WHEREAS many studies have shown that attempts to change or “repair” sexual orientation or gender identity are associated with compromised mental health including, among other harms, lifelong suffering as the result of internalized shame, increased risk of suicide, and difficulty in forming stable and lasting relationships,11 and

WHEREAS a survey of at-risk LGBTQ+ youth published by the Trevor Project in 2020 showed that 42 percent who were subjected to conversion therapy had attempted suicide, while the attempted suicide rate of transgender and non-binary youth during or after conversion therapy was even higher at 57 percent,12 and

WHEREAS virtually every professional association in the health care industry has declared that conversion therapy is ineffective, unethical or harmful, including the American Medical Association, the American College of Physicians, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychoanalytic Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Counseling Association, and the National Association of Social Workers,13 and

WHEREAS in December 2020 UCC denominational leaders joined Archbishop Desmond Tutu and more than 400 other Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Sikh and Hindu faith leaders as signatories of the statement “Declaring the Sanctity of life and the Dignity of All” which called “for all attempts to change, suppress or erase a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression—commonly known as ‘conversion therapy’—to end, and for these harmful practices to be banned.”14

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ, affirming the dignity and worth of all people, deplores the practice of “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” that denies LGBTQ+1 youth and adults the opportunity to experience the blessings of love and human integrity, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod urges parents, authorized ministers and care-givers in the United Church of Christ to protect those in their care from any practice or program that purports to “cure” their sexual orientation or gender identity, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod urges congregations and all other settings of the church to advocate for state and federal laws protecting adults, youth and children from “conversion therapy” by banning the practice, and
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod urges congregations and other settings to strengthen their efforts to reach their LGBTQ+ neighbors, especially youth, with the Good News that their sexual orientation and gender identity or expression are gifts from God.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

1 "LGBTQ+" is a common abbreviation for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer." The plus sign indicates that no acronym can fully express the rich diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities in the human family. Another common abbreviation is "LGBTQIA+," which includes the intersex and asexual communities.


3 Human Rights Campaign. The Lies and Dangers of Efforts to Change Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity. www.hrc.org/resources/the-lies-and-dangers-of-reparative-therapy


5 Human Rights Campaign. See original citation.

6 Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Conversion Therapy and LGBT Youth. http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/conversion-therapy-and-lgbt-youth

7 Williams Institute. See citation above.


9 Human Rights Campaign. See original citation.

10 Movement Advancement Project. See original citation.

11 American Psychoanalytic Association. See original citation.


13 Human Rights Campaign. See original citation.

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A COMMITMENT TO GENDER SAFETY & EQUITY IN MINISTRY SETTINGS

A Resolution of Witness

Submitted by the Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ

SUMMARY

This resolution calls us to renewed accountability for the theology of equality that we have long professed as the United Church of Christ. In a climate of increased violence and hatred, where women in public leadership are targeted with intimidation by the highest office of government, women and non-binary clergy are uniquely vulnerable as they stand in the pulpit. Clergy have begun to share their #metoo #churchtoo stories of discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse in the congregations where they serve. This resolution confesses our complicity with systems of sexist oppression, and asks the Church to explore ways to promote gender safety. It asks the Church to empower women and non-binary persons, both lay and ordained, to raise issues regarding sexism and discrimination, free of censure or threat of retaliation. This resolution expresses a commitment to the physical and sexual autonomy of women and non-binary persons. It urges congregations to address inequities (in pay, benefits, senior leadership, etc.) for clergy and lay women and non-binary persons who serve within the Church. Finally, it resolves that the Church do this work with intentionality and awareness of the added threats and realities of violence experienced by women and non-binary persons holding multiple marginalized identities.

BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Our scriptural tradition has a complicated relationship with women. While women are counted in the genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:1-17), their agency is mitigated by sexual exploitation (Tamar, Dinah, Bathsheba and many nameless others), objectification for barter or conquest (Ruth, Leah and Rachel), or as a buffer to protect men from violence (daughters of Lot).

Patriarchal and misogynistic interpretations of scripture have only served to perpetuate and amplify the patriarchal culture and bias of those who wrote scripture.

Although women hold important roles in the stories of our faith, by the account of Carol Meyers, of the 1,426 names which appear in the Hebrew Testament, 1,315 are specified or presumed to
be male. Of those women who are named, few of their stories appear in the lectionary or traditional Sunday School curriculum. Yet those women received an inheritance from YHWH (Hagar), saved the life of Moses (Shiprah and Puah, Miriam), protected the people of God during war (Yael, Rahab), served as prophets (Deborah, Huldah), changed the torah so that women could inherit property (Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milkah and Noah), and advocated for their murdered children (Rizpah).

In the Christian Testament, Jesus shared a table with women and gave them a place, defending them against the judgment and accusations of others. Women were the first witnesses of the resurrection (Mary Magdalene, Mary, mother of James, Salome, Joanna, and others). Women were funders and foundational members of the earliest Christian congregations. Our scriptures tell us that women served as leaders and teachers (Priscilla), disciples (Tabitha), apostles (Junia), deacons (Phoebe) and patrons (Lydia) in the early church. Although their stories have been largely ignored and are only now being reclaimed, these texts provide an important affirmation of the importance of women’s leadership.

Biblically and theologically, the United Church of Christ affirms that women can and should serve and lead within the Church. The denomination has worked to adopt inclusive language, affirming that humankind, in all of our gender expressions, is created in the image of God. The United Church of Christ is proud to celebrate that a Congregationalist church ordained the first woman minister in the United States, Antoinette Brown, in 1853. (It is worth noting, however, that Brown left that church after only two years to become Unitarian.) Previous General Synods have affirmed the value and dignity of women, and called on us to recognize and address gender inequality and discrimination where they exist within the Church itself. As women began entering ordained ministry in great numbers, from the 1970s onward, the work of Marie Fortune and what is now the FaithTrust Institute helped committees on ministry develop processes to address ministerial sexual misconduct, as well as examine the ways women clergy were being harassed. Only recently has the United Church of Christ reached a point where more than 50% of active clergy are women.

In a climate of increased violence and hatred, where women in public leadership are targeted with intimidation by the highest office of government, women and non-binary clergy are uniquely vulnerable as they stand in the pulpit. Clergy across the United Church of Christ have begun to share their #metoo #churchtoo stories of discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse in the congregations where they serve. Stories of women’s leadership in scripture may seem to be the exception rather than the rule, and sexist assumptions and attitudes remain.

We are called to stand in solidarity with women and non-binary persons who, for the sake of their calling, risk their bodies and their lives to be faithful to the gospel. We are called to hold all clergy, regardless of age, gender, or active status, to the code of ethics that requires us to treat one another as equal partners in the ministry of Jesus Christ. This resolution calls us to accountability for the theology of equality that we profess as the United Church of Christ.

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**
WHEREAS: The General Synod of the United Church of Christ has taken a firm, unyielding
stance for the human rights and safety of women, refuses to condone any form of violence
against vulnerable people, and strongly encourages clergy and laity to support survivors of
sexual violence; and
WHEREAS: The majority of women, both cisgender and transgender, whether they identify as
women or as non-binary, are objectified and subjected to the violence and degradation of sexual
assault and unwanted sexual advance; and
WHEREAS: Sexual harassment and gender discrimination, including attacking, undermining
and dismissing women and non-binary persons’ leadership, is a form of violence; and occurs
within a national context of escalating violence against women in positions of public leadership;
and
WHEREAS: Women and non-binary persons risk further discrimination, violence, loss of
employment, ostracism or death in daring to say no or confront the harasser, and penalty of being
silenced or not believed when they dare to report; and
WHEREAS: Gender expression continues to be a minefield for women and non-binary persons,
who are pressured to exude the amount of femininity that makes others comfortable – “too
feminine” is seen as helpless or intentionally seductive, but “too masculine” is considered
confrontational and disrespectful - and women are still judged on their appearance, rather than on
their skills, ideas, achievements, or other non sexual/non-gendered attributes; and
WHEREAS: Women are still subject to economic violence, primarily in that they are paid less
than men for the same or similar work, and this lower pay in turn reduces their pension,
retirement benefits and Social Security payments; they are overcharged for “women’s products”
and penalized for carrying out the responsibilities of home and family; and
WHEREAS: These experiences of bias, discrimination and violence occur in ministry settings,
and are experienced by clergy and lay women and non-binary persons holding positions of
leadership within the Church; and
WHEREAS: Such discrimination is founded in misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and racism,
which are antithetical to the way of Jesus; and
WHEREAS: Our society is in the midst of a cultural transformation, with the #metoo movement
empowering survivors to break the silence and share their stories of rape, abuse, and sexual
harassment, and women and non-binary persons have begun sharing their #churchtoo stories of
how this occurs within the Church; and
WHEREAS: Clergy, chaplains and faith leaders are called upon to provide pastoral care to those
navigating gender discrimination, sexual harassment and violence, some of which occurs within
our ministry settings; and
WHEREAS: The United Church of Christ Ministerial Code of Ethics requires ministers to “not use my position, power, or authority to exploit any person”; ix

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ, confesses its complicity with systems of sexist oppression that inhibit and limit leadership, and asks all settings of the United Church of Christ, including (but not limited to) Committees on Ministry, Local Church Ministries and Justice & Witness Ministries Teams, to explore ways to promote gender safety, to empower women and non-binary persons, both lay and ordained, to raise issues regarding sexism and discrimination, reinforcing the covenants and standards of behavior which bind us together as conference, clergy, and lay leaders and members; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the Thirty Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms the physical and sexual autonomy of women and non-binary persons: the right not to have any other person invade her/their personal space without permission; the right not to be touched, or abused, either emotionally or physically, in any way by another person; the right to express gender in the ways she/they choose; the right to communicate autonomously, without reproach or censure based in sexism and misogyny; the right to expect that any such action will in no way be held against her/them for any reason in the workplace, including ministry settings, or in any social situation; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the Thirty Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the UCC to commit to gender equity in staff compensation, and urges all settings to address inequities (in pay, benefits, senior leadership, etc.) for clergy and lay women and non-binary persons who serve within the Church; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty Third General Synod asserts that this work must simultaneously address the threats and realities of violence that racism, transphobia, heterosexism, classism, and ableism impose on the daily life and leadership of women and non-binary persons in the Church.

**FUNDING**

The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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United Church of Christ Ordained Minister’s Code, https://www.ucc.org/ministers_ordained-ministers-code
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A RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING TO END 128 YEARS OF WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM

A Resolution of Witness

Submitted by the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches of the Hawaiʻi Conference United Church of Christ

SUMMARY

This Resolution calls the United Church to actualize its historical commitment to justice and peace with the friendly Christian Hawaiian Kingdom nation whose constitutions are founded upon Christian values.

BIBLICAL & THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

In the beginning humans were created in the image of God and were called “good”. Thus, all humans were created equal. The call to justice by the prophets is God’s commandment to treat everyone justly by acting righteously.

God’s moral law, enshrined in the Ten Commandments, is eternal and unchanging. Our bible is built on it. These laws are God’s stated will, the way he wants his kingdom and his universe to operate. In order, for justice to prevail, human laws must mirror God’s law. Justice is to prescribe the right way, to do things in an appropriate way. Moses demonstrated this concept when he said, “You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgment is God’s.” (Deuteronomy 1:17). Justice has to do with equity in judgment without regard for a person’s status. It is an equitable application of God’s moral law to all people without partiality. (Numbers 15:16). When we do not operate according to biblical standards, we have abandoned God’s moral law, so every man does what is right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25).

Jesus came to proclaim liberty and freedom to announce God’s justice being satisfied through what he called, “the favorable year of the Lord”, Old Testament Year of Jubilee. It was when God set society back in order. According to Leviticus 25:8-9, Israel could not have Jubilee until the people first observed the Day of Atonement. They could not have true justice on the human level until they got right with God on the vertical level. Social justice will not be complete until
the people in a society, even the Church, get right with God. It is bringing the presence, precepts, and power of God to bear on society, pulling society back in an upright position.

**HISTORICAL GROUNDING**

Responding to the wish of Henry Opukahaia, but burdened with the false ideology of White Supremacy, missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) were sent to Hawaii arriving in 1820 (201 years ago).

Rev. Rufus Anderson attempted to correct the evils of White Supremacy and advocated for a Hawaiian-led and Hawaiian-run church during his visit to the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1863.

In 1893, descendants of missionaries led the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

President Paul Sherry traveled to Hawaii and on January 17, 1993, the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom government, apologized to the Hawaiian people at Kaumakapili Church. This apology was cited in Public Law 103-150 signed by President William Clinton on November 23, 1993.

Given the present COVID-19 pandemic and the institutional racism seen recently, the “God is Still Speaking” church, the United Church of Christ, is challenged to actualize its struggle to fulfill the principle of justice and reconciliation within the United Church of Christ. 128 years of war crimes continues to target and violate Christian Hawaiian citizens in Hawaiian Kingdom territory and abroad which amount to a colossal scale of humanitarian and human rights violations daily.

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS**, Henry Opukahaia is known as the missionary from the Hawaiian Kingdom that encouraged American missionaries to arrive in Hawaii, and

**WHEREAS**, the first Christian nation in the pacific, the Hawaiian Kingdom constitution in 1840 began with a quote from the bible “God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on the face of the earth in unity and blessedness.”, and

**WHEREAS**, on December 19, 1842, United States President John Tyler agreed to recognize the independence of the Hawaiian Kingdom; and

**WHEREAS**, the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom through treaties with friendly nations around the world, successfully modernized Hawaiian self-governance at the time to prosper in peace, trade and friendship through treaties with friendly nations around the world for fifty years; and

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Rufus Anderson, the author of the three-self method (self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating) and the long-term secretary of the ABCFM (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission) arrived in Hawaii in 1863 to tell the missionaries to create
self-reliant, self-governing churches and "to devolve upon it (the Hawaiian churches) the responsibilities of self-government in ecclesiastical matters."viii, and

WHEREAS, Rev. Anderson’s advice was not followed and the government of the Hawaiian Kingdom was overthrown on January 17, 1893ix, and

WHEREAS, on December 18, 1893, President Grover Cleveland’s executive agreement to restore the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom was signed by Liliuokalani and received by U.S. ambassador Albert Willisx, and

WHEREAS, in 1991, the Eighteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ directed President Paul Sherry to issue an apology on the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy for the complicity of the church in the overthrowxi, xii, and

WHEREAS, in 1993 President Clinton, with senators and representatives from Hawaii, signed Public law 103-150 apologizing for the United States role in the illegal occupationxiii, and

WHEREAS the National Lawyers Guild recommended to the Governor of the State of Hawaii “to begin to comply with international humanitarian law in its prolonged and illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Islands.”xiv

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ has historically stressed the importance of Justice as a key faith component for the Church, and

WHEREAS, the correction of injustices depends upon correct history based upon factual matters, and history is often based upon who writes the history and factual information available, and

WHEREAS, the information included in this resolution will be available at
https://ahecchurch.weebly.com/ about the founding of the Hawaiian Kingdom to correct false history about the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom, and

WHEREAS, various General Synods of the United Church of Christ have taken proactive stands on Justice; and

WHEREAS justice depends upon action, not just stating what is true and just and right (pono in Hawaiian),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ strongly urges the Mayors for the counties of the State of Hawaii “to begin to comply with international humanitarian law in its prolonged and illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Islands.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ strongly urges the Governor for the State of Hawaii “to begin to comply with international humanitarian law in its prolonged and illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Islands.”
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ strongly urges the U.S. Congress “to begin to comply with international humanitarian law in its prolonged and illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Islands.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ strongly urges the U.S. President “to begin to comply with international humanitarian law in its prolonged and illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Islands.”

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ strongly urges all United Nation member States and non-member States to cooperate to ensure the United States complies with international humanitarian law and bring an end to the unlawful occupation of the Hawaiian Islands.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

i Papa Makua Wendell Davis 5th generation lineal descendant of Henry Opukahaia


iv https://www.hawaii-nation.org/constitution-1840.html

v http://hooilina.org/cgi-bin/journal?e=d-0journal--00-0-0-004-Document---0-1--1en-50---20-frameset-search-issue--001-0110escapewin&a=p&p=frameset&d=HASH0166acfd8ec6df2fa38fd161.5.2.3


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DECLARATION FOR A JUST PEACE BETWEEN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

A Resolution of Witness

Submitted by

Shalom United Church of Christ, New Haven, Connecticut

With the concurrence of:

First Church, United Church of Christ, Guilford, Connecticut
First Congregational Church, UCC, Old Lyme, Connecticut
Meriden Congregational Church, UCC, Meriden, New Hampshire
Union Congregational Church, UCC, Angels Camp, California
Pilgrim United Church of Christ, Carlsbad, California

SUMMARY

The resolution calls on the General Synod to adopt a Declaration on the Requirements for a Just Peace Between Palestine and Israel articulating the principles that must be in place and honored in any future just and peaceful relationship between Israel and Palestine. The Declaration affirms that justice, understood both as adherence to the message of the Hebrew prophets and the life and teachings of Jesus, as well as to applicable international laws, is the fundamental and requisite principle which must guide a peaceful future for Israel and Palestine. It rejects a future imposed by military power, illegal occupation and dispossession, or unilateral annexation of land and the use of an imperialistic theology as justification. The Declaration pronounces Israel’s continued oppression of the Palestinian people a sin, incompatible with the Gospel. It further calls upon Local Churches, Conferences, and Associations to adopt this Declaration as their plumbline to guide their support for the aspirations of our partners in the region and their advocacy with the United States’ government for policies consistent with these principles.

The resolution draws on over fifty years of General Synod actions, statements by UCC officers, and actions by Global Ministries and its historic component bodies. It is informed by the witness of ecumenical partners, including the National Council of Churches, USA, and the World Council of Churches, and it responds to the witness of our Palestinian Christian partners, and in

The Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ reminds us that “God calls the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship. . . and resist the powers of evil.” The Declaration calls on the United Church of Christ to engage in a costly act of solidarity and accompaniment with the Palestinian people and to resist the oppressive dispossession, occupation, and economic and military oppression of Palestine.

**BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL, THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING**

In Kairos Palestine: A Word of Faith, Hope, and Love From the Heart of Palestinian Suffering (2009), Palestinian Christians assert that our land has a universal mission. In this universality, the meaning of the promises, of the land, of the election, of the people of God open up to include all of humanity, starting from all the peoples of this land. In light of the teachings of the Holy Bible, the promise of the land has never been a political programme, but rather the prelude to complete universal salvation. It was the initiation of the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God on earth” (Kairos Palestine par. 2.3).

The promise of God regarding land and blessing in Genesis was ultimately not about possession of land, but about the role of the people of Israel as a blessing that “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12.3).

United Church of Christ biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann writes that “the Torah and the world it evokes are beyond a possessed land, and this notion links to ‘a true community of all’ that transcends any tribalism” (Chosen? Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” 2015, p. 37). He goes on to quote Jewish philosopher Martin Buber: “This entire history of the road from Ur of the Chaldees to Sinai is a consequence of choices and partings, events of history – tribal history and national history. But above them stands revelation [which] gives them their meaning, points out to them their goal. For the end of all these partings is a true community of all men.”

In 1987 the General Synod affirmed its recognition that God's covenant with the Jewish people has not been rescinded or abrogated by God, but remains in full force, inasmuch as “the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable” (Rom. 11:29) – a clear rejection of Christian supersessionist theology. Along with this, however, the General Synod in 2003 rejected the theological claims of Christian Zionism which seek to privilege Jews in the modern State of Israel over others who share the land, and instead, while recognizing “the diversity of biblical perspectives on the question of a Jewish homeland,” also “affirms that all such perspectives should be grounded in the message of justice and peace taught by Jesus and the biblical prophets.” That message is summarized in the passage from Isaiah that Jesus quotes in Nazareth to inaugurate his ministry: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Isaiah 61.1-2; Luke 4.18-19).
Isaiah reminds us that the mere accumulation of property at the expense of justice and righteousness offers only a barren future: “Ah, you who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is room for no one but you and you are left to live alone in the midst of the land” (Isaiah 5.8).

The United Church of Christ, through its mission agencies, has maintained a close relationship with the Palestinian Christian community, as well as the wider Arab population of Palestine. For decades it has supported churches and church-related agencies, as well as human rights, humanitarian, and social justice organizations in Palestine and Israel to the end that God’s blessings might be shared by all in the land and that the violence and oppression that have afflicted the region for over seventy years may end.

Consistent with these understandings, the General Synod has repeatedly called for the implementation of a vision of the future for Israel and Palestine based on justice and security for all and the principle of self-determination. In 1973 the General Synod affirmed that “peace and security can be attained only through a just and stable political settlement that takes into account the legitimate aspirations of all the peoples in the area and, particularly, the right to existence of the State of Israel and the rights of the Palestinian Arabs.” In 1997 the General Synod called for a negotiated agreement on the status of Jerusalem “that respects the human and political rights of both Palestinians and Israelis, as well as the rights of the three religious communities.”

In 2005 the General Synod called upon United Church of Christ settings and members “to use economic leverage, including, but not limited to: advocating the reallocation of US foreign aid so that the militarization of the Middle East is constrained; making positive contributions to groups and partners committed to the non-violent resolution of the conflict; challenging the practices of corporations that gain from the continuation of the conflict; and divesting from those companies that refuse to change their practices of gain from the perpetuation of violence, including the Occupation.” Further, the same Synod in a resolution on Israel’s construction of the separation barrier, called upon the Israeli government “to cease the project to construct the barrier, tear down the segments that have already been constructed, and make reparations to those who have lost homes, fields, property, and/or lives and health due to the barrier and its effects.”

In 2015 the General Synod called on United Church of Christ settings “to divest any direct or substantive indirect holdings in companies profiting from or complicit in human rights violations arising from the occupation of the Palestinian Territories by the state of Israel” and to “boycott goods identified as produced in or using the facilities of illegal settlements located in the occupied Palestinian territories.” In 2017 the General Synod called on Israel to honor the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, calling attention to the practice of military detention for Palestinian children, denial of access to legal assistance, and the use of physical and emotional abuse. Most recently, in 2019 the General Synod called for advocacy for Palestinian refugees specifically as stipulated in UN General Assembly Resolution 194 (1948), and for continued US funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

TEXT OF THE MOTION
WHEREAS for over seventy years Palestinian people have faced dispossession of their land, displacement from their homes, a harsh military occupation, severe restrictions on travel, the military detention of their children, home demolitions – over 120,000 to date and the constant threat of more – and vast inequities in access to natural, economic, and medical resources when compared to that enjoyed by Israeli citizens living in illegal West Bank settlements, and also on a daily basis face severe restrictions on access to their olive groves, farms, and holy sites; and

WHEREAS there are more than 5.6 million Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Administration representing a global displacement of Palestinian people dating back to 1948 whose future status remains unresolved; and

WHEREAS the Israeli government has maintained an illegal military occupation of Palestinian territories since 1967 that includes the establishment of illegal Jewish-only settlements throughout the West Bank and more recently has enacted formal discrimination against its Arab citizens through the passage of the Nation State Law in 2018; and

WHEREAS provocative actions under the Trump administration, including moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, the suspension of humanitarian aid to the United Nations Relief and Works Administration, and support for Israel’s proposed illegal annexation of land in the occupied West Bank have further injured the Palestinian community and imposed serious road blocks to peace; and

WHEREAS the Trump Administration’s Department of Education has issued a rule labeling any criticism of the State of Israel as an antisemitic act in order to suppress advocacy for Palestinian rights on university campuses, and has joined many state governments in further suppressing freedom of speech in support of Palestinian civil society’s call for boycotts, divestment, and sanctions; and

WHEREAS actions by Israel, with tacit and overt support from the United States government, have established conditions comparable to those in force under Jim Crow in the United States south between Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement, with segregation laws that enshrined systematic domination and oppression by whites over blacks. Israel’s acts of domination and oppression include, but are not limited to adoption of the Nation State Law in 2018, the building of the separation barrier, implementation of a restrictive pass system for Palestinians, the creation of Israeli-only highways through the West Bank, and imposed military detention of Palestinian children accused of crimes; and

WHEREAS the General Synod of the United Church of Christ and its officers have for over fifty years advocated for a negotiated process leading to a just peace between Israel and Palestine marked by adherence to international law and international standards of human rights and honoring the principle of self-determination and the rights of Palestinian refugees; and

WHEREAS, reminiscent of historical examples such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and Southern Africa, Israel exhibits a current-day form of settler colonialism, actively engaged in the removal and erasure of the indigenous Palestinian population, through a matrix of control that includes: the imposition of a harsh military occupation; the de facto annexation of
Palestinian lands and threats of further annexation; the expansion of illegal Jewish only
settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank; the contraction of Palestinian-controlled land;
and the restriction of travel for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

WHEREAS Cry for Hope: A Call for Decisive Action issued by Palestinian Christian leaders
and theologians in July, 2020⁸, states that “the very being of the church, the integrity of the
Christian faith, and the credibility of the Gospel is at stake. We declare that support for the
oppression of the Palestinian people, whether passive or active, through silence, word or deed, is
a sin. We assert that Christian support for Zionism as a theology and an ideology that legitimize
the right of one people to deny the human rights of another is incompatible with the Christian
faith and a grave misuse of the Bible”;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church
of Christ adopts the following Declaration:

1. We affirm that the continued oppression of the Palestinian people remains, after more
than five decades of oppression of the Palestinian people, a matter of theological urgency
and represents a sin in violation of the message of the biblical prophets and the Gospel,
and that all efforts to defend or legitimate the oppression of the Palestinian people,
whether passive or active, through silence, word, or deed by the Christian community,
represent a fundamental denial of the Gospel.

Therefore, we reject the notion that Israel’s occupation of Palestine is a purely political
problem outside the concern of the church or that the oppression of the Palestinian people
is an inevitable consequence of global or regional geopolitical interests.

2. We affirm that the biblical narrative beginning with creation and extending through the
calling of the Israelites, the corrective admonitions of the prophets, the incarnation and
ministry of Jesus and the witness of the apostles to the “ends of the earth” . . . speaks of
God’s blessing extending to “all the families of the earth.” (Genesis 12.3)

Therefore, we reject any theology or ideology including Christian Zionism,
Supercessionism, antisemitism or anti-Islam bias that would privilege or exclude any one
nation, race, culture, or religion within God’s universal economy of grace.

3. We affirm that all people living in Palestine and Israel are created in the image of God
and that this bestows ultimate dignity and sacredness to all;

Therefore, we reject any laws and legal procedures which are used by one race or religion
to enshrine one people in a privileged legal position at the expense of another, including
Israel’s apartheid system of laws and legal procedures.

4. We affirm that all peoples have the right to self-determination and to their aspirations for
sovereignty and statehood in the shaping of their corporate religious, cultural, and
political life, free from manipulation or pressure from outside powers, and that a just
resolution of conflicting claims is only achieved through peaceful negotiation based on
international law and UN resolutions, the equal protection of civil rights, and the fair and just sharing of land and resources.

Therefore, we reject the use of Scripture to claim a divine right to the land as the rationale for Israel’s illegal seizure and annexation of Palestinian land as well as the imposition of so-called peace agreements by Israel or the United States through the exercise of political and military domination that leaves Palestinians without equal rights, full citizenship, and the opportunity to thrive religiously, culturally, politically, and economically.

5. We affirm the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes if they so choose or to be compensated for their loss of property, consistent with UN General Assembly resolution 194 (1948).

Therefore, we reject the denial of this right, just as we reject efforts to manipulate internationally-agreed upon definitions of refugees to attempt to erase this right which extends across generations.

6. We affirm the First Amendment constitutional right to freedom of speech and assembly to protest the actions of the State of Israel and to uphold the rights of Palestinians, including the use of economic measures to support justice as a First Amendment right and joining the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement by individuals, institutions, corporations, and religious bodies that advocate peace with justice or participate in any aspect of the use of economic measures to support justice.

Therefore, we reject the idea that any criticism of policies of the State of Israel is inherently antisemitic, and we oppose the efforts of U.S. federal and state governments to limit free speech on university campuses and to restrict or ban support of the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that national setting of the United Church of Christ send the text of this Declaration to Local Churches, Associations and Conferences; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that all settings of the United Church of Christ be encouraged to receive this Declaration as a prophetic call for renewed and continued advocacy for a just peace in Palestine and Israel and use it as a plumbline for taking action, including:

a. Committing to hearing the voices of Palestinians regarding their situation, including the voices of Palestinian Christians through the study of Palestine Liberation Theology, attention to statements and appeals such as Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth (2009) and a Cry for Hope (2020), participation in travel seminars that expose visitors to the Palestinian community, and use of resources from Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

b. Implementing the calls of prior General Synod resolutions, including the 2015 Resolution, “A Call for the United Church of Christ to Take Actions Toward a Just Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” and the 2017 Resolution, “A Call for the United
Church of Christ to Advocate for the Rights of Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation.”

c. Examining critically our use and interpretations of Scripture as well as liturgies and hymns that equate ancient Biblical Israel with the modern state in ways that promote settler colonialism and the dispossession of Palestinian land, rights, and cultural expressions.

d. Offering support and encouragement to college students and faculty members as well the human rights groups (including Students for Justice in Palestine, Jewish Voice for Peace, American Muslims for Palestine, and many other allied groups), whose freedom to speak, witness and advocate on university campuses is threatened in any way by state or local governments, or by college administrators.

e. Advocating for the cessation of U.S. aid to Israel until such time that Palestinian human rights, civil rights, and self-determination are fully realized and protected in compliance with international law, US laws on foreign military assistance, and the principles of human rights.

f. Supporting the full restoration of US funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency which carries out critical services by and for Palestinian refugees, and encouraging continued support for UCC partners which serve Palestinian refugees.

g. Demanding that the plight of Palestinian refugees be addressed by Israel and the international community based on United Nations Resolution 194 guaranteeing that “refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.”

FUNDING

The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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1 Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions: [https://icahd.org/](https://icahd.org/)
2 United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: [https://www.unrwa.org/](https://www.unrwa.org/)
4 [https://www.globalministries.org/ecumenical_statement_on_current_u_s_policy_and_israel_palestine](https://www.globalministries.org/ecumenical_statement_on_current_u_s_policy_and_israel_palestine)
[https://www.globalministries.org/ucc_disciples_leaders_issue_joint_statement_in_response_to_the_peace_and_prosperity_proposal](https://www.globalministries.org/ucc_disciples_leaders_issue_joint_statement_in_response_to_the_peace_and_prosperity_proposal)
[https://www.globalministries.org/not_peace_but_apartheid_b_tselem_s_brief_response_to_the_trump_plan](https://www.globalministries.org/not_peace_but_apartheid_b_tselem_s_brief_response_to_the_trump_plan)
[https://www.globalministries.org/ucc_disciples_leaders_issue_statement_on_israeli_settlements](https://www.globalministries.org/ucc_disciples_leaders_issue_statement_on_israeli_settlements)
6 https://www.globalministries.org/mee_resolutions
8 Kairos Palestine and Global Kairos for Justice: https://www.cryforhope.org/
The following resolution has been received by the Office of the General Minister and President prior to the deadline established by the Standing Rules of the Thirty-third General Synod.

Receipt and release of this resolution for pre-Synod consideration by delegates and other interested parties should not be considered an indication it will come before the General Synod. This resolution is now being researched by the Board of Director’s Subcommittee on Disposition and its staff, before consideration by the full Board of Directors in March 2021. Any resolution must meet all of the requirements of the General Synod Standing Rules (see Standing Rule 11). The Board of Directors will decide in March whether this resolution meets those requirements and make a determination as to its disposition.

A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE AND RESPOND TO RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

A Resolution of Witness

Submitted by The Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM), UCC, and the Council on Racial and Ethnic Ministries (COREM), UCC

SUMMARY

This Resolution calls the United Church of Christ to declare and respond to racism as a public health crisis.

BIBLICAL & THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

As followers of Christ, we are called to be co-builders of the City of God, who dismantle all preventable suffering and oppression, are present to the pain that remains, and release the life-force of the resurrection in our collective story and action.

As such, God calls us to repair our world to one of health equity, where everyone has the opportunity—free from barriers—for a life of health and wellbeing. As expressed in Isaiah:

> For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth!…no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it or the cry of distress. No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or old people who do not live out their days…at last they will live in the houses they build, and eat the fruit of the vineyard they plant.”

Health equity is holy, in how it is an expression of liberation and a path towards shared abundant life together. As a movement towards wholeness, achieving health equity is the work of the Spirit and reflective of the healing ministry of Christ.

Moreover, its response does not isolate an understanding of care to the compassion of the Good Samaritan, but rather addresses why the road to Jericho was so dangerous to begin with. Most poignantly, the public health concept of health equity names racism as a longstanding and present danger on that road, which has led to avoidable health disparities for People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color. Caused by racist policies and power,
People of Color experience poorer health outcomes and lower life expectancy at disproportionate rates.

And while God calls each individual person to work for an equitable society, scripture also articulates the charge to change systems and those who influence and condone them:

Woe to you who make unjust policies and draft oppressive legislation, who deprive the powerless of justice and rob poor people—my people—their rights, who prey upon the widowed and rob orphans. 

Thus, we are called not only to tend to the travelers in front of us who are “beaten, stripped naked, and left half-dead,” but to transform the road to Jericho itself.

Such transformational work is shared, communal, and inherently interdependent. It also requires answers that reflect the reality of diverse needs—and not standards of sameness that do not acknowledge how different, and additional, resources are necessary to achieve equity. This vision lies at the heart of our tradition, as the Book of Acts illustrates:

The community of believers was one mind and one heart. None of them claimed anything as their own; rather, everything was held in common…nor was anyone needy among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them and give money to the apostles. It was then distributed to any members who might be in need.

The time is far past due for this vision to remain only a glimmer of what is possible. Further, this delay is not merely an intellectual or theological exercise for People of Color or others impacted by health disparities. It speaks to lived reality and to the cry of generations wailing, “our bones are dry, our hope is gone, and we are doomed.”

While systemic racism seeks to maintain the mountaintop for a select few and a valley of dry bones for the global majority, God says to us, “Prophesy to the wind; prophesy mere mortal, and say to it…breathe on these slain, that they may live.” Such prophecy has been spoken by communities who—in spite of persistent structural failings—provide safety, security, and support for themselves and in collaboration with others. Know that we are all called to extend this great exhale of the Spirit, to restore hope and life, and to learn from the rescue breathers among us.

Finally, as Christians we follow a messiah who preached a message of interconnectedness and died by state-sanctioned violence for doing so. However, Christ shows us that violence does not have the final say, and that the way forward is through healing that is justice—through restoring right relationships with humanity and all creation. So, let us recommit ourselves to the call of the beloved community, where barriers to wellbeing are broken down and systems are reimagined to make it so.

**HISTORICAL GROUNDING**

Since its inception, the United Church of Christ has been committed to social justice and has dedicated efforts towards racial justice and health justice, specifically. It has advocated for health
care as a human right that is inclusive, accessible, and affordable for everyone and has called for a commitment to be an antiracist church by examining both historic and contemporary forms of racism. This is evidenced by numerous ministries of the UCC on the national, congregational, and affiliated organizational levels, and by multiple General Synod resolutions such as, Calling the United Church of Christ to be an Anti-racist Church, An Urgent Call for Advocacy in Support of Health Care for All, Dismantling the New Jim Crow, A Call for Study on Reparations for Slavery, Reclaiming the Church’s Ministry of Health and Healing, and Affirming Government’s Role to Protect the Common Good among many others.

This resolution proposal is consistent with the professed and lived ministry of the UCC and seeks to be another expression of God’s still speaking voice through proclamation and tools for change, such as education, training, and advocacy. As articulated by the COREM’s Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Task Force, “We are tired of a health system that does not see health care as a basic right and a priority for all people. We are tired of a justice system that seems to condone police brutality with no consequences for their actions. To this end, we call upon our churches and conferences to new and increased levels of attention, commitment and action by intentionally resolving to work on the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities as resolved and pronounced in General Synod 27.” Addressing this injustice is imperative and its immediacy cannot be overstated.

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS “racism is a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities,” in the words of Ibram X. Kendi.

WHEREAS without exception and across generations, racial inequities persist in every system of society—as evidenced through health care access, education, criminal justice, employment, housing, access to food and clean water, services to youth, older adults, and persons with disabilities, organizational leadership, governmental office, voting, and immigration, among many others—and thus a specific anti-racist lens is required for health equity and broader systemic change.

WHEREAS inequities based on race also intersect with other dimensions of identity—such as income, sex, gender, sexuality, citizenship and incarceration status, geographic location and housing status, ability, education, language proficiency, etc.—and thus racial justice is a necessary method from which to respond to other intersecting oppressions impacting health and equity overall.

WHEREAS public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities and environments in which they live, learn, work and play.

WHEREAS the word crisis, comes from the ancient Greek word that means “turning point,” and comes from the verb meaning “to decide”—thus connoting a call to change and action.
WHEREAS framing racism as an issue of public health rallies and compels faith communities, organizations, and the government to address the crisis through systemic change, in the same way other threats to public health have been addressed, such as through policies, practices, enforcement, education, and support services.21

WHEREAS for over thirty-five years, research has shown how racism undermines the physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational health and wellbeing of People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color, as evidenced by The Report of the Secretary’s Task Force on Black and Minority Health (Heckler Report).22

WHEREAS Healthy People 2020, the federal government’s prevention agenda for building a healthier nation continues to name the achievement of health equity, the elimination of disparities, and the improvement the health of all groups as the nation’s overarching goal.23

WHEREAS social determinants of health—the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age—have a profound impact on the health of People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color;24 as the effects of trauma,25 poverty,26 and environmental devastation27 due to structural racism cannot be overstated in this regard; as the majority of changeable contributors to healthy outcomes are found in these social determinants; as these inequities are avoidable and able to be changed through policy and the redistribution of money, power, and resources;28 and as this is evident nationally and globally.

WHEREAS research shows that racial discrimination and the impact of implicit bias continues to persist in medicine and remains a fundamental cause of health disparities, which can also be remedied through changes in policy and education.29

WHEREAS health disparities for People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color remain at unacceptable rates and breadth—as evidenced by lower life expectancy,30 higher infant and maternal mortality,31 poorer treatment for pain,32 cancer,33 cardiovascular conditions,34 mental health35 and end-of-life care,36 and inadequate access to and quality of health care,37 among many others.

WHEREAS the joint forces of racism and ableism have constructed an inaccessible society and an understanding of disability as an inherently undesirable, devalued, and diminished life experience38, which has resulted in abuse, neglect, incarceration, institutionalization, and social exclusion across generations of disabled People of Color, in particular.39

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the devastating reality of these racial health disparities and the social and political conditions that created them;40 as structural racism has been proven to be a barrier to COVID-19 treatment and prevention;41 as Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities have a COVID-19 mortality rate of more than 2.7 times the rate of People of European Decent;42 as the Navajo Nation’s infection rate has been the highest in the country;43 as disparities in economic stability and health care access have been linked to infection rates and death;44 as Communities of Color are more likely to live in multigenerational homes;45 as workers of African Descent are more likely to be in jobs deemed essential;46 and as one in five state and federal prisoners had COVID-19.47
WHEREAS police violence, state-sanctioned terror, and the systems that uphold and condone them are an integral part of this public health crisis; as People of African Descent are three times more likely to be killed by police (and are nearly one and a half times more likely to be unarmed in those killings) than those of European Descent;\textsuperscript{48} as research shows that the presence of high use of force by police in Communities of Color is associated with an increased risk in poorer health, high blood pressure, and diabetes, among other health concerns;\textsuperscript{49} as 98.3 percent of killings by police from 2013-2020 have not resulted in officers being charged with a crime;\textsuperscript{50} as poor data collection by law enforcement has contributed to the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women;\textsuperscript{51} and as People of African Descent are overrepresented on death row and are more likely to die by state execution.\textsuperscript{52}

WHEREAS mass incarceration and the inherently racist war on people who use drugs have targeted and ravaged Communities of Color\textsuperscript{53} through every measure and expression of health;\textsuperscript{54} as 60 percent of the 2.2 million Americans incarcerated are of African Descent or Latinx;\textsuperscript{55} as People of African Descent are nearly six times more likely to be incarcerated for drug-related offenses than their counterparts of European Descent, despite equal substance usage rates; as 72,000 people died from drug overdoses in 2019;\textsuperscript{56} as the opioid overdose crisis is fueled by socioeconomic inequities, trauma, and hopelessness, in addition to harmful prescribing practices;\textsuperscript{57} and as numerous governmental laws and organizational policies refuse to adopt life-saving harm reduction strategies.

WHEREAS immigration status directly influences health outcomes;\textsuperscript{58} as migrant detention centers have a long history of medical neglect and abuse,\textsuperscript{59} including preventable deaths of children;\textsuperscript{60} and as family separation has long-term damaging psychological and health consequences for children, families, and communities.\textsuperscript{61}

WHEREAS a tool of white supremacy and capitalism is to inflame and sustain racial tension and hatred in order to prevent People of European Descent, particularly those who are low-income, and People of Color from uniting as a collective force to dismantle these oppressive systems, and is also wielded in such a way, where upholding racist beliefs becomes more important than—and at the expense of—the health of European Americans that would also be improved, if not saved, by anti-racist policies.\textsuperscript{62}

WHEREAS the answers, strategies, and practices that have come from many People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color use public health perspectives to guide their life-saving work.

WHEREAS voting and protecting voting rights are essential for advancing health equity; as there exists a correlation between voting behaviors and poor health; and as voting establishes the policy makers who will make decisions on a systemic level.\textsuperscript{63}

WHEREAS there is reason to have hope; where although the magnitude and overwhelming reality of racism can evoke a sense of powerlessness, addressing social determinants of health is a practical way to move forward together on the path to justice. The church, in all of its expressions, can be a vessel for that hope to come alive. The church can be a place of trust,
connection, and collaboration with the wisdom already present in communities working for transformation; as Christ modeled that the work of the Good News is shared and can start today; and as each member of the Body has their own unique role to play, gift to give, and worth to claim.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ declares racism a public health crisis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the national setting of the United Church of Christ to enable and encourage local churches, conferences, and organizations to develop methods to:

a. Raise the church's consciousness of racism as a public health crisis from theological, bioethical, and public health perspectives.

b. Monitor and advocate for public policies that work towards health equity by addressing social determinants of health and divest in those that cause harm, violence, and death.

c. Discover ways in which current ministries and mission connect with and can address racism as a public health crisis and explore new ways of incorporating this lens into the life of the church.

d. Examine, in radical honesty, past and current organizational policies and practices in how they contribute or create barriers to health equity and racial justice.

e. Identify current and potential relationships with members of CHHSM, COREM, other health and human service organizations, advocacy groups, faith and community-based organizations, and academic institutions to collaborate on responding to racism as a public health crisis.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the U. S. Congress and state legislatures to pass legislation that would address social determinants of health, such as The Anti-Racism in Public Health Act, which would create a “Center on Anti-Racism in Health” at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and to establish a “Law Enforcement Violence Prevention Program” at the CDC.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

1 Isaiah 65:17-21
2 Martin Luther King Jr., "Beyond Vietnam -- A Time to Break Silence" (sermon, Riverside Church, New York City, April 4, 1967).
3 Matthew 25:31-46
   See also James 5:1-4: “Now an answer for the rich: weep and howl for the miseries that are coming to you...Laborers mowed your fields, and you cheated them! Listen to the wages that you kept back: they call out against you; realize that the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of our God Most High.”
6 Acts 4:32-34.
7 Ezekiel 37:11.
8 Ezekiel 37:9.
10 General Synod 27, 2009.
11 General Synod 30, 2015.
14 Ibid.
18 We heed the wisdom of the Combahee River Collective, which teaches, “If Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all the systems of oppression,” and name the inclusion of trans and gender-diverse folx into our understanding of this principle.
30 Timothy Cunningham et al., "Vital Signs: Racial Disparities in Age-Specific Mortality Among ..," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, last modified April 8, 2019, https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6617e1.htm.


46 "Black Workers Face Two of the Most Lethal Preexisting Conditions for Coronavirus—racism and Economic Inequality."


50 "National Police Violence Map."


Racism as a public health crisis

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“Who will speak for the Trees?”¹ A Resolution on the Rights of Nature

A Resolution of Witness

Submitted by the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ

“We abuse land because we see it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.” ²

Aldo Leopold

SUMMARY

The manifestations of climate change have radically escalated with increased severity, and it is more than likely we have ten years to dramatically change our relationship to nature.³ This resolution on the Rights of Nature calls for a change of human relationship to nature from apartheid with nature, views nature as “object” and a “commodity” for our benefit, profit, and exploitation to recognition that we are citizens of the Earth, interconnected to the web of life. Indigenous peoples as well movements in the Southern Hemisphere have pioneered the rights of nature, connecting human and environmental rights. More recently, the environmental rights have appeared as justice movements internationally to defend Nature.⁴ It has evolved to defend and restore damaged bio-regions and preserve biodiversity and prevent increasing rapid species extinction. In the US, the Rights of Nature has countered the legal granting of corporation the rights of a person.

The UCC has long history in the defense of human and environmental rights since a group of Black women placed their bodies to block trucks with toxic PCBs being dumped in their locale. This led to UCC development of environmental racism and two historical studies.⁵ The UCC has opportunity to address our need as a church and humanity’s need to change our relationship of relating to Nature as an “it” to a “thou.”

BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORICAL GROUNDING

Our biblical traditions share the notion of the land as divine gift. Leviticus 25:23 and Psalm 24:1 make clear that God owns the land. The phrase “the land of God” (‘erets Yhwh) in the Hebrew scriptures assumes God’s ownership. There was tension between the perspective that “the Earth is the Lord’s” (Ps. 24:1) and the appropriation of the land or the Earth as “theirs.”
Genesis 1:2 “the earth was formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a
wind (ruach) swept over the face of the waters.” God’s Spirit is involved in, abides, and sustains
creation. As humans wound the Earth through ecocide, we are wounding the Spirit.

Genesis 2:2-3 “On the seventh day, God finished the work that God completed, and God rested
on the seventh day from all work God had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it,
because of it, God rested from all the work that God had done.” God delights in creation. When
we see Nature from the eyes of God, we see Nature as beloved.

In the Hebrew scriptures, there is a developed creation-centered spirituality, an on-going
relationship with God as Creator and Spirit who abide in the natural world, sustain the world, and
developed in actions defending divine distributive justice and recognition when sharing (in the
wilderness), there was abundance. The stories of Jesus feeding of the multitude embodies the
notion of abundance in creation when we share resources.

Matthew 5:5 “Blessed are the meek (praus), for they will inherit the earth.” The Earth-loving
Jesus speaks of the meek. The meek understand the Earth as as a divine gift to be used with
reverence and gratitude. Embedded in this eco-beatitude is the inverse: Non-meek (apraus) is
construed as the violent, who will not inherit the Earth.

Matthew 22:37, 39 The Earth-loving Jesus annoyingly reminds God inclusive insistence on
loving our neighbor. That inclusiveness included beyond family and tribe to include outsiders,
Samaritans and Gentiles, enemies, and our contemporary construal of Nature/Earth as
commodity to be recklessly exploited and abused by humanity. Love Nature is consistent with
the inclusiveness of Jesus’s creation-centered spirituality that would include wildlife and habitats
(Nature) as we love ourselves.

How This Resolution Differs

Though this resolution depends upon the past history of UCC environmental resolutions and
makes explicit what these resolutions intend is human change with Nature. The 17 resolution
“The Earth is the Lord’s, Not Ours to Wreck: Imperative for New Moral Era” (2017) recognizes
the Earth belongs to Earth, that it is a divine gift to us. We are called to co-live with the Earth
with respect and nature. This resolution “Who will Speak for the Trees?” invites us to makes a
spiritual/human to change our human relationship to Nature, not as an “it” but as a “thou,” alive
with the presence of God’s Spirit and part of God’s beloved community. We are all members of
the community of the Earth; we are co-participants in Nature and are called to respond
compassionately to the cries of Nature.

The resolution recognizes an important reality for living on Earth claimed by the deceased the
eco-theologian Thomas Berry, “The universe is not a collection of objects, but a communion of
subjects.” Nature needs to be recovered as primordial “thou.” This becomes a forceful and
antidote to making Nature an object to be used without respect and reverence.

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS all rights, human and the more than human lives, depend on the flourishing and
vital natural cycles of life, and healthy Earth living systems. We are all interconnected to all
living beings, and when we diminish or fail to recognize the rights of the natural world, we
diminish our own life. Humanity and nature are interconnected, The Rights of Nature recognizes a reciprocal and responsible human relationship with Nature.  

**WHEREAS** The UCC has a long history of creation-care, starting with the recognition of environmental racism in the 1980s, its studies on toxic pollution (1987, 2007, 2020), responsibly and the campaign of the Three Great Loves: Neighbor, Children, and Creation (2017), programs on Green and Creation Justice Churches, and the formation of Environmental Justice Teams. The United Church of Christ Synod has passed resolutions that directly express concerns for Earthcare.  

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ declares that

- humans need a dramatic shift from the point of view that the Earth and all her resources are available to our sole benefit.
- Nature is not there for enslavement, and it is wrong for people of faith to view nature as property that we own and may abuse.
- We proclaim publicly, “The Earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it (PS. 24:1).”
- The Earth is an original gift to sustain all life.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls for prophetic action by listening to the cries of the Earth and by adopting this “Rights of Nature” declaration. We boldly proclaim the following principles in the public square:

- Promote compassionate care, foster love, and co-live responsibly with the Earth Community of Life. Safeguard the common goods, space and shared resources of the Earth, for humanity and biokind; uphold the rights of ecological integrity, biodiversity, and healthy bioregions. Advocate intergenerational responsibility for the biotic community of the Earth and gratitude of the natural world as divine gift. The interdependence of humans and Nature is fundamental to sustainable life on Earth. Co-living with Nature involves distributive justice, a fair sharing and responsible participation of natural resources.
- Uphold ecological principle that the Rights of Nature supersedes harmful and destructive property rights, for the balanced cycles of the natural world must be protected as a common good for the present and future generations of human life and biokind. The Rights of Nature counters corporate rights to exploit and violate Nature. Restore the repealed EPA regulations and protections. Promote economies of life rather than unregulated extractive economies that exploit resources. Seek financial reparations and restoration to the habitats when corporations and/or government projects harm and damage habitats.
- Support the Indigenous peoples, the Earth Charter, and nature rights movement to grant legal standing as corporations have legal rights. Require all corporate and/or governmental land and water projects to perform environmental impact studies on minimizing damage to habitats (waterways, lands, and atmosphere) and wildlife. Local communities or environmental organizations have a right to represent the unheard voices cries of Nature.
• Foster respect and gratitude for Nature as divine gift. Combat attitudes of relegating
Nature as mere capital for profit nor trashed as dumping ground for toxic waste.
• Promote the rights to Nature to be free from undue human harm, the right healthy
habitants, the right to species flourishing, a right to a fair share of the bio-region and its
goods, and the right to fulfil their ecological potential without undue human
infringements.
• Prioritize renewable energies over fossil fuels; the economies of life such as the Green
New Deal have over extractive and unbridled economies that pollute and damage the
Earth. Encourage organic farming and regenerative agriculture; support family farming
and local farmer markets; reduce usage of pesticides and insecticides negatively
impacting the soil, aquifers, and other life. Work for food justice and security for all
people.
• Respect all treaties with indigenous nations, that includes their lands and kinship natural
relations. Ally and support indigenous peoples in their de-colonization of Nature, protect
their kinship rights and access to sacred lands.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of
Christ calls on individual churches to respond to the Rights of Nature by taking the following
actions:
  • Participate in the Season of Creation for September Sundays. Include Creation care
during each liturgical season (Earth-seders, Tenebrae, Easter sunrise service outdoors,
and Earth Day. Preach every six weeks often on Earth Justice. Celebrate outdoors or
bring the outdoors into the church.
  • Ritualize environmental grief: Bio-Diversity Day (May 22), Remembrance for Lost
Species (November 22). Start environmental grief support groups.
  • Foster love of God’s creation, organize walks in botanical gardens and wilderness, plant
trees, take nature hikes, and attend UCC summer camps.
  • Study and implement Kairos Document, Call to Action, a 10- year Mobilization Plan on
Climate Change and Inequality.
  • Become a Creation Justice Church and Green Hub of God’s green grace,
  • Subscribe to the UCC Environmental Justice newsletters and environmental newsletters;
share webinars, and read and study on creation care and climate change. These are
spiritual practices to equip us for creation care.
  • Work for the Green New Deal (the transition to renewable energies) Advocate for the
Rights of Nature and take part in climate strikes and non-violent protests.
  • Organize locally, partner and build local community networks with conservationist and
environmental groups. Many folks in these organization have had spiritual experiences
within nature, recognize and find common ground to restore damaged environments.
  • Be creative and imaginative in our defense of the Rights of Nature.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance
with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries
or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.
1 Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*, New York, Random House, 1071. At the same year when Dr. Seuss published *The Lorax* with the haunting moral question, “Who will speak for the Trees?” a young law professor Christopher Stone, who was teaching property law published the article, “Should Trees Have Standing?” He argued that there was no legal barrier to granting rights to nature since rights were granted to ships and corporations. See the original and expanded rationale of the resolution. https://www.nhcucc.org/uploads/documents/conference-ministries/annual-meetings/Resolution%20of%20the%20Rights%20of%20Nature%20(3).pdf

2 Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*.


4 The word “nature” is a secular term used to describe the material world, both animate and inanimate. Nature is a term for what the Abrahamic religions interpreted as “creation” because of creation’s relationship to God. The word nature is less employed in other religious cultures. “Land” is the analogous linguistic category for nature, used in indigenous spiritualities and in the Hebrew scriptures. Nature is the more inclusive term.


10 Season of Creation, https://seasonofcreation.org/

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A RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT (2015-2024)

A Resolution of Witness

Submitted by the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ

SUMMARY

This resolution calls on the United Church of Christ to recognize the United Nations declaration of an International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024). In declaring this decade, the United Nations acknowledges that African descendant people are a group whose rights must be protected and promoted. The United Nations accounts for over 200 million people who self-identify as African descent living in the Americas. The resolution calls on the United Church of Christ to: 1) acknowledge this Decade; 2) adopt its frameworks for addressing the issues affecting African descendant people; and 3) promote the Decade and resulting outcomes for advocating for the rights of African descendant people.

BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND ETHICAL RATIONALE

At the outset of the creation stories, God declared that all that was made was good. Included in the goodness of creation was the creation of persons in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). The Imago Dei is present across many traditions which note that the equality of human kind rests on the theological premise that all people reflect the Divine. The sin of racism and the disenfranchisement of individuals because of their race or skin color is antithetical to the Imago Dei.

The unity of the church continues to be threatened by racism and all forms of discrimination. The global racial divide is a threat to the unity of the church which looks to the accord that Jesus prayed for. “That they may all be one” (John 17:21) is a reminder of the oneness that is exemplified in God’s love for all God’s people. Racism is a challenge to the church and continues to be a dehumanizing force robbing communities of rights, freedom and dignity.

The unity of the church is reflected in the rich diversity that is present in all of God’s people – race, gender, ethnicity, theology, sexuality – all are created in the image of the Divine. It is a core value of the United Church of Christ to work towards equality and to ensure that an inclusive communication of the Gospel is present and accessible for all. The Gospel is a call to
action on behalf of the least of these. Jesus’ ministry was a message to the margins of his day “to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free” (Luke 4:18).

The call to the church is to bring the good news of the Gospel, and to ensure that the oppressed go free. The oppression of racial injustice must be addressed in all areas of society. The church has the opportunity and mandate to be present in addressing the challenges facing people of African descent globally.

**HISTORICAL GROUNDING**

The history of racial injustices in the United States and across the Americas includes the commodification of African lives through the Transatlantic Slave Trade. While records point to the earliest enslaved people being brought into the United States in 1619, the kidnapping and enslavement of African people date back to the early 15th century and the arrival of the Portuguese on the African continent. The ensuing centuries of the Transatlantic Slave Trade brought about the removal of 12-15 million Africans from their continent to, at first, provide essential labor for the system of exploitation and expropriation of economic and other resources in the European colonization of Indigenous peoples and lands in the Americas that built European mercantile empires, and subsequently, to meet the need for uncompensated labor during the era of the Industrial Revolution in European nations and their colonies. This bounty of uncompensated labor supported a plantation economy founded in imperialism and undergirded by the demonization of Africans and African-ness.

This arrival of African people in the Americas was undergirded by stereotypes of African people. These stereotypes were present in naming Africans as inferior to Europeans. This vilification and stereotyping of African peoples were supported by Christianity and Christian doctrine. By utilizing the Bible, theology, and the Church as instruments of oppression, white supremacy and white privilege became normative in the Americas. These instruments of racism are still present among us almost two hundred years after emancipation and over fifty years beyond the Civil Rights movement in the United States.

The United Nations stated: “In proclaiming this Decade, the international community is recognizing that people of African descent represent a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected. Around 200 million people identifying themselves as being of African descent live in the Americas. Many millions more live in other parts of the world, outside of the African continent.” These 200 million people in the Americas identified by the UN are the descendants of Africans who were kidnapped from the African continent and enslaved in the Americas.

The United Church of Christ and its predecessor bodies have been strong advocates for Civil Rights for African descendant people in the United States. The General Synod has spoken on several occasions regarding racism. In 2003, the Twenty-Fourth General Synod adopted the resolution “Calling on the United Church of Christ to Renew Battle Against Racism in all its Guises.” The Twenty-Fourth General Synod also adopted a resolution “Calling the United Church of Christ to be an Anti-Racist Church.” Both of these resolutions informed a commitment to combat racism including racism directed toward people of African descent.
In its call for the church to be an anti-racist church in 2003, the UCC referenced the 2001 United Nations World Conference on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa and its affirmation that “racism has historically through imperialism and colonization created an unequal world order and power balance with present global implications impacting governments, systems, and institutions.” The International Decade comes four years after the International Year for People of African Descendant (2011).

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS the human rights of African descendant people globally and in the United States continue to be challenged by the presence of racism and the legacy of whiteness, and

WHEREAS a myriad of social issues are byproducts of the racial inequities stemming from prejudice, bigotry, White privilege, White fragility, and White supremacy, and

WHEREAS the numbers of incarcerated people of African descent in the Americas continues to grow, and

WHEREAS disparities in healthcare, housing, education, the plight of women and girls, and a myriad of interconnected issues point to the need for addressing racism and calling attention to the need to protect the human rights of African descendant people.

WHEREAS in many countries, while African descendant people attained civil rights, the human rights guaranteed under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly continue to be elusive, and

WHEREAS data show that police have continued killing Black men and women at disproportionate rates, even after the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor sparked international protests against racism and police brutality, with a total of 164 Black men and women who were killed by police from January 1 to August 31, 2020, and

WHEREAS in June of 2020 four black men, Malcolm Harsch, Robert Fuller Dominique Alexander and an unidentified Black teenager were found hanged to death, all reported by authorities to have committed suicide, a claim disputed by their family members and many other people, and

WHEREAS the Bible and Christian theology affirm imago dei – that all people are created in the image of God; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has consistently shown leadership in advocacy and for the rights of African descendant people in the United States and globally; and

WHEREAS the United Nations declaration of the Decade calls for the promotion and protection of the rights of people of African descent; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ passed several resolutions that address the unfair treatment of people of African descent, that call for legislation and action to address injustices perpetuated against African descendant people and continues to decry the systems that support and perpetuate white privilege and white supremacy as tools that produce racism and racial
WHEREAS the United Church of Christ continues to advocate for the dismantling of racism and racist institutions through education and policy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015 - 2024);

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to increase awareness of the United Nations Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) and work ecumenically to promote the Decade;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to utilize this Decade to intentionally address the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to adopt the Decade themes of recognition, justice and development as frameworks for its advocacy, commitments and engagement in the fight for the rights of People of African Descent.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

1 http://undocs.org/A/RES/68/237
4 http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition/africa_article_01.shtml
6 https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2014/06/24/black-theology-and-legacy-oppression
7 https://www.npr.org/2020/07/01/883115867/white-supremacist-ideas-have-historical-roots-in-u-s-christianity
12 https://www.un.org/WCAR/e-kit/indigenous.htm
13 https://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=healthcare+disparities+and+race&hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C3&as_vis=1&q=disparities+and+race&btnG=
15 https://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=disparities+and+race&hl=en&as_sdt=0&as_vis=1&oi=scholart
21 https://couriernewsroom.com/2020/06/18/4-black-men-were-found-hanged-in-3-weeks-what-is-happening/
THE SECOND REPORT OF
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD
TO THE THIRTY-THIRD GENERAL SYNOD

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-05-01 To approve the Agenda.

(Supporting Document UCCB-21-05-01 Agenda)

GRANT VOICE WITHOUT VOTE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-05-02 To grant voice without vote to Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Tami Marinella, Cheryl Williams.

APPROVAL OF UCCB MARCH 2021 MEETING MINUTES

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-05-03 To approve the minutes of the March 4, 2021 Meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.

(Supporting Document UCCB-21-05-02 Minutes 04.09.2021)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IT WAS VOTED:
UCCB-21-07-01 To approve the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-07-02 To approve the Consent Agenda.

UCCB-21-07-02a: grant Voice Without Vote to Staff and Others: Geoffrey Black, Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Vivian Lucas, Tami Marinella, Dianne Roberts, Cheryl Williams.

UCCB-21-07-02b: To elect Onyx Kuthuru (Class of 2023) to fill an unexpired board term.

Supporting Document: UCCB-21-06-GOV-03 Onyx Kuthuru Bio
UCCB-21-07-02c: To elect Rachel MaeRose as chair and June Boutwell as vice chair of the General Synod Nominating Committee for the 2021-2023 biennium.

Supporting Document: UCCB-21-06-GOV-04 Rachel MaeRose & June Boutwell Bios
Supporting Document: UCCB-21-06-GOV-05 Rachel MaeRose & June Boutwell Demographics

UCCB-21-07-02d: To elect the following individuals to the General Synod Nominating Committee to fill unexpired terms: Cathy Green to the class of 2025 and Sue Johannsen to the class of 2023.

Supporting Document: UCCB-21-06-GOV-06 GSNC Nominee Bios

UCCB-21-07-02e: To nominate the following individuals for election by the Thirty-third General Synod to the General Synod Nominating Committee class of 2027: Lynn Jones, Laura Migarone, Thomas Mitchell, Warren Orikasa, and Sue Sheer.

Supporting Document: UCCB-21-06-GOV-06 GSNC Nominee Bios

UCCB-21-07-02f: To receive the report of the Executive Committee as set forth in the minutes of the April 13, 2021 Executive Committee meeting.


UCCB-21-07-02g: To approve the proposed corporate membership of the United Church Funds, Inc. for the next biennium, including the election of Doni Mooberry Slough, Noah Jensen Tabor, and Bernard Wilson to serve full six-year terms, and Lynn Bujnak to serve the unexpired term of Kathy Dwyer.

Supporting Document: UCCB-21-07-02g-1_Bernard Wilson (Bio)
Supporting Document: UCCB-21-07-02g-2_Doni Mooberry Slough (Bio)
Supporting Document: UCCB-21-07-02g-3_Lynn Bujnak (Brief Bio)
Supporting Document: UCCB-21-07-02g-4_Noah Jensen Tabor (Resume)

UCCB-21-07-02h: To receive the preliminary report of the General Synod Credentials Committee

Supporting Document: UCCB-21-07-02h-CC-Preliminary Report_06.28.2021
APPROVAL OF UCCB MAY 2021 MEETING MINUTES

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-07-03  To approve the minutes of the May 28, 2021 Meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.


EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-07-07  To go into Executive Session.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-07-08  To return to Regular Session.

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-07-09  To approve the Executive Session Minutes from March 5, 2021.

CHAIR/VICE CHAIR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-05-04  To elect Cameron Barr as Chair of the United Church of Christ Board for the 2021-2023 Biennium, beginning at the close of the 2021 General Synod and continuing until the close of the 2023 General Synod or until a successor is duly elected and assumes office.

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-05-05  To elect Julia Gaughan as Vice-Chair of the United Church of Christ Board for the 2021-2023 Biennium, beginning at the close of the 2021 General Synod and continuing until the close of the 2023 General Synod or until a successor is duly elected and assumes office.

Supporting Document UCCB-21-03-Chair_Vice-Chair_Nom_Com-01 Report
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
UCCB -21-07-06  To approve the creation of a Task Force to address the future financial viability of the national setting of the United Church of Christ including consideration of Legacy Giving Circle and possible formation of a Foundation.


GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
UCCB -21-07-05  To approve the proposed amendments to the United Church of Christ Board Standing Rules.

Supporting Document UCCB-21-06-GOV-07 Proposed UCCB Standing Rules Amendments

RACIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY AND INCLUSION RFP COMMITTEE
It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-05-06
To accept the proposal of Culture Brokers in response to the Racial Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment Request for Proposal and to authorize the expenditure of funds necessary for the associated fees.

Supporting Documents UCCB-21-05-Equity-RFP-01_Culture_Brokers_proposal; UCCB-21-05-Equity-RFP-02_Mission_Institute_proposal

UCC NATIONAL OFFICE SPACE NEEDS COMMITTEE

It was VOTED:
UCCB-21-07-04
To affirm the General Minister & President’s exploration of the possibilities for the best stewardship of the office building at 700 Prospect Avenue, including: affirming the GMP’s authority as President of 700 Prospect Corporation to lead the 700 Prospect Corporation Board of Trustees in selling the building if appropriate analysis warrants; affirming the GMP’s authority to review, select, and lease a new office space location in Cleveland for the National Setting of the United Church of Christ; and affirming the GMP’s authority to take all other necessary actions to accomplish any such sale and lease.

Supporting Document UCCB-21-XX-OS-02 May 18 Minutes/DRAFT
It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-07-10 To grant voice without vote to Resource Persons to General Synod as follows:

RESOURCE PERSONS TO BE GRANTED VOICE WITHOUT VOTE BY GENERAL SYNOPD

David Anderson
Kevin Peterson
Suzi Townsley
Roy Mosley
Dennis Frische-Mouri
Caroline Belsom
Maria Brace
Rebecca David
Andria M. Davis
Marilyn Kendrix
Cheryl Lindsay
Crystal McCormick
Elliott Munn
Michael Vollbrecht
Valerie Smith
Corey Larson
Derek B. Ritenour
Reginald Brantley
Heather Kimmel
Ken Medema
Tami Marinella
Shameerah Lemon
Nathan Young
Julie Yarborough
Thom Bower
Committee Process Team
Committee Process Team
Committee Process Team
Committee Process Team
Committee Process Team
Committee Process Team
Committee Chair
Committee Chair
Committee Chair
Committee Chair
Committee Chair
Committee Chair
Committee Chair
Associate GS Administrator
Agenda Coordinator
Parliamentarian
Parliamentarian
General Counsel
Theological Reflector
Chief Financial Officer
GS Registrar
meet.ucc
Association of United Church Educators
Association of United Church Educators

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-07-11 To approve list of General Synod Committee Liaisons as follows:

NOTICE OF GENERAL SYNOD COMMITTEE LIAISONS

Carrie Call
Hannah Cranbury
Kevin Graham

-6-
Carla Gregg-Kearns
Dick Harter
David Nelson
Inez Reid

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-07-12 To approve the General Synod Agenda as presented.

It was VOTED:
UCCB 21-07-13 To adjourn
PREAMBLE

100 These Bylaws, consistent with the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, further define and/or regulate the General Synod and its relationships with the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries and Other Bodies which are related to the General Synod, and the United Church of Christ Board, and describe the free and voluntary relationships which the Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and Ordained, Commissioned and Licensed Ministers sustain with the General Synod and with one another. The pattern of relationships and procedures so described is recommended to Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and authorized ministers to enable them more effectively to accomplish their tasks and the work of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE I. THE MINISTRY

Members in Discernment

101 A member of a United Church of Christ Local Church wishing to explore God’s call to ministry, and the potential of that call leading to authorized ministry (ordained, commissioned or licensed), requests, along with the member’s Local Church, to enter a covenant of discernment with the Association.

102 The Committee on Ministry of the member’s Association interviews the member to decide whether to join with the member and the Local Church in a covenant of discernment. The goal of discernment is to determine whether the member is called to authorized ministry, what the specific character of that ministry might be, and, if authorization is appropriate, what steps are to be taken toward authorization. Normally a covenant of discernment leading to authorization is expected to be for not less than two years.

103 The Association and the Local Church are in a mutual covenant with the Member in Discernment to offer support, counsel, and direction during this time of decision making and preparation.

104 A Member in Discernment who is called to authorized ministry will follow a plan of preparation for that ministry which has been prepared with the Association Committee on Ministry. With respect to ordained ministry, a bachelor’s degree and Master of Divinity may be included in the plan.

Ordained Ministry

105 Not more than six months prior to the completion of theological preparation for authorization, a Member in Discernment preparing for the ordained ministry applies with the Member in Discernment’s Local Church to its Association for approval as a candidate for ordination. If the service of ordination is to be performed within an Association other than that of the Member, the procedure, including that described in the following paragraph, is initiated by that Association after consultation with the Association which is in covenant with the Member in Discernment.

106 The Committee on Ministry of the Association examines the Member in Discernment with respect to Christian faith; character; ability to do the work expected; preparation to meet the responsibilities of the office; educational and theological attainments; and knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ. If, following this examination, the committee is satisfied with the fitness of the Member in Discernment, it makes an affirmative recommendation to the Association. In turn, upon receipt of this recommendation, the
Association may opt for further examination or proceed immediately to authorize the ordination, subject to a call recognized by the Association.

Ordination by an Association of the United Church of Christ, in cooperation with the Local Church, confers Ordained Ministerial Standing as an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ and recognition as an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and The United Church of Canada.

After the ordination or in anticipation of it, a certificate is issued bearing the signatures of the proper officers of the Association and the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

Ordained Ministerial Standing

An Ordained Minister moving from the bounds of one Association to another applies for a transfer of Ordained Ministerial Standing to the new Association.

An Ordained Minister engaged in Local Church ministry has standing in the Association in which the Local Church served has standing. An Ordained Minister engaged in other than Local Church ministry has standing in the Association where the Ordained Minister’s Local Church membership is held.

An Ordained Minister engaged in a ministry requiring prolonged absence from the United States, or one that does not permit a fixed residence, may apply to have Ordained Ministerial Standing in the Association of the Ordained Minister’s choice.

An Ordained Minister who withdraws from active service in the ordained ministry prior to retirement applies to the Ordained Minister’s Association for Leave of Absence. The Association may grant such Leave of Absence for one year at a time. Except in special cases such Leave of Absence is not granted for more than five years in succession.

An Ordained Minister retiring from active service by reason of age or disability retains Ordained Ministerial Standing in the Association of the Ordained Minister’s choice. Membership in a Local Church must be maintained.

An Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ serving a church not affiliated with the United Church of Christ, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), or The United Church of Canada, or serving a local church of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or The United Church of Canada without Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing retains Ordained Ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ so long as the Ordained Minister’s Association approves.

The church membership of an authorized minister serving in Local Church ministry shall be in the Local Church served. The church membership of an authorized minister serving in a setting other than Local Church Ministry, or of an authorized minister without fixed residence shall be in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ in the Association where the authorized minister holds or seeks authorized ministerial standing.

Ordained Ministers from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

An ordained minister from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may hold Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ only when serving a United Church of Christ calling body or serving in a ministry capacity directly relating to the United Church of Christ.
117 Upon demonstrating knowledge of, and appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ to the Association in which the person resides, an Ordained Ministerial Partner from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may seek a call in the United Church of Christ.

118 An Ordained Ministerial Partner from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who accepts a call in the United Church of Christ joins a Local Church in the United Church of Christ and applies for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing to the Association in which Local Church membership is held.

119 An ordained minister from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in an Association shall maintain ordained ministerial standing within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Region in which the United Church of Christ calling body is located.

120 In the United Church of Christ, Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is granted by the Association where the ordained minister from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is called to serve and is for the period of call for which it is granted. If a new consecutive call to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ is extended, then Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing may be transferred across Associations pursuant to the process for transferring standing.

121 Ordained ministers from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ are expected to maintain requirements for ongoing ministerial standing from both denominations.

122 Primary oversight of an ordained minister from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is with the United Church of Christ. In the event of a fitness review, the Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in which the person’s ordained ministerial standing is maintained shall be informed and invited to participate in the procedures.

United Church of Christ Ordained Ministers Serving in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

123 An Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall maintain Ordained Ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ, Ordained Ministerial Standing shall be held in the Association in which local church membership is held;

124 Ordained Ministers from the United Church of Christ holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are expected to maintain requirements for ongoing ministerial standing from both denominations.
Primary oversight of an Ordained Minister from the United Church of Christ holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In the event of a disciplinary procedure, the United Church of Christ Association in which standing is held shall be informed and invited to participate in the procedures. The Association may accept the procedures and outcome of the Region or utilize its own procedures to determine the person’s ongoing standing in the United Church of Christ.

When a person no longer has Ordained Ministerial Standing in either the United Church of Christ or Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), that person is no longer an Ordained Ministerial Partner and no longer has Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing.

**Ordained Ministers from The United Church of Canada**

An ordained minister from The United Church of Canada may hold Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ only when serving a United Church of Christ calling body or serving in a ministry capacity directly relating to the United Church of Christ.

Upon demonstrating knowledge of, and appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ to an Association, an Ordained Ministerial Partner from The United Church of Canada may seek a call in the United Church of Christ.

An Ordained Ministerial Partner from The United Church of Canada who accepts a call in the United Church of Christ joins a Local Church of the United Church of Christ, and applies for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing to the Association in which Local Church membership is held.

An ordained minister from The United Church of Canada who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in an Association shall also maintain ordained ministerial standing within their current presbytery of The United Church of Canada.

In the United Church of Christ, Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is granted by the Association where the ordained minister from The United Church of Canada is called to serve and is for the period of call for which it is granted. If a new consecutive call to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ is extended, then Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing may be transferred across Associations pursuant to the process for transferring standing.

Ordained ministers from The United Church of Canada holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ are expected to maintain requirements for ongoing ministerial standing from both denominations.

Primary oversight of an ordained minister from The United Church of Canada holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is with the United Church of Christ. In the event of a fitness review, The United Church of Canada Ministry Personnel Office shall be informed and invited to participate in the procedures.

**United Church of Christ Ordained Ministers Serving in The United Church of Canada**

An Ordained Minister from the United Church of Christ who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in The United Church of Canada
shall maintain Ordained Ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ. Ordained Ministerial Standing shall be held in the Association in which Local Church membership is held.

(b) shall hold Local Church membership in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ and in a presbytery of The United Church of Canada.

(c) shall relate to The United Church of Canada for the Ordained Minister’s primary support and accountability in ordained ministry.

135 Ordained Ministers from the United Church of Christ holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in The United Church of Canada are expected to maintain requirements for ongoing ministerial standing from both denominations.

136 Primary oversight of an Ordained Minister from the United Church of Christ who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in The United Church of Canada is with The United Church of Canada. In the event of a disciplinary procedure, the United Church of Christ Association in which standing is held shall be informed and invited to participate. The Association may accept the procedures and outcome of The United Church of Canada or utilize its own procedures to determine the person’s ongoing standing in the United Church of Christ.

137 When a person no longer has Ordained Ministerial Standing in either the United Church of Christ or The United Church of Canada, that person is no longer an Ordained Ministerial Partner and no longer has Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing.

Ordained Ministers from Denominations Other than the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or The United Church of Canada

138 An ordained minister of a denomination other than the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who desires to enter the ordained ministry of the United Church of Christ applies for Privilege of Call to the Association within whose bounds the minister resides.

139 The Committee on Ministry of the Association examines the applicant as to the applicant’s abilities, reasons for desiring to enter the ordained ministry of the United Church of Christ, educational and theological attainments, knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ, and Christian faith and experience. If the applicant is found to be qualified, the Association grants Privilege of Call, thereby declaring said applicant eligible to seek a call in the United Church of Christ. Privilege of Call shall be granted for a period of one year and may be renewed. After accepting a call, the ordained minister applies for Ordained Ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ to the Association of which the Local Church of membership is a part.

140 An ordained minister of another denomination other than the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or The United Church of Canada who wishes to retain ordained ministerial standing in that denomination and who has become pastor of a Local Church of the United Church of Christ, or serves in a Covenanted, Affiliated or Associated Ministry of the United Church of Christ, or has become pastor of a yoked charge or a federated church one part of which is affiliated with the United Church of Christ, or has been called to an ecumenical ministry one constituent of which is the United Church of Christ, may apply to the Association for dual ordained ministerial standing which is limited to duration of that pastorate or that responsibility, and during that period may have all the rights and privileges of such membership.
Commissioned Ministers

141 A Member in Discernment seeking initial recognition and authorization as a Commissioned Minister applies with the Member in Discernment’s Local Church to the Association of which that church is a member.

142 The Committee on Ministry of the Association examines the Member in Discernment with respect to Christian faith, character, ability to do the work expected and preparation to meet the responsibilities of the office to be filled, and make its recommendation of fitness to the Association. If upon acceptance of the recommendation or upon further examination and decision by the Association itself, the applicant is found to be qualified, commissioning thereby is authorized.

143 Commissioned Ministers are listed separately from Ordained Ministers and from Licensed Ministers on the rolls of the Association.

144 A Commissioned Minister moving from the bounds of one Association to another and who continues in the specific church-related ministry, applies for a transfer of the commission to the new Association.

145 A Commissioned Minister seeking to be commissioned for a new or different church-related ministry applies to the Association for commissioning for the new ministry.

146 A Commissioned Minister who ceases to function in the specific church-related ministry to which the minister was commissioned resigns the commission or applies to the Association for Leave of Absence. Leave of Absence is granted for one year at a time, but not more than three consecutive years.

147 A Commissioned Minister who retires from service as a Commissioned Minister may be recognized by the Association as a Retired Commissioned Minister of the United Church of Christ. Voting membership in that Association is thereby granted. Such recognition is regularly reviewed.

Licensed Ministers

148 A Member in Discernment seeking recognition and authorization as a Licensed Minister applies with the Member in Discernment’s Local Church to the Association of which that church is a member.

149 The Committee on Ministry of the Association examines the Member in Discernment with respect to Christian faith, character, ability to do the work expected, preparation to meet the responsibilities of the office, educational and theological attainments, and knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ. If the applicant is found to be qualified, a license is granted by the Association for not more than one year to serve in a designated Local Church or within that Association. Following a review by the Committee on Ministry, the license may be renewed annually for two more years after which the Association may grant the license for a time determined to be appropriate.

150 At the request of the Local Church which the person serves, the Association may grant the Licensed Minister the right to administer the sacraments and rites of the Church for this Local Church.
Licensed Ministers are listed separately from Ordained Ministers and from Commissioned Ministers on the rolls of the Association.

A Licensed Minister who retires from service as a Licensed Minister may be recognized by the Association as a Retired Licensed Minister of the United Church of Christ. Voting membership in that Association is thereby granted. Such recognition is regularly reviewed.

**Calling, Installing and Terminating a Pastor**

It is the responsibility of a committee of the Local Church to seek a candidate for a vacancy in the office of pastor.

In filling a vacancy or in securing pastoral services during the period of a vacancy, the committee of the Local Church, through its Conference Minister, obtains counsel and access to the services of the “Search and Call” process of the United Church of Christ.

The committee of a Local Church requests the Conference Minister to secure relevant information about any Ordained Minister, Ordained Ministerial Partner, or Licensed Minister whom it wishes to consider or who requests to be considered for the vacancy.

Any Ordained Minister, Ordained Ministerial Partner, or Licensed Minister may confer with the Conference Minister concerning a pastoral vacancy. At the Ordained Minister’s request or at the request of the Ordained Ministerial Partner, that person’s name shall be submitted by the Conference Minister for consideration by the committee of any Local Church where there is a pastoral vacancy.

All vacancies within the Conference shall be reported promptly to the designated administrative office in the National Setting of the Church.

The committee of the Local Church presents to the Local Church the name of a candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy. The Local Church determines whether or not it wishes to call the person recommended.

In the call agreement the terms of the pastoral relationship are stated, including the agreement of the Local Church to participate in the pension fund on the pastor’s behalf. The pastor, the Local Church, Association Committee on Ministry, and the Conference Minister should each receive a copy of the call agreement. The Conference Minister shall inform the designated administrative office in the National Setting of the Church when the call has been accepted.

When an Ordained Minister or Licensed Minister accepts a call to a Local Church, the Minister and the Local Church join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of installation or recognition.

Report of the service of installation or recognition is signed by the proper officer of the Association and by the Conference Minister, and is reported to the designated administrative office in the National Setting of the Church.

When a pastor or a Local Church decides to terminate the pastoral relationship, notice of the decision is sent to the Conference Minister and the Association. The Association takes action appropriate to the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. The Conference Minister promptly informs the designated administrative office in the National Setting of the Church.
Ministerial Accountability

163 All authorized ministers of the United Church of Christ are active partners in a covenant of mutual accountability with their Association of standing, their Local Church, and, in the case of those serving in settings other than a Local Church, with their calling body. Such a covenant includes, but is not limited to, mutual support and care, continued discernment of call, and lifelong learning.

164 All authorizations for Ordained Ministerial Standing, for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing, and for commissioned and licensed ministry granted by an Association are subject to oversight by that Association, including periodic consultation and review.

165 The ecclesiastical oversight of Ordained Ministers, persons with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing, Commissioned Ministers, and Licensed Ministers is the responsibility of the Association in which their current ecclesiastical authorization is held.

ARTICLE II. ASSOCIATIONS AND CONFERENCES

Associations

166 An Association elects officers and elects or appoints such committees as it deems necessary for the transaction of its business and the correlation of its work with that of the Conference and the General Synod.

167 An Association determines its own method for securing financial support.

168 An Association is concerned with the welfare of all Local Churches within its boundaries.

169 An Association seeks ways and means to assist Local Churches when they are undergoing unusual difficulties requiring help beyond their own resources.

170 An Association offers encouragement, guidance, and assistance in the organization of new Local Churches.

171 An Association, with the counsel of the Conference, receives Local Churches into the United Church of Christ.

172 An Association covenants with members of the United Church of Christ within that Association as together they discern God’s call to authorized ministry and prepare for ordination, commissioning or licensing.

173 An Association ordains, commissions, and licenses qualified candidates; grants standing as a covenantal relationship with Ordained Ministers, Licensed Ministers, Commissioned Ministers, and persons with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing; certifies to, transfers, and terminates Ordained Ministerial Standing, Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing, commissioned ministerial standing and licenses; installs Ordained Ministers and persons with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing; covenants with Licensed Ministers, Commissioned Ministers, and the Local Churches to which they are called; grants Privilege of Call and Leaves of Absence; reviews and ecclesiastically oversees Ordained, Commissioned, and Licensed Ministers and persons with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing; and verifies that an Ordained Ministerial Partner has demonstrated knowledge of, and appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ.
An Association receives and acts upon business referred to it by its Local Churches, its Conference, the General Synod, and other bodies.

An Association may petition and overture its Conference or the General Synod.

Conferences

A Conference elects officers and elects or appoints such committees as it deems necessary for the transaction of its business and the correlation of its work with that of the General Synod.

A Conference employs such salaried personnel as its program may require.

A Conference receives and acts upon business, requests, counsel, and references from Local Churches, Associations, the General Synod, and other bodies.

A Conference provides names to the General Synod Nominating Committee as requested.

A Conference may petition and overture the General Synod.

A Conference chooses delegates and alternate delegates to the General Synod in accordance with the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and these Bylaws.

A Conference receives from the Local Churches contributions for denominational support and keeps detailed records of the same.

A Conference consults on a regular basis with the General Minister and President, or the General Minister and President’s designee, acting on behalf of the General Synod, to reach mutual agreement upon the percentage, or the dollar amount, of the undesignated gifts for denominational support to be retained for its own support.

Upon the basis of the agreed upon percentage, or dollar amount, the Conference each month retains the amount necessary for its own support and forwards the balance to the treasury office of the National Setting.

A Conference, in the interest of the Local Churches, discharges those duties and provides those services which will strengthen the witness of the United Church of Christ, such as:

- Coordinating the work and witness of the Local Churches and Associations;
- Rendering counsel to Local Churches and ministers in situations calling for help beyond their own resources;
- Rendering an advisory service to Local Churches and to ministers with reference to pastoral search;
- Establishing and maintaining Conference offices, Conference centers, institutions, and other agencies needful to its growth and welfare;
- Sponsoring in-service training for ministers; and
- Conducting conferences, retreats, clinics, and workshops.
ARTICLE III. THE GENERAL SYNOD

Meetings of the General Synod

187 Regular meetings of the General Synod shall be held biennially.

188 Special meetings of the General Synod may be called by resolution of the General Synod, by the United Church of Christ Board, or upon receipt of a petition from at least twenty percent of the Conferences. A special meeting so petitioned shall be convened not earlier than three months nor later than four months after the petition is received by the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. The petition and the call for a special meeting shall contain a statement of the purpose of the meeting. In any special meeting only such business may be transacted as is specified in the call.

189 The time and place of all meetings of the General Synod shall be determined by the United Church of Christ Board unless otherwise directed by the General Synod.

190 The call for any meeting of the General Synod shall be signed by the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. Such call shall be issued at least six months prior to a regular meeting and at least three months prior to a special meeting of the General Synod. All calls shall be sent to the Conferences and the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries, and notice of these calls shall be transmitted to the Local Churches by the Conferences.

191 All proceedings of the General Synod shall, unless otherwise provided for, be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, as amended. Any regular or special meeting of the General Synod may be held remotely, as determined by the United Church of Christ Board, with all delegates attending through communications equipment that allows delegates to communicate contemporaneously with one another.

192 Expenses of General Synod delegates, including travel expenses for meetings of the General Synod, shall be the responsibility of the sending groups, except expenses of Conference voting delegates as negotiated with the Conferences shall be borne by the General Synod.

Membership of the General Synod

193 The membership of the General Synod shall consist of voting delegates and associate delegates. Visitors shall be welcome.

Voting Delegates

194 Voting delegates shall consist of Conference delegates, all members of the United Church of Christ Board, and delegates named by the Historically Underrepresented Groups, as these are hereinafter defined. All voting delegates shall be members of a Local Church of the United Church of Christ. Each voting delegate to the General Synod shall be entitled to a single vote at the General Synod.

Conference Delegates

195 The number of Conference delegates shall be allocated to each Conference by the United Church of Christ Board on the basis of the number of persons who have membership in the Local Churches of the Conference. There shall not, however, be fewer than three delegates allocated to any Conference. The total number of Conference delegates in any biennium shall not be fewer than 675 nor more than 725. Delegates and alternate delegates shall be chosen by each
Conference from among its authorized ministers in full standing and persons with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing and the members of its Local Churches. Conferences may initiate and consider nominations from the Associations. From each Conference, except in Conferences having three delegates, (a) lay persons shall constitute at least fifty percent of the delegates and (b) the delegation shall reflect the United Church of Christ’s commitment to affirmative action the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion; it shall be representative of people of diverse races, ethnicities, genders, gender expressions; it shall be representative of racial and ethnic persons (Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders), women and youth and young adults (at least twenty percent of each delegation shall be under 30 years of age at the time of the commencing of their terms, and where possible, be represented equally by (1) youth, persons of high school age; and (2) young adults, persons graduated from high school or over 19 years of age). In Conferences with three delegates the above requirements for representation are recommended but shall not be mandatory. Despite any lack of exact compliance with these requirements, actions of a General Synod which is constituted in substantial compliance with these representation requirements, as determined by the United Church of Christ Board, shall be valid.

The term of Conference delegates, other than any elected to fill unexpired terms, shall begin at the opening of the next regular meeting of the General Synod following their election and shall continue for a period of four years, terminating at the opening of the third regular meeting of the General Synod following such election; provided, however, that each Conference delegation shall be divided into two classes with terms expiring in alternate bienniums. When the number in one class from a given Conference exceeds the number in the other class by more than one, the Conference shall at the earliest possible opportunity make use of a two-year term for one delegate or fill any delegate vacancy that may occur in such a way as to equalize the two classes. No delegate who has served a full term shall again be elected until after at least two years have elapsed. Delegates shall be members of all regular and special meetings of the General Synod which are held during their term of office unless they have become separated from the Conference which elected them.

The members of the United Church of Christ Board shall be voting delegates at the General Synod, and their term shall be concurrent with their terms as members of the United Church of Christ Board.

There shall be forty (40) Historically Underrepresented Groups delegates, four (4) from each of the Historically Underrepresented Groups: Council for American Indian Ministry; The Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries; Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice; Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries; United Black Christians; UCC Disabilities Ministries; Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries; the United Samoan Ministries; the Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ; and the UCC Mental Health Network. The term of Historically Underrepresented Groups delegates, other than any elected to fill unexpired terms, shall begin at the opening of the next regular meeting of the General Synod following their election and shall continue for a period of four years, terminating at the opening of the third regular meeting of the General Synod following such election. No delegate who has served a full term shall again be elected until after at least two years have elapsed.

Unless otherwise serving as a voting delegate to
the General Synod, the chairperson of the governing body and the principal minister(s) or executive(s) of each Conference; the chairperson of each Task Force created by the General Synod not otherwise represented on the United Church of Christ Board; the chairperson of each General Synod standing committee; a representative of the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ); and one representative of each of the seminaries of the United Church of Christ not otherwise represented, chosen by the seminary, shall be Associate Delegates, with voice but without vote.

Ecumenical Delegates

200 In each biennium the United Church of Christ Board may invite a representative from each of its U.S. and Canada full communion partners as an associate delegate to the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. In addition, the United Church of Christ Board may invite a representative from up to three other partner churches in the United States. These representatives shall be accorded the same privileges as Associate Delegates.

Moderators of the General Synod

201 The Moderator shall be elected by the General Synod. The office of Moderator shall be filled alternately by lay persons and authorized ministers or persons with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing. The Moderator shall take office upon the adjournment of the regular meeting at which the Moderator is elected and shall hold office through the next regular meeting or until a successor has been qualified and installed.

202 The Moderator shall preside at the sessions of the General Synod.

203 There shall be elected an Assistant Moderator of the General Synod to assist the Moderator in presiding at sessions of the General Synod. The Assistant Moderator shall take office upon adjournment of the regular meeting at which the Assistant Moderator was elected and shall hold office through the next regular meeting. The Assistant Moderator will be eligible for nomination and election to the position of Moderator, upon completion of the term of Assistant Moderator.

204 The Moderator and Assistant Moderator shall include an authorized minister or a person with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing and a layperson, and shall reflect the diversity to which the United Church of Christ is committed.

Committees of the General Synod

205 The General Synod shall have such Committees as it may deem necessary, including but not limited to those named hereafter.

206 Nominating Committee The Nominating Committee shall consist of 16 members elected by the General Synod as follows:

a) Ten members will be elected from a pool of nominees provided by the Conferences, as follows: At least nine months before each regular meeting of the General Synod, the United Church of Christ Board shall invite each Conference not currently represented on the Nominating Committee to submit the name of an authorized minister or a person with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing and the name of a layperson for possible membership on the Nominating Committee as an at-large member. The United Church of Christ Board shall submit these names, to the General Synod. Not more than one of the at-large members of the Nominating Committee shall be from any one Conference. Notwithstanding this requirement, if a member of the Nominating Committee moves to a Conference from which there is another member of the Committee currently serving, the
member moving to the Conference currently served by another member shall continue to serve as a member of the Nominating Committee until the end of the biennium. The position on the Nominating Committee held by the member who moved becomes vacant at the end of the biennium during which the above change in Conference occurs.

b) Four members will be elected from a pool of nominees provided by the following groups: the Council for American Indian Ministry; The Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries; Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice; Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries; United Black Christians; United Samoan Ministries, the Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ; UCC Disabilities Ministries; the Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries; and the UCC Mental Health Network. At least nine months before each regular meeting of the General Synod, the United Church of Christ Board shall invite each of the six groups not currently represented on the Nominating Committee to submit the names of an ordained minister or a person with ordained ministerial partner standing and a layperson for possible membership on the Nominating Committee. The United Church of Christ Board shall submit to the General Synod for election the number of names needed to maintain four members from these groups on the Nominating Committee. Two members will be an ordained minister or a person with ordained ministerial partner standing and two members will be laypersons. The Conference affiliations of the representatives from these groups will not affect the determination of the Conference affiliation of the at-large members elected in accordance with paragraph 201a.

c) Two members will be appointed from among the members of the United Church of Christ Board.

d) The diversity of the Nominating Committee shall reflect the diversity requirements for the United Church of Christ Board, as set forth in these bylaws.

e) A member of the Nominating Committee who has served a full term shall not be eligible for re-election until a biennium has elapsed. Terms of members shall begin at the close of the General Synod at which the members have been elected and continue to the close of the third regular General Synod after their election. The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall be named by the United Church of Christ Board from the members of the Nominating Committee within six months after each regular meeting of the General Synod.

207 The Nominating Committee of the General Synod, prior to the call for nominations, reviews the composition of the continuing membership of the United Church of Christ Board and determines the needed nominations. In its call for suggestions of names, the Nominating Committee will indicate the criteria consistent with the provisions of these Bylaws which will be used for filling positions on the United Church of Christ Board. Each Conference or group to be represented shall provide at least two names for each of the positions.

208 The Nominating Committee shall make all nominations for election by the General Synod for which the Constitution and Bylaws do not otherwise provide. The Nominating Committee shall consider, but not be limited to, such attributes as candidates’ leadership, a wide range of life experience and background including socio-economic, cultural competency, financial knowledge, fund raising experience, community building skills, commitment to justice, and understanding of good governance. The Nominating Committee shall maintain records of suggested nominees and their qualifications.
The Nominating Committee is responsible for ensuring that the membership of the United Church of Christ Board embodies the commitment of the United Church of Christ to diversity and balance, both in its overall composition and in its internal segments. In order to achieve this end, the Nominating Committee may, if necessary, approach any group submitting and/or recommending names with the request that they assist in that task by presenting additional names.

When selecting candidates for offices, the Nominating Committee shall consider all names submitted.

The Nominating Committee shall submit its report to the General Synod at least twenty-four hours before the elections are scheduled to take place, unless the General Synod, by a three-fourths vote, consents to an earlier election.

The Credentials Committee shall consist of ten delegates to the General Synod, five of whom shall come from each of the two classes of General Synod delegates. At least three months before each regular meeting of the General Synod the United Church of Christ Board shall appoint five members from the latest class of delegates and shall designate one of the ten members of the Committee as chairperson. Terms of members shall be for four years, beginning with their appointment and terminating with the appointment of their successors, the United Church of Christ Board or persons designated by the United Church of Christ Board from its own membership. The Credentials Committee will review the composition of the Conference and other voting delegations for compliance with the composition requirements of these Bylaws and is empowered to request changes in membership to all voting delegations so that said delegations and the Delegation as a Whole will be in compliance with the provisions of these Bylaws.

The Budget Committee, the Business Committee, and the Committee of Disposition at each regular and special meeting of the General Synod shall be the United Church of Christ Board or persons designated by the United Church of Christ Board from its own membership. The role and scope of the Budget Committee, Business Committee and the Committee of Disposition shall be determined by the United Church of Christ Board.

Officers of the United Church of Christ

The General Synod shall call by election, from among the members of the United Church of Christ, the General Minister and President, the Associate General Ministers, and such other officers of the United Church of Christ as the General Synod may from time to time determine.

Each Officer of the United Church of Christ serves at the will of the General Synod, and may be terminated as an Officer of the United Church of Christ by the United Church of Christ Board acting as the General Synod ad interim in accordance with the United Church of Christ Board’s procedures.

The term of each Officer of the United Church of Christ shall be two regular meetings of the General Synod, terminating at the opening of the third regular meeting of the General Synod following such election, not to exceed three terms, and shall commence within ninety days following call by election by the General Synod. Officers of the United Church of Christ shall hold office until their successors have been elected and qualified and have assumed the duties of their office. Officers of the United Church of Christ may be reelected, but not more than twice, subject to the call by election of the General Synod.
The General Minister and President, who shall have Ordained Ministerial Standing or Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing, is called to ministry in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ upon election by the General Synod.

a) **Spiritual Leader of the Church:**

The General Minister and President is the spiritual leader and pastor of the Church, charged with the care and nurture of the spiritual life of the Church. The General Minister and President is responsible for the unity and well-being of the Church, and for nurturing its covenantal life and ecumenical and interfaith relationships, and leading the visioning, planning, coordination and implementation of the total mission of the United Church of Christ.

b) **Theological Interpreter:**

The General Minister and President is the principal leader in interpreting the theological perspectives and values of the United Church of Christ as guided by the General Synod and in consultation with the Officers of the United Church of Christ. The General Minister and President is the chief representative of the United Church of Christ in the public square and at ecumenical, interdenominational and interfaith tables.

c) **Convener:**

The General Minister and President will convene and preside at the meetings of the Officers of the United Church of Christ. The General Minister and President is responsible for coordinated communication, fund raising and planning in collaboration with the Associate General Ministers. The General Minister and President is a member of the Mission Planning Council.

d) **Chief Executive Officer:**

The General Minister and President is the Chief Executive Officer of the General Synod and is its principal spokesperson. The General Minister and President oversees the administration of the National Setting offices. The General Minister and President leads and directs the work of the Associate General Ministers and the Officers of the United Church of Christ. The General Minister and President is the executive ultimately responsible for all hiring and termination decisions in the National Setting of the United Church of Christ. The General Minister and President may from time to time delegate administrative responsibilities as the needs of the Church and good judgment dictate.

The General Minister and President serves as the corporate President of the United Church of Christ Board, each of the Covenanted Ministries, the **Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ**, and all other corporations related to the Covenanted Ministries. The General Minister and President determines the delegation and direction of the work of the Covenanted Ministries to the Associate General Ministers, with the affirmation of the United Church of Christ Board.

The General Minister and President serves as an ex-officio member in all meetings of the Affiliated and Associated Ministries. The General Minister and President shall serve as an ex-officio member, with voice, but not vote, in the meetings of all Commissions, Councils, and Committees of the United Church of Christ, except as otherwise provided in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ; except that the General Minister and President shall not participate in the work of the Search Committee for the General Minister and President. The
General Minister and President shall be the official representative of the Church in ecumenical, interdenominational, and interfaith relations. The General Minister and President may appoint a representative for such occasions as the General Minister and President deems advisable.

218 The General Minister and President is accountable to the General Synod and the United Church of Christ Board, acting as the General Synod ad interim.

219 The candidate for the position of General Minister and President is nominated for an initial term by a search committee of the United Church of Christ, broadly representative of the Church, and appointed by the United Church of Christ Board. The search committee includes at least one Conference Minister named by the Council of Conference Ministers and one representative of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries to be selected, in the first instance, from the COREM members on the United Church of Christ Board, each with voice and vote. At least one member shall be a youth or young adult. The affirmative action commitment of the Church is to be fully respected in the search process and diversity maintained in the membership of the Officers of the United Church of Christ. The candidate chosen by the search committee is confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the United Church of Christ Board before the candidate’s name is placed before the General Synod. Only one nominee may be presented for election, and nominations may not be made from the floor. An affirmative vote of at least sixty percent of the General Synod is necessary for election and call. The General Minister and President does not participate in the work of the search committee choosing a successor. The General Minister and President is evaluated regularly through a process approved by the United Church of Christ Board. In the event that the General Minister and President is unable to discharge the responsibilities of that Office, or if there is a vacancy in that Office, the United Church of Christ shall name an Associate General Minister to serve as Acting General Minister and President until the General Minister and President returns to service or is replaced by a successor elected by the General Synod after a search process.

Associate General Ministers

220 An Associate General Minister may be a lay person, an authorized minister, or a person with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing. Each Associate General Minister serves as an appointed member of the United Church of Christ Board and accordingly as a member of the Board of Directors of each Covenanted Ministry.

221 Each Associate General Minister will be responsible for the work of the Covenanted Ministries, as delegated and directed by the General Minister and President and affirmed by the United Church of Christ Board of Directors.

222 As led by the General Minister and President, each Associate General Minister will be involved in the overall functions of the National Setting, including visioning and planning, communications, development and management of budgets, development and leadership of staff, and implementation of policies adopted by the General Synod and the United Church of Christ Board.

223 Each Associate General Minister will be accountable to the General Synod through the United Church of Christ Board. Each Associate General Minister serves at the will of the United Church of Christ Board and may be terminated by the United Church of Christ Board, acting as the General Synod ad interim, in accordance with its procedures.

224 Each Associate General Minister is an Officer of the United Church of Christ.
225 Each Associate General Minister is to be nominated for an initial term by a search committee
of the United Church of Christ broadly representative of the Church, appointed by and from the
United Church of Christ Board. The search committee shall include the General Minister and
President; one Conference Minister, named by the Council of Conference Ministers; one
representative of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries to be selected, in the first instance,
from the COREM members on the Board of Directors and one representative of the UCC
Disabilities Ministries to be selected, in the first instance, from the UCC Disabilities Ministries
member on the Board of Directors, each with voice and vote. At least one member shall be a
youth or young adult. The affirmative action commitment of the Church is to be fully respected in
the search process and diversity maintained in the membership of the Officers of the United
Church of Christ. The candidate chosen by the search committee is to be confirmed by a two-
thirds vote of the United Church of Christ Board of Directors before the candidate’s name is
placed in nomination before the General Synod. Only one nominee may be presented for election,
and nominations may not be made from the floor. An affirmative vote of at least sixty percent of
the General Synod is necessary for the call by election. An Associate General Minister does not
participate in the work of the search committee choosing a successor. The Associate General
Minister is evaluated regularly by a process approved by the United Church of Christ Board of
Directors. The evaluation process shall include the General Minister and President, with voice
and vote. Terms of office shall begin within ninety days following their election. An Associate
General Minister shall hold office until the Associate General Minister’s successor has been
elected and qualified and has assumed the duties of the Office.

226 In the event that an Associate General Minister is unable to discharge the responsibilities of
that position, or if there is a vacancy in the office, the United Church of Christ Board of
Directors, in consultation with the General Minister and President, may appoint an Acting
Associate General Minister, who shall be an Acting Officer of the Church, according to its rules
and procedures acting as the General Synod ad interim. An Acting Associate General Minister
shall serve until the Associate General Minister returns to service, or is replaced by a successor
called by election by the General Synod.

United Church of Christ Board
227 The United Church of Christ Board continues the work of, and acts as agent for, predecessor
bodies, and continues other ministries, as specified in the Constitution of the United Church of
Christ.

228 The United Church of Christ Board shall consist of up to 52 members. Thirty-six members
shall serve in at-large positions and up to 16 members shall be appointed members with voice and
vote. The composition of the United Church of Christ Board shall embody the commitment of the
United Church of Christ to be a multicultural and multiracially diverse, equitable, and inclusive
Church open and accessible to all, reflecting the racial and ethnic diversity of society with a
balance of leadership between women and men among people of diverse races, ethnicities,
genders, gender expressions, and sexuality, open and accessible to all. All members of the United
Church of Christ Board shall be voting members, except as legally proscribed and noted below.

229 The 36 at-large members, nominated by the General Synod Nominating Committee, and
elected by the General Synod as members of the United Church of Christ Board, shall reflect the
following composition at the time of their election:

- 50% or more A majority shall be persons of color.
• A majority shall be persons who identify as women, both transgender and cisgender; non-binary persons; or gender non-conforming persons. The remaining members may be persons who identify as men, both transgender and cisgender.

• One-third shall be authorized ministers or persons with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing.

• One-third shall be laymen. Two-thirds shall be laypersons.

• Twenty percent shall be under 30 years of age. To the extent possible, the under 30 years of age members shall include both youth of high school age and young adults. All such members shall be voting members except as legally proscribed.

• At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as having a disability.

• At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or asexual. At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as transgender.

a) At-large members shall serve one term of three regular meetings of the General Synod, which shall commence at the close of the General Synod at which the person is elected and qualified and shall terminate at the close of the General Synod in which a successor is elected and qualified. At-large members shall be divided into three classes of 12 members each, with a class of 12 members being elected at each General Synod. No at-large member who has served more than one-half of a full term shall be nominated to serve again until at least one regular meeting of the General Synod has elapsed.

Nominations for the at-large positions shall be solicited from all entities and organizations within the United Church of Christ. There shall not be more than three at-large members from any one Conference at the time of an individual’s election.

b) The General Synod Nominating Committee nominates these persons after submission of names, according to the procedures established in these Bylaws, and criteria determined by the Nominating Committee. In order to fulfill its responsibilities to ensure that the membership of the United Church of Christ Board reflects the diversity to which the United Church of Christ is committed, the Nominating Committee may ask for additional names to be submitted.

230 Appointed members of the United Church of Christ Board with voice and vote shall include:

a) The Officers of the United Church of Christ.

b) The Moderator and the Assistant Moderator of the General Synod.

c) One member designated by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to serve a term of two years. Any such member shall be eligible to serve up to two additional terms and not to exceed three terms.

d) Six principal ministers of Conferences, one to be elected from each Region by the Council of Conference Ministers for a term of two years, not to exceed two consecutive terms. If any such member ceases during the member’s term of office on the United Church of Christ Board to be the principal minister of a Conference within the Region from which said member was elected, a vacancy shall be thereby created to be filled by election by the Council of Conference Ministers.

e) The Executive of the United Church Funds, Inc.
f) The Executive of The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ

g) The Executive of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

231 Although members of the United Church of Christ Board may be nominated or selected by particular groups, each member serves on behalf of, and bears responsibility for, the well-being of the whole Church.

232 The United Church of Christ Board shall elect, from its members who are elected by the General Synod, a chairperson and a vice-chairperson according to its own Standing Rules.

233 The United Church of Christ Board shall appoint a Secretary and a Treasurer, who shall not be members of the United Church of Christ Board, and shall have voice but no vote. The Secretary and the Treasurer may be appointed from staff members at the National Setting, who shall report to the General Minister and President, who is directly accountable to the United Church of Christ Board.

234 The Secretary and the Treasurer shall have the customary duties of a corporate secretary and treasurer to the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

Responsibilities of the United Church of Christ Board

235 The United Church of Christ Board shall act for the General Synod ad interim, and, in cooperation with the Officers of the United Church of Christ, shall provide coordination and evaluation of the work of the Church and shall carry out such other responsibilities as may be from time to time delegated to it by the General Synod or as provided for in these Bylaws or the Constitution.

a) The United Church of Christ Board shall be responsible for strategic planning and policymaking. The Committees of the United Church of Christ Board shall make recommendations to the members of the United Church of Christ Board for strategic planning, policymaking, and oversight purposes. The United Church of Christ Board shall receive recommendations from the Investment and Endowment Committee regarding the annual draw rate on invested funds that may be used to carry out the mission entrusted to the Covenanted Ministries. Recommendations as to the annual draw rate and as to the allocation of the annual dollar amounts resulting from the application of the annual draw rate to each of the restricted endowment funds and to each of the historic donor intended uses of each of the unrestricted endowment funds shall not be modified by the United Church of Christ Board except upon a two-thirds vote of the members present of the full Board.

b) The United Church of Christ Board is responsible for policies relating to the mission of the United Church of Christ in its National Setting. It shall support the on-going work of the General Synod through its various ministries, planning for and encouraging cooperation among those ministries, with Local Churches, Associations, and Conferences, and with other expressions of the Church which contribute to and embody God’s mission in Jesus Christ. It shall support the spiritual and financial health of the Church, and shall ensure the presence and implementation of policies which contribute to the health of the Covenanted Ministries in relationship with one another and their accountability to the General Synod. It shall receive reports from the Officers of the United Church of Christ and provide oversight and support for the work of that body. It shall facilitate the business of the General Synod and assume such other tasks as may be
assigned to it by the General Synod. It shall be a focal point for decision-making, overall planning and evaluation, and budgeting in the National Setting. It shall receive and report upon divergent points of view and maintain an open channel for the consideration of minority or dissenting opinion. It shall submit a report of its work to the General Synod at each regular meeting. In cooperation with the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries it shall make an annual informational report to the Local Churches and the Conferences about the total program of the Church in the National Setting.

Vacancies occurring in offices, commissions, or committees of the General Synod, or in the membership of the United Church of Christ Board, shall, unless otherwise provided, be filled by the United Church of Christ Board acting as the General Synod ad interim, such actions to be reported to the next General Synod.

The United Church of Christ Board shall make such elections, nominations or appointments as these Bylaws or action of the General Synod may require.

Acting as the Budget Committee for the General Synod, the United Church of Christ Board shall determine the allocation of funds from denominational support. The United Church of Christ Board, acting as the Budget Committee, shall also receive and review the past and projected use of denominational funds allocated to each Covenanted Ministry and recommend the denominational support threshold amount for each General Synod regular meeting interval.

The United Church of Christ Board shall be an incorporated body in order to ensure that it may effectively and expeditiously perform all legal functions of the General Synod and all of its other functions as provided for in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. The membership of the Corporation shall consist of those persons described in the Bylaws as members of the Board of Directors of the United Church of Christ, who shall be elected or affirmed in the manner therein provided and who shall have the right to vote only to the extent granted by the Bylaws. Those members shall also be the Directors of the Corporation. The Corporation shall have such officers as required by law and as provided in these Bylaws. The Corporation may adopt for its government and the management of its affairs bylaws and rules not inconsistent with its Articles of Incorporation nor with the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and regulations of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

The United Church of Christ Board shall serve as the Business Committee of the General Synod during its sessions, and as such shall prepare the agenda and schedule for all meetings of the General Synod, recommend changes therein during sessions, and appoint committees not otherwise provided.

Administration of the National Setting Offices

The General Minister and President shall oversee the administration of the National Setting offices.

Committees of the United Church of Christ Board

The United Church of Christ Board shall have such other Committees as it may deem necessary, including but not limited to those named hereafter, and each may draw on expertise beyond the Board if necessary.

Ministry Committees

The United Church of Christ Board shall establish committees relating to the mission and ministry of the United Church of Christ (the Ministry Committees). Each Ministry Committee
shall make recommendations to the United Church of Christ Board regarding ministry priorities and policy. The Ministry Committees will honor the diversity commitments of the United Church of Christ and work in covenant with each other and National Setting staff. To the extent possible while still maintaining expertise needed on the Ministry Committees, the composition of each Ministry Committee shall embody the commitment of the United Church of Christ to a multicultural and multiracial Church, with leadership reflecting race and gender diversity, open and accessible to all. To the extent possible while still maintaining expertise needed on the Ministry Committees, each United Church of Christ Board member will be assigned to a Ministry Committee based on that individual’s experience, expertise, personal passion and spiritual calling. Individuals also will be considered based on the role that they may serve as members of the Common Global Ministries Board, the mission partnership between the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Each Ministry Committee will elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson, subject to the requirement that at least one of these positions must be held by a person of color in each Ministry Committee.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of up to 16 members of the United Church of Christ Board, as follows:

a) Chairperson and vice-chairperson of the United Church of Christ Board

b) Chairperson of the Audit Committee, Finance and Budget Committee, Governance Committee, Investment and Endowment Committee, and Development Committee

c) The Officers of the United Church of Christ

d) One Conference Minister

e) Moderator of the General Synod

f) Three additional at-large members, one from each of the three classes

g) To the extent possible while still maintaining diversity and expertise, the composition of the Executive Committee shall embody the commitment of the United Church of Christ to a multicultural and multiracial Church, with membership reflecting age, race, and gender diversity, open and accessible to all.

245 The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility to ensure that visioning and strategic planning be done on behalf of the National Setting of the Church. It will lead the United Church of Christ Board in developing and articulating comprehensive and integrated strategies and goals for the National Setting. The Executive Committee will facilitate the United Church of Christ Board’s identification of concerns and ideas related to communications, identity, fundraising, fund development, strategic planning, evangelism, and other critical issues for the life of the whole Church. The decision-making power and authority of the Executive Committee shall be governed by the standing rules of the United Church of Christ Board.

Finance and Budget Committee

The Finance and Budget Committee shall consist of up to 12 members of the United Church of Christ Board, including:

a) Chairperson or vice-chairperson of the United Church of Christ Board
b) Six representatives of the United Church of Christ Board

c) General Minister and President

247 The duties and responsibilities of the Committee include:

a) Reviewing the annual available resources and being responsible for financial planning.

b) Reviewing the proposed Annual Budget recommended by the General Minister and President in consultation with key staff and mission partners, such as Common Global Ministries.

c) Recommending the Annual Budget to the United Church of Christ Board.

d) Receiving and reviewing regular financial reports.

Investment and Endowment Committee

248 The Investment and Endowment Committee shall consist of up to 14 members and shall be members of the United Church of Christ Board (except as noted below), including:

a) Six representatives from the United Church of Christ Board

b) The Officers of the United Church of Christ

c) The Executive of the United Church Funds, Inc., with voice but without vote

d) The United Church of Christ Board, by vote of its membership, may add up to three individuals with legal and/or investment expertise who are not members of the United Church of Christ but are members of the United Church of Christ.

249 The duties and responsibilities of the Committee include:

a) Assuring that the legacy/historic restrictions on the use of restricted funds and the intended use restrictions of the unrestricted funds of each of the historic ministries are monitored, accounted for, maintained and reported to the United Church of Christ Board annually. The Committee shall monitor and oversee the allocation of both restricted and unrestricted funds to ensure that they will be allocated based on donor intent, whenever that can be determined and to provide the full Board an overview of all funds in order to encourage the most effective collaborative and holistic use of those funds to meet the missional needs of the Church.

b) Recommending to the United Church of Christ Board investment policies including investment screens that reflect the commitment of the United Church of Christ to corporate social responsibility.

c) Managing the investment of the endowed funds and other assets including real property in accordance with investment policies approved by the United Church of Christ Board.
d) Monitoring and reporting on the management of invested funds to the United Church of Christ Board.

e) Recommending to the United Church of Christ Board the annual draw rate on invested funds that may be used to carry out the mission entrusted to the Covenanted Ministries. Recommendations as to the annual draw rate and as to the allocation of the annual dollar amounts resulting from the application of the annual draw rate to each of the restricted endowment funds and to each of the historic donor intended uses of each of the unrestricted endowment funds shall be accepted by the United Church of Christ Board unless modified by a vote of two-thirds of the members present of the full Board.

f) Reviewing, monitoring and recommending to the United Church of Christ Board the allocation of the annual dollar amounts resulting from the application of the spending rate to each of the restricted endowment funds and to each of the historic donor intended uses of each of the unrestricted endowment funds.

g) Providing Board representation to the Investment Committee of the United Church Funds, Inc.

Audit Committee

250 The Audit Committee shall consist of such members as determined by the United Church of Christ Board, provided that members of the Board must comprise a majority of the members of the Audit Committee. The United Church of Christ Board, by vote of its membership, may include on the Audit Committee individuals with legal and/or financial expertise who are not members of the United Church of Christ Board but are members of the United Church of Christ. All Committee members shall be voting members.

251 The duties and responsibilities of the Committee include:

a) Retaining the audit firm to perform the annual financial audit.

b) Receiving and reviewing the audit report from the auditors and reporting to the United Church of Christ Board.

c) Such other duties as assigned by the United Church of Christ Board.

Regions

252 The United Church of Christ Board shall make an appropriate assignment of the several Conferences into Regions. The Regions as thus determined shall form the basis for Conference representation on national bodies wherever required by the Bylaws.

Organization of the United Church of Christ Board

253 The United Church of Christ Board shall organize itself as it deems necessary to carry out its responsibilities and fulfill its mandates.

Advisory Commissions

254 The United Church of Christ Board may provide for special advisory commissions on subjects of pervasive interest to the entire Church on which the United Church of Christ Board and/or the General Minister and President need policy or substantive advice. Members of such commissions and its chairperson shall be appointed by the United Church of Christ Board
pursuant to its Standing Rules and shall include at least one member of the United Church of Christ Board.

Common Services
255 In covenant with the Covenanted Ministries, the United Church of Christ Board, through and by the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ, shall provide for common services, including, but not limited to, common treasury services, accounting services, personnel services, logistical services, information services and office support services. It shall also provide for a common salary program and shall provide common personnel policies.

256 Each Covenanted Ministry shall use the aforementioned common services, program and policies whenever legally permissible and otherwise appropriate, all as determined by its own board of directors.

257 A nonprofit corporation shall be formed for the purpose of providing the above described common services. The corporation, to be named the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ, shall be governed by its articles of incorporation, rules, and bylaws, and the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. The General Minister and President shall be the principal executive of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ. The number of directors of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ shall be up to ten, consisting of:

1. Two representatives of, and selected by, Local Church Ministries;
2. Two representatives of, and selected by, Justice and Witness Ministries;
3. Two representatives of, and selected by, Wider Church Ministries;
4. General Minister and President; and
5. Key operations, financial services, and human resources personnel as deemed necessary by the General Minister and President.

The directors of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ shall be the members of the corporation. The board of directors shall appoint such committees, with such responsibilities, as it deems necessary to carry out its work. The corporate officers of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ shall be the following:

(i) General Minister and President, who as President of this corporation shall be accountable to the board of directors;
(ii) A Secretary, who shall be appointed by and report to the General Minister and President;
(iii) A Treasurer, who shall be appointed by and report to the General Minister and President.

258 Policy decisions related to the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ shall be the responsibility of the board of directors of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ.
ARTICLE IV. ORGANIZATION

The work of the United Church of Christ shall be carried out by the United Church of Christ Board, the Covenanted, Affiliated, Associated Ministries, Councils, and other such bodies as may from time to time be created by, or related to, the General Synod or the United Church of Christ Board.

COVENANTED MINISTRIES

The Covenanted Ministries are Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, and Wider Church Ministries.

The General Minister and President oversees the programmatic work of the Covenanted Ministries, which shall be carried out in accordance with the policies, planning, and broad oversight of the United Church of Christ Board as provided in these Bylaws.

LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRIES

Purpose and Mission

The purpose and mission of Local Church Ministries shall be to encourage and support the Local Churches of the United Church of Christ in the fulfillment of God’s mission. It continues the work of, and acts as agent for, predecessor bodies, and continues other ministries, as specified in the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and as described in its articles of incorporation. The program, administrative, and financial development functions of Local Church Ministries shall be carried out in cooperation with the United Church of Christ Board. The United Church of Christ Board shall oversee these functions, which will be coordinated and implemented by staff assigned by the General Minister and President. Local Church Ministries shall retain responsibility for all legacies and other property received, maintained or held by it, and shall have sole authority to approve any use, expenditure or disposal of its legacies or other property.

Governance and Leadership

Pursuant to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, Local Church Ministries shall be incorporated and governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the members of the United Church of Christ Board. It shall act pursuant to the provisions as defined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, its own articles of incorporation and bylaws, and by the rules of its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of Local Church Ministries performs the functions normally associated with boards of directors, and such additional tasks necessary to carry out its purposes and mandates, including the formation of associated auxiliary corporations. Pursuant to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, it has legal corporate status for the purpose of holding, receiving, and managing unrestricted, restricted, and designated allocated...
funds, and funds donated to it from all sources. It is responsible for its articles of incorporation and required corporate documents, and establishes its own rules and bylaws. It has responsibility for organizing its ministries in order to carry out its mandates, for providing necessary staffing, and for determining the manner and site(s) of its office(s). The Board of Directors may grant authority to sub-units, ministry teams, or other appropriate entities, to speak and act on its behalf within its own broad policy statements and those of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. The Board of Directors may form task groups representing a variety of groups of the Church necessary for implementing its mission.

266 Members of the Board of Directors of Local Church Ministries serve on behalf of the whole Church.

JUSTICE AND WITNESS MINISTRIES

Purpose and Mission

267 The purpose and mission of Justice and Witness Ministries shall be to enable and encourage Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and national expressions of the United Church of Christ to engage in God’s mission globally by direct action for the integrity of creation, justice, and peace. It continues the work of, and acts as agent for, predecessor bodies, and continues other ministries, as specified in the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and as described in its articles of incorporation. The program, administrative, and financial development functions of Justice and Witness Ministries shall be carried out in cooperation with the United Church of Christ Board. The United Church of Christ Board shall oversee these functions, which will be coordinated and implemented by staff assigned by the General Minister and President. Justice and Witness Ministries shall retain responsibility for all legacies and other property received, maintained or held by it, and shall have sole authority to approve any use, expenditure or disposal of its legacies or other property.

In overseeing the purpose and mission of Justice and Witness Ministries, the United Church of Christ Board shall encourage the Church in all of its expressions to speak prophetically on matters of justice, power, and public policy. The United Church of Christ Board shall assist the Church in all of its expressions to confront expressions of injustice and alienation in the Church and in the society. The United Church of Christ Board shall provide support for the Church’s ministry of service on behalf of those who are poor, the forgotten and the oppressed, and for those marginalized by stigma and discrimination because of their sexual orientation or their disabilities, including mental illness. The United Church of Christ Board may provide public witness on behalf of the justice and witness policies of the General Synod.

269 The United Church of Christ Board shall work in interactive partnership with Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, national expressions of the Church, and with ecumenical and interfaith groups, and community organizations.

Governance and Leadership

270 Pursuant to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries shall be incorporated and governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the members of the United Church of Christ Board. It shall act pursuant to the provisions as defined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, its own articles of incorporation and bylaws, and by the rules of its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of Justice and Witness Ministries performs the functions normally associated with boards of directors, and such additional tasks necessary to carry out its purposes and mandates, including the formation of associated auxiliary corporations. Pursuant to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, it has legal corporate status for the purpose of holding, receiving, and managing unrestricted,
restricted, and designated allocated funds, and funds donated to it from all sources. It is
responsible for its articles of incorporation and required corporate documents, and establishes its
own rules and bylaws. It has responsibility for organizing its ministries in order to carry out its
mandates, for providing necessary staffing, and for determining the manner and site(s) of its
office(s). The Board of Directors may grant authority to sub-units, ministry teams, or other
appropriate entities, to speak and act on its behalf within its own broad policy statements and
those of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. The Board of Directors may form task
groups representing a variety of groups of the Church necessary for implementing its mission.

271 Members of the Board of Directors of Justice and Witness Ministries serve on behalf of the
whole Church.

WIDER CHURCH MINISTRIES

Purpose and Mission

272 The purpose and mission of Wider Church Ministries shall be to encourage and support
Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and national expressions of the United Church of
Christ to participate in the global, multiracial, multicultural church, accessible to all, and to
support United Church of Christ ministries around the world and the nation. It continues the work
of, and acts as agent for, predecessor bodies and continues other ministries, as specified in the
Constitution of the United Church of Christ and as described in its articles of incorporation. The
program, administrative, and financial development functions of Wider Church Ministries shall
be carried out in cooperation with the United Church of Christ Board. The United Church of
Christ Board shall oversee these functions, which will be coordinated and implemented by staff
assigned by the General Minister and President. Wider Church Ministries shall retain
responsibility for all legacies and other property received, maintained or held by it, and shall have
sole authority to approve any use, expenditure or disposal of its legacies or other property.

273 In overseeing the purpose and mission of Wider Church Ministries, the United Church of
Christ Board shall strengthen relationships with partner churches and oversee participation in the
Common Global Ministries Board in joint venture with the Christian Church (Disciples of
Christ). The United Church of Christ Board shall provide support for institutional ministries in
health care, education, disaster relief, and social services in the United States and internationally.
It shall also coordinate volunteer ministries in all expressions of the Church. In cooperation with
partner churches it shall promote interfaith dialogue and global education and advocacy issues.
Through the Common Global Ministries Board, the United Church of Christ Board shall oversee
the sending and receiving of missionaries.

274 The United Church of Christ Board shall work in interactive partnership with Local
Churches, Associations, Conferences, and national expressions of the Church and of the
ecumenical and interfaith bodies.

275 Governance and Leadership Pursuant to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ,
Wider Church Ministries shall be incorporated and governed by a Board of Directors comprised
of the members of the United Church of Christ Board. It shall act pursuant to the provisions as
defined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, its own articles of
incorporation and bylaws, and by the rules of its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of
Wider Church Ministries performs the functions normally associated with boards of directors, and
such additional tasks necessary to carry out its purposes and mandates, including the formation of
associated auxiliary corporations. Pursuant to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, it
has legal corporate status for the purpose of holding, receiving, and managing unrestricted,
restricted, and designated allocated funds, and funds donated to it from all sources. It is
The Board of Directors may grant authority to sub-units, ministry teams, or other appropriate entities, to speak and act on its behalf within its own broad policy statements and those of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. The Board of Directors may form task groups representing a variety of groups of the Church necessary for implementing its mission.

Members of the Board of Directors of Wider Church Ministries serve on behalf of the whole Church.

OFFICERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Officers of the United Church of Christ, defined in Article IV of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, support and consult with the United Church of Christ Board and the Covenanted Ministries in carrying out their work in a spirit of coordination and cooperation. The General Minister and President is the presiding Officer. Led by the General Minister and President, the Officers of the United Church of Christ are responsible for providing leadership for the mission programming in the United Church of Christ and for the proper implementation of General Synod actions. The Officers of the United Church of Christ coordinate research, long-range planning, program evaluation, and report on the ongoing programs of the United Church of Christ.

The Officers of the United Church of Christ are convened by the General Minister and President as the presiding officer and consult with the United Church of Christ Board and the General Synod. They shall consult regularly with the leaders of the Affiliated and Associated Ministries of the United Church of Christ. They meet regularly with the Cabinet of the Council of Conference Ministers.

MISSION PLANNING COUNCIL

The Mission Planning Council provides a multi-missional setting which brings together the Officers of the United Church of Christ, and principal staff of the United Church of Christ Board and the Covenanted, Associated, and Affiliated Ministries of the United Church of Christ, for planning coordinated ministries and for visioning and exploring new perspectives over a wide range of mission, theological, ecumenical, spiritual, stewardship, financial, justice, communications, gender, disability, and racial issues and concerns. The Mission Planning Council is responsible for the coordination and correlation of mission and purpose and for maintaining mutual trust, mutual accountability, and the wise use of leadership and talents. It is designed to encourage cooperation and sharing of talents among the Ministries. The Mission Planning Council may invite others to participate, including representatives of Conferences and partner churches, as it deems appropriate. The General Minister and President coordinates the tasks, meetings, agendas, and follow-up actions of the Mission Planning Council.

AFFILIATED MINISTRY

Pursuant to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ is an Affiliated Ministry of the United Church of Christ and serves the Church and its United Church of Christ Board and Covenanted Ministries as a separate corporation.

The purpose of The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ is to make available ministerial welfare activities and a system of employee benefit programs designed to assist authorized ministers and lay workers in achieving financial security during working and retirement years.
The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ continues as a nonprofit membership corporation which determines its own governance and leadership. The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ will have membership on the United Church of Christ Board.

ASSOCIATED MINISTRY

Pursuant to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, the United Church Funds, Inc., is an Associated Ministry of the United Church of Christ Board and the Covenanted Ministries as a separate corporation related to the United Church of Christ Board.

The purpose of the United Church Funds, Inc. is to provide a means by which individuals and organizations of the Church may further exercise their stewardship of resources for the sake of strengthening the mission of the Church as set forth in the Constitution of the United Church of Christ.

The United Church Funds, Inc. will work cooperatively with the United Church of Christ Board to facilitate comprehensive financial planning and development; and will continue its relationship with The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ. It shall have membership on the United Church of Christ Board.

The corporate membership of the United Church Funds, Inc. shall consist of 15 persons nominated and elected by the United Church of Christ Board for terms of six years, one-third to be elected each biennium and to serve until their respective successors are elected and qualified. The General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ and the chairperson of the United Church of Christ Board shall be appointed members. At least two of the members elected each biennium shall not be members of the United Church Funds, Inc. at the time of their election. The United Church of Christ Board may remove a member of the United Church Funds, Inc. and shall fill vacancies for unexpired terms.

Other Provisions

No person shall serve in more than one General Synod elected position simultaneously. Further, no employee of a Covenanted, Associated, or Affiliated Ministry shall serve as a voting member of the United Church of Christ Board, except as otherwise set forth in these Bylaws.

All members of the United Church of Christ Board, with the exception of the representatives from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), shall be members of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE V. INDEMNIFICATION

Any Officer of the United Church of Christ, or any member, including officers and directors, of the General Synod, the United Church of Christ Board or the Councils, Committees, and Committees of the General Synod may, to the full extent allowed by law, be indemnified by the United Church of Christ Board against all judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement of, and against all reasonable expenses, including attorney’s fees, actually and necessarily incurred in defense of any lawsuit, proceeding or prosecution (including appeal thereof) wherein such person is made a party by reason of being such officer or member to the extent such person is not otherwise indemnified by another entity. This provision shall also extend to any lawsuit, proceeding, or prosecution in which such officer or member is made a party in such person’s capacity as an officer or member of another organization in which the person serves at the request of any of the above entities or bodies.
In all other lawsuits, proceedings, or prosecutions, indemnity shall not be made unless the officer or member acted in good faith and for a purpose which the person reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Entity or body of which the person is an officer or member and in criminal actions or proceedings only upon the additional requirement that the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the operative conduct or inaction was unlawful.

These indemnity provisions shall also operate for the benefit of anyone duly serving in a representative capacity for such member or officer.

The United Church of Christ Board is authorized to purchase insurance providing indemnification pursuant to the provisions of the preceding. Any such contract of insurance may afford coverage for matters as to which the United Church of Christ Board may not give indemnity.

ARTICLE VI. OTHER BODIES

The following groups are identified as related in covenant to the United Church of Christ, through a primary relationship with the United Church of Christ Board.

COUNCILS

Council for American Indian Ministry

Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) is a national body with primary responsibility for providing Christian ministry and witness in American Indian settings, and is a resource to the whole United Church of Christ in understanding and supporting American Indian churches and communities. The Council for American Indian Ministry supports and gives general direction to the American Indian members and congregations of the United Church of Christ, advocating with them, through CAIM’s Recognized Unit of Ministry, to embody their own cultures and values and to be vital parts of the United Church of Christ and the Conferences in which they are located. The Council for American Indian Ministry encourages and supports the identification, enlistment, and support of American Indian candidates for authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ. Working with American Indian people throughout the United Church of Christ, the Council seeks to develop broad bases of visibility, nurture and support for American Indian people, communities, and churches. The Sixteenth General Synod vote calls for CAIM to be accountable to the General Synod through the United Church of Christ Board and to be funded from one-third of the net income of the neighbors in need offering.

Council for Higher Education

The Council for Higher Education (CHE) shall be composed of the academies, colleges, and theological schools that indicate their desire to be recognized as related to the United Church of Christ and that are accepted by the Council as conforming to its standards; and of representative(s) from the United Church of Christ Board. For purposes of business and policy making, member academies, colleges, and theological schools shall be represented by each institution’s executive head or other key officer as designated by each institution’s executive head. The Council shall organize with its own chairperson, secretary, and any other officers needed to carry on its work. All officers shall be executive heads of their institutions. The Council shall be administratively related to the General Synod through the United Church of Christ Board; this provision not precluding the Council’s right to direct access to the General Synod concerning any matters in which it may feel that its interests in program or budget require the exercise of such access. An Associate General Minister appointed by the General Minister and President shall be an advisory member of the Council with voice but without vote. The Council shall be
organized in two sub-sections: College and Academy Section, and Seminary Section. The
Council for Higher Education shall advance and interpret higher education in the United Church
of Christ, including the cultivation of closer relationships between the educational institutions and
the Church, the expression of the connection between faith and knowledge in those institutions,
and, in cooperation with the United Church of Christ Board, the promotion of education as an
integral part of the Church’s mission.

Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries
295 Created by the Fourteenth General Synod (83-GS-43) the Council for Racial and Ethnic
Ministries (COREM) provides a place where racial and ethnic groups can develop their common
agenda, collaborate with appropriate program and mission bodies of the United Church of Christ
so that resources for racial and ethnic ministries will be effective and relevant, discern appropriate
ways by which the many and varied gifts of racial and ethnic groups may be made available to the
Church, and advocate for racial and ethnic concerns within the United Church of Christ. It is
composed of two representatives each from the Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministry
(PAAM), The Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries, the Council for American Indian Ministry
(CAIM), United Black Christians (UBC), Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice
(MRSEJ), and United Samoan Ministries (USM) who are accountable to the groups that send
them. COREM is accountable to the United Church of Christ Board.

Council for Theological Education
296 The Council for Theological Education (CTE) shall be responsible for fostering mutual
accountability between the United Church of Christ and the Seminaries of the United Church of
Christ, for periodic reviews of the criteria for being designated as a Seminary of the United
Church of Christ, and for the general well-being of the relationship between the seminaries and
the United Church of Christ. The Council will exercise care for the Seminaries, explore ways by
which theological education contributes to the leadership needs of the Church, foster cooperation
among the Seminaries, and facilitate communication and appropriate engagement between the
Seminaries of the United Church of Christ and Historically Related Seminaries and with other
seminaries which provide theological education for persons preparing for authorized ministry in
the United Church of Christ. Seminaries of the United Church of Christ retain full membership
and responsibility in the Council for Higher Education and its seminary section. The Council will
provide comment to the United Church of Christ Board whenever the United Church of Christ
Board prepares to recommend a seminary for recognition as a Seminary of the United Church of
Christ. The Council shall be composed of the President and one additional representative from
each of the Seminaries of the United Church of Christ, a representative from one of the
Historically Related Seminaries, two representatives from the Council of Conference Ministers
elected by that Council, two conference staff persons who relate to a Committee on Ministry
and/or work with the search and call process from a conference not otherwise represented on the
Council, four persons who serve on a Committee on Ministry, the General Minister and President,
and an Associate General Minister appointed by the General Minister and President. The General
Minister and President will assign staff members as necessary to support the programmatic work
of the Council. An intentional effort will be made to ensure that those who have been historically
under-represented be present in the membership of the Council. The Council shall meet annually
and shall elect its own officers each biennium.

Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries
297 The Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries (CYYAM) shall serve to advocate,
support programs, and be a resource for youth and young adult ministries throughout the United
Church of Christ and shall report to the United Church of Christ Board and to the General Synod
on issues, developments, and concerns in youth and young adult ministries in church and society.
It shall monitor to ensure that the unique gifts and talents of youth and young adults are present in all aspects of the life of the Church. It shall inform, envision, and shape national youth and young adult ministry priorities across the Church. The Council and its membership will act as a resource regarding youth and young adult ministry opportunities across the Church (including but not limited to internships, mission trips, Regional Youth Events, National Youth Event, and the General Synod). The Council shall organize itself as needed in order to carry out its work and shall have direct access to the United Church of Christ Board and the General Synod in areas of program and budget. The Council’s composition shall reflect the United Church of Christ’s commitment to having a diversity of perspectives in church governance.

**Council of Conference Ministers**

298 The Council of Conference Ministers (CCM) shall be composed of the Conference Ministers of the several Conferences. The General Minister and President shall be a member ex-officio, without vote, of the Council and its Cabinet. It shall select a chairperson and such other officers and committees as it shall deem necessary. It shall elect from its members those who are to serve on the United Church of Christ Board and in other representative positions, distributing those positions among the Regions. It shall maintain a close relationship with the Officers of the United Church of Christ, the United Church of Christ Board, and national units the Covenanted Ministries, the Affiliated Ministry, and the Associated Ministry with respect to matters affecting the life of the Church.

**Historical Council**

299 The Historical Council (HC) shall be composed of 12 members, three elected by each of the Historical Societies, Congregational Christian and Evangelical and Reformed, and six at large appointed by the United Church of Christ Board. One-third shall be named each biennium for a term of six years, to serve until their respective successors are named and qualified, and not to exceed two terms. The United Church of Christ Board will name from these 12 members the chairperson. The Council shall meet at the call of the General Minister and President or the chairperson. It shall act in an advisory capacity to the General Minister and President and the United Church of Christ Board in overseeing the archives of the United Church of Christ and of the two Historical Societies, in expressing interest and concern for all archival collections related to the several heritages of the denomination, in recommending the amount to be allocated in the contributions budget for the Historical Societies, and in reminding the United Church of Christ of its traditions. The Council shall receive financial support through the United Church of Christ Board and staff support as assigned by the General Minister and President.

**Council for Health and Human Service Ministries**

300 The Council for Health and Human Services Ministries (CHHSM) was recognized by the Fifteenth General Synod as an organization composed of institutions and programs in health and welfare related to the United Church of Christ and accepted by the CHHSM as conforming to its standards. The CHHSM is organized with its own Directorate and Officers. The purposes and functions of the CHHSM shall include: 1) The support and nurture for its member institutions and programs in fulfillment of their ministries as part of the mission of the United Church of Christ; 2) Representation of the ministries of its member institutions and programs to the General Synod and United Church of Christ Board in the conduct of the mission of the United Church of Christ in health and welfare; 3) Cooperation with the Conferences and the United Church of Christ Board in the process of Conference recognition of health and human service ministries, monitoring the authorization to seek funds within Conferences, and approval of requests to conduct capital campaigns; 4) Provision, annually, to the United Church of Christ Board, the names of those member institutions and programs which conform to the standards set by CHHSM; 5) Cooperation with the United Church of Christ Board in collecting information on
institutions and programs in health and welfare to be listed in the United Church of Christ Yearbook; and 6) Participation in secular, ecumenical, and inter-faith networks in the field of health and welfare.

SELF-CREATED GROUPS

The Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries

The Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries is a diverse community of children of a God who created us to flourish in this world, to live in interconnection with one another and creation through intentional relationships grounded in love, justice, and peace. We believe in Jesus' Good News message of extravagant welcome to ALL at the table of God, the acknowledgement and value of the diversity of people and their gifts, the promise of life in abundance, and freedom and wholeness for all of creation. In the spirit of mutual accountability, The Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries commits to sharing our experience and gifts with the whole church as we claim our place within the body of Christ, seeking to be members, not a mission of the United Church of Christ. Our membership is comprised of individuals, congregations, Associations, Conferences, and nationally based ministries of United Church of Christ who have endorsed the values and goals of the Colectivo and agree to join in covenant to strengthen and support the mission and ministry of Latinx people in the UCC. We also welcome dialogue and connections with ecumenical partners and community-based organizations that share our values.

Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice

Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice (MRSEJ) is a group which brings together clergy who advocate on behalf of African Americans in church and society, providing a caucus of ministers for fellowship, for sharing mutual concerns, and for actions regarding the agenda of the black constituency within the United Church of Christ. MRSEJ challenges, monitors, initiates, and supports the cause of African American involvement to the fullest possible measure in the life of the United Church of Christ.

UCC Disabilities Ministries

The UCC Disabilities Ministries (UCCDM) strives for the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in the life and mission of the Church. The UCCDM encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to be open, inclusive, affirming, and accessible in their buildings, worship, education, fellowship, and service so that they may proclaim God’s word to and with all persons, including those with disabilities. It seeks to enable all members of the United Church of Christ to affirm the theological/biblical affirmations of the wholeness of all people, and to recognize the ministry to and with persons with disabilities as a part of the ministry of all the baptized. The UCCDM Board of Directors includes persons with disabilities, members of families of persons with disabilities, experts on disabilities, and other persons from the United Church of Christ who support the purposes of the UCCDM and reflect the diversity of the United Church of Christ.

Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries

Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM), organized in 1974 and recognized by the Tenth General Synod, advocates for the presence, participation and contributions of PAAM in the life of the United Church of Christ and serves its constituent members and churches, initiating and supporting their life, and working for greater representation in wider church settings. It seeks to strengthen Local Churches, to nurture and develop lay and clergy leadership for the church, and to address issues of justice. As an advocate group for the rights of people, PAAM is involved in issues of the rights of Pacific Islander and Asian people in the United States and in the United Church of Christ and works in the areas of rights for women and children, the poor on welfare, institutional racism, and political prisoners.
United Black Christians

305 United Black Christians (UBC) is a special interest group which represents over 50,000 African-American members of the United Church of Christ. It stands in the affirmation that each person has gifts to offer to the Church, and that each is entitled to full rights and privileges as children of God. UBC dedicates itself to providing voice for all African-American members of the United Church of Christ, seeking to witness to, and preserve the history and legacy of the African-American people and churches. UBC is an active advocate for liberation and social justice at home and abroad.

The Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ

306 The Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ (The Coalition) is composed of members and friends of the United Church of Christ who affirm the good news that all persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions are loved and empowered by God. The Coalition actively works to combat prejudice and seeks justice for, and the full inclusion and involvement of, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Christians in all expressions of the United Church of Christ. In its leadership and outreach, The Coalition is committed to ending exclusion based on sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, race, age, size, class and/or ableness. It promotes mutual ministries of pastoral care, education, and advocacy within the United Church of Christ and society as a whole; encourages Local Churches, Associations and Conferences to become “Open and Affirming” (ONA); and organizes within Conferences to make resources of The Coalition available to all.

United Samoan Ministries

307 United Samoan Ministries was organized in 2010 and recognized by the Twenty Ninth General Synod in Long Beach, California, in 2013. USM conducted its reorganization process between 2011 and 2014. USM is established to provide a setting for members of Samoan congregations in the United Church of Christ to gather for fellowship, spiritual nurturing, mutual support, and communications to strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ. USM also seeks but is not limited to: strengthening channels of communication among Samoan congregations in the United Church of Christ (UCC) and their respective ministries; exchanging of information and building communication about the UCC in all its settings including local congregations, Associations, Conferences, National Ministries and Global Partners; establishing a setting for collective decision-making that will fulfill the USM Mission Statement and strengthen the covenantal relationships among Samoan congregations within the UCC; providing a setting to develop and enhance the leadership and cultural identities among Samoan congregations in order to empower them in the UCC; and recognizing and celebrating the unique insights and contributions of Samoans throughout the life of the UCC. USM encourage all Samoans of all ages to affirm their unique ethnic and cultural identities while embracing the Still Speaking God and find joy, spiritually “no matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.”

UCC Mental Health Network

308 The UCC MHN faithfully seeks to understand and address the impact of mental health challenges on the members of our congregations, in our communities, and our society. We encourage all settings of the UCC to be welcoming, inclusive, supportive, and engaged with persons who are living with a mental health challenge, brain disorder, and substance use disorder. All are invited into the Body of Christ, and those living with mental health conditions are welcomed into the work and leadership of the Church. Through educational materials, conferences across the country, practical resources, stories from individuals and congregations, and the WISE for Mental Health certification, the UCC MHN answers Jesus’ call to build the Kingdom of God. We urge congregations, Associations, and Conferences of the UCC to become
WISE about mental health as a way to live fully with justice, peace, and love. The UCC MHN Board of Directors does this work through a diversity of people, especially those who are personally living with mental health challenges, brain disorders, substance use disorders, and their loved ones, as well as professionals in mental health and recovery from addiction.

Relationships

Unless otherwise designated in these Bylaws, each of the aforementioned bodies shall have a primary relationship with the United Church of Christ Board which shall serve as its primary linkage to the national expressions of the United Church of Christ, to which it shall report annually. This primary relationship shall be defined by the United Church of Christ Board in consultation with the respective group. The designated relationship shall be reviewed each biennium by the appropriate partners, and may be changed upon the mutual consent of those partners, and so declared by vote of the United Church of Christ Board. The General Minister and President shall be responsible for initiating said review.

In effect July 3, 2017; amendments approved by the General Synod in 2017 that were contingent upon ratification of the amendments to the Constitution were effective October 13, 2018. Updated effective June 25, 2019 upon recognition by the General Synod of The Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries and UCC Mental Health Networks as Historically Underrepresented Groups.
The UCCB Financial Report

General Synod 33

Tami Marinella, Chief Financial Officer
Accountability & Transparency
Strategic Priorities

- Inclusive Excellence
- Technology Infrastructure
- Curriculum, Training & Development
- Innovation Center & Think Tank
- Strategic Organizational Alignment
### Operating revenues and support:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020</th>
<th></th>
<th>2019</th>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total return draw</td>
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<td>8,276</td>
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<td>OCWM-Special support</td>
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<td>1,479</td>
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<td>Gifts, donations and trust income</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>1,779</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,564</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Management fees &amp; reimbursements</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2,547</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2,053</td>
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<td>Publications and other resource sales</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>1,234</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>685</td>
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<td>Total Operating revenues and support</td>
<td><strong>20,863</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>22,377</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>21,941</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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In thousands of Dollars, except for %
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCWM-Special Support (Operating):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors in Need</td>
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<td>Strengthen the Church</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>335</td>
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<tr>
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<td>OCWM-Special Support (Non-Operating/Pass-Through):</td>
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<td>One Great Hour of Sharing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,341</td>
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<td>2,365</td>
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In thousands of Dollars, except for %
2020 National Setting Costs

- Programs: 74%
- Administration: 17%
- Fundraising: 9%
The National Setting in 4 Acts
Thank You!
REPORT REGARDING THE RE-ELECTION OF THE ASSOCIATE GENERAL MINISTER

On October 3, 2020, the United Church of Christ Board nominated for re-election by the Thirty-Third General Synod the Rev. Traci Blackmon, Associate General Minister of the United Church of Christ, for an additional four-year term as Associate General Minister of the United Church of Christ, and submits its nomination for consideration by delegates to the Thirty-Third General Synod, meeting virtually July 11-18, 2021.

Heather E. Kimmel

General Counsel and Corporate Secretary

May 10, 2021
APPENDIX I

BECOMING A CHURCH OF CONTEMPLATIVES IN ACTION
A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS the 21st century has seen a resurgence of Christian spiritual and contemplative practices, yet many churchgoers have not heard of or engaged in these practices in church;

WHEREAS people who leave church often find a scarcity of spiritual food there to nourish their souls, and are frequently unfamiliar with practices that cultivate self-care and love of God; and have turned to other spiritual and secular communities and organizations to fulfill this need;

WHEREAS there is a wide diversity of spiritual practices in the Christian tradition, and we aim to honor the diversity of each of these practices as they serve to build up the body of Christ;

WHEREAS with the crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, systemic racism, and the financial fallout causing greater need than ever for work for social justice, the church is called to model and share expressions of activism modeled in the contemplative spirit of Jesus;

WHEREAS Jesus said “I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit” (John 15: 5), and Christian contemplative practices hold the goal of abiding more deeply in Christ;

WHEREAS if we look at the “Tree of Contemplative Practices”[1] as but one example of this diversity, we see that the myriad of spiritual disciplines far surpasses what the Church universal and the UCC in particular have offered to church members. As Barbara Holmes says, "Contemplative practices can be silent or evocative, still or embodied in dance or shout. Always, contemplation requires attentiveness to the Spirit of God."[2];

WHEREAS being “transformed by the renewing of our minds” (Romans 12: 2) begins with honest self-examination, reflective introspection and dialogue, and intentions and commitments to change, through God’s grace;

WHEREAS the UCC is rooted in the “Three Great Loves” of neighbor, children, and creation, and authentic contemplative practices expand our capacity and commitment to love and justice, so that we might be clearer channels for God’s love to shine through and might more fully “come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.” (Ephesians 4: 13)

WHEREAS the UCC is often identified as a progressive church for activists, whereas what makes the church unique is its spiritual grounding in the love and wholeness of God,
WHEREAS the church’s foundation of divine love grounds and informs communal life in the body of Christ, as well as provides the reason for why the church expresses its witness in active forms of justice, peace, and service in the world;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages local churches to become churches of “contemplatives in action,” remembering the essential disciplines modeled by Jesus of silent prayer, meditation, and practices to commune with the Divine Mother-Father, and letting contemplative depth inspire our forming and sustaining of life-giving, spiritually-generative community and our church’s action in the world through works of charity, social justice, peacemaking, earth-stewardship, and making disciples on the path of God’s unconditional, agape love;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages training of future clergy and lay leaders in the ways of contemplation, spiritual practice, and Christian mysticism, providing experiential grounding for the sustained life of faith; living into our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ and as children of God to see the Divine in everyone and everything in all creation, beginning with ourselves and expanding our love into ever-widening circles;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod invites local churches to commit to being a “both/and” rather than an “either/or” church- a church that prioritizes contemplation, spending time communing with God in various forms of prayer; and a church of activism that seeks to make God’s love and justice real in the world; thus a church of both contemplation and action—a church of “contemplatives in action” where our love of God through contemplative practices informs how we live and act in the world, and where our interior and exterior spiritual practices complement, ground, and inspire one another.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod calls upon all settings of the United Church of Christ to invest in curriculum and resources to support Conferences, Associations, local churches, clergy, lay leaders, General Synod and seminaries in practicing and teaching a foundational life of spiritual practices, as modeled in the life of Jesus. In this resourcing, all settings are called to remain committed to the UCC’s diversity as a Multicultural, Multiracial, and Anti-racist church, thus honoring the diversity of spiritual and contemplative practices and teachers from many and varied cultures through whom the spirit works in different ways;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod encourages all settings of the UCC seek to live out the foundation of contemplative practices in the ministry of God’s work in the world—making inclusive, participatory spiritual practices and teachings that cultivate being, introspection, reflection and growth an integral part of National gatherings, including committee work, children’s, youth and adult ministries, ecumenical partnerships, and General Synod;

FUNDING: Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.
IMPLEMENTATION: The Collegium of Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries of other entities with the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE AND RESPOND TO
RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS
A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS “racism is a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities,” in the words of Ibram X. Kendi.¹

WHEREAS without exception and across generations, racial inequities persist in every system of society—as evidenced through health care access, education, criminal justice, employment, housing, access to food and clean water, services to youth, older adults, and persons with disabilities, organizational leadership, governmental office, voting, and immigration, among many others—and thus a specific anti-racist lens is required for health equity and broader systemic change.²

WHEREAS inequities based on race also intersect with other dimensions of identity—such as income, sex, gender, sexuality, citizenship and incarceration status, geographic location and housing status, ability, education, language proficiency, etc.— and thus racial justice is a necessary method from which to respond to other intersecting oppressions impacting health and equity overall.³

WHEREAS public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities and environments in which they live, learn, work and play.⁴

WHEREAS the word crisis, comes from the ancient Greek word that means “turning point,” and comes from the verb meaning “to decide”—thus connoting a call to change and action.⁵

WHEREAS framing racism as an issue of public health rallies and compels faith communities, organizations, and the government to address the crisis through systemic change, in the same way other threats to public health have been addressed, such as through policies, practices, enforcement, education, and support services.⁶

WHEREAS for over thirty-five years, research has shown how racism undermines the physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational health and wellbeing of People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color, as evidenced by The Report of the Secretary’s Task Force on Black and Minority Health (Heckler Report).⁷

WHEREAS Healthy People 2020, the federal government’s prevention agenda for building a healthier nation continues to name the achievement of health equity, the elimination of disparities, and the improvement the health of all groups as the nation’s overarching goal.⁸
WHEREAS social determinants of health—the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age—have a profound impact on the health of People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color; as the effects of trauma, poverty, and environmental devastation due to structural racism cannot be overstated in this regard; as the majority of changeable contributors to healthy outcomes are found in these social determinants; as these inequities are avoidable and able to be changed through policy and the redistribution of money, power, and resources; and as this is evident nationally and globally.

WHEREAS research shows that racial discrimination and the impact of implicit bias continues to persist in medicine and remains a fundamental cause of health disparities, which can also be remedied through changes in policy and education.

WHEREAS health disparities for People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color remain at unacceptable rates and breadth—as evidenced by lower life expectancy, higher infant and maternal mortality, poorer treatment for pain, cancer, cardiovascular conditions, mental health and end-of-life care, and inadequate access to and quality of health care, among many others.

WHEREAS the joint forces of racism and ableism have constructed an inaccessible society and an understanding of disability as an inherently undesirable, devalued, and diminished life experience, which has resulted in abuse, neglect, incarceration, institutionalization, and social exclusion across generations of disabled People of Color, in particular.

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the devasting reality of these racial health disparities and the social and political conditions that created them; as structural racism has been proven to be a barrier to COVID-19 treatment and prevention; as Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities have a COVID-19 mortality rate of more than 2.7 times the rate of People of European Descent; as the Navajo Nation’s infection rate has been the highest in the country; as disparities in economic stability and health care access have been linked to infection rates and death; as Communities of Color are more likely to live in multigenerational homes; as workers of African Descent are more likely to be in jobs deemed essential; and as one in five state and federal prisoners had COVID-19.

WHEREAS police violence, state-sanctioned terror, and the systems that uphold and condone them are an integral part of this public health crisis; as People of African Descent are three times more likely to be killed by police (and are nearly one and a half times more likely to be unarmed in those killings) than those of European Descent; as research shows that the presence of high use of force by police in Communities of Color is associated with an increased risk in poorer health, high blood pressure, and diabetes, among other health concerns; as 98.3 percent of killings by police from 2013-2020 have not resulted in officers being charged with a crime; as poor data collection by law enforcement has contributed to the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women; and as People of African Descent are overrepresented on death row and are more likely to die by state execution.

WHEREAS mass incarceration and the inherently racist war on people who use drugs have targeted and ravaged Communities of Color through every measure and expression of health.
as 60 percent of the 2.2 million Americans incarcerated are of African Descent or Latinx; as People of African Descent are nearly six times more likely to be incarcerated for drug-related offenses than their counterparts of European Descent, despite equal substance usage rates; as 72,000 people died from drug overdoses in 2019; as the opioid overdose crisis is fueled by socioeconomic inequities, trauma, and hopelessness, in addition to harmful prescribing practices; and as numerous governmental laws and organizational policies refuse to adopt life-saving harm reduction strategies.

WHEREAS immigration status directly influences health outcomes; as migrant detention centers have a long history of medical neglect and abuse, including preventable deaths of 96 children; and as family separation has long-term damaging psychological and health consequences for children, families, and communities.

WHEREAS a tool of white supremacy and capitalism is to inflame and sustain racial tension and hatred in order to prevent People of European Descent, particularly those who are low-income, and People of Color from uniting as a collective force to dismantle these oppressive systems, and is also wielded in such a way, where upholding racist beliefs becomes more important than—and at the expense of—the health of European Americans that would also be improved, if not saved, by anti-racist policies.

WHEREAS the answers, strategies, and practices that have come from many People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color use public health perspectives to guide their life-saving work.

WHEREAS voting and protecting voting rights are essential for advancing health equity; as there exists a correlation between voting behaviors and poor health; and as voting establishes the policy makers who will make decisions on a systemic level.

WHEREAS there is reason to have hope; where although the magnitude and overwhelming reality of racism can evoke a sense of powerlessness, addressing social determinants of health is a practical way to move forward together on the path to justice. The church, in all of its expressions, can be a vessel for that hope to come alive. The church can be a place of trust, connection, and collaboration with the wisdom already present in communities working for transformation; as Christ modeled that the work of the Good News is shared and can start today; and as each member of the Body has their own unique role to play, gift to give, and worth to claim.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ declares racism a public health crisis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the national setting of the United Church of Christ to enable and encourage local churches, conferences, and organizations to develop methods to:

a. Raise the church's consciousness of racism as a public health crisis from theological, bioethical, and public health perspectives.
b. Monitor and advocate for public policies that work towards health equity by addressing social determinants of health and divest in those that cause harm, violence, and death.
c. Discover ways in which current ministries and mission connect with and can address racism as a public health crisis and explore new ways of incorporating this lens into the life of the church.
d. Examine, in radical honesty, past and current organizational policies and practices in how they contribute or create barriers to health equity and racial justice.

e. Identify current and potential relationships with members of CHHSM, COREM, other health and human service organizations, advocacy groups, faith and community-based organizations, and academic institutions to collaborate on responding to racism as a public health crisis.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the U. S. Congress and state legislatures to pass legislation that would address social determinants of health, such as The Anti-Racism in Public Health Act, which would create a “Center on Anti-Racism in Health” at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and to establish a “Law Enforcement Violence Prevention Program” at the CDC.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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3 We heed the wisdom of the Combahee River Collective, which teaches, “If Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all the systems of oppression,” and name the inclusion of trans and gender-diverse folx into our understanding of this principle.
15 Timothy Cunningham et al., "Vital Signs: Racial Disparities in Age-Specific Mortality Among ..," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, last modified April 8, 2019, [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/rr/rr6606.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/rr/rr6606.htm).
16 Jamila Taylor et al., "Eliminating Racial Disparities in Maternal and Infant Mortality," Center for American Progress, last modified May 2, 2019,
31 "Black Workers Face Two of the Most Lethal Preexisting Conditions for Coronavirus—racism and Economic Inequality."
35 "National Police Violence Map."


TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS the human rights of African descendant people globally and in the United States continue to be challenged by the presence of racism and the legacy of whiteness, and

WHEREAS a myriad of social issues are byproducts of the racial inequities stemming from prejudice, bigotry, White privilege, White fragility, and White supremacy, and

WHEREAS the numbers of incarcerated people of African descent in the Americas continues to grow, and

WHEREAS disparities in healthcare, housing, education, the plight of women and girls, and a myriad of interconnected issues point to the need for addressing racism and calling attention to the need to protect the human rights of African descendant people.

WHEREAS in many countries, while African descendant people attained civil rights, the human rights guaranteed under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly continue to be elusive, and

WHEREAS data show that police have continued killing Black men and women at disproportionate rates, even after the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor sparked international protests against racism and police brutality, with a total of 164 Black men and women who were killed by police from January 1 to August 31, 2020 and

WHEREAS in June of 2020 four Black men, Malcolm Harsch, Robert Fuller Dominique Alexander and an unidentified Black teenager were found hanged to death, all reported by authorities to have committed suicide, a claim disputed by their family members and many other people, and

WHEREAS the Bible and Christian theology affirm - that all people are created in the image of God; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has consistently shown leadership in advocacy and for the rights of African descendant people in the United States and globally; and

WHEREAS the United Nations declaration of the Decade calls for the promotion and protection of the rights of people of African descent; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ passed several resolutions that address the unfair treatment of people of African descent, that call for legislation and action to address injustices perpetuated against African descendant people and continues to decry the systems that support and perpetuate white privilege and white supremacy as tools that produce racism and racial inequality;

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ continues to advocate for the dismantling of racism and racist institutions through education and policy;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015 - 2024);

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to increase awareness of the United Nations Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) and work ecumenically to promote the Decade;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to utilize this Decade to intentionally address the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to adopt the Decade themes of recognition, justice and development as frameworks for its advocacy, commitments and engagement in the fight for the rights of People of African Descent.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with 66 the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

1 http://undocs.org/A/RES/68/237
2 https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C3&as_vis=1&q=disparities+and+racism&btnG=
4 https://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=healthcare+disparities+and+racism&hl=en&as_sdt=0&as_vis=1&oi=scholart
10 https://couriernewsroom.com/2020/06/18/4-black-men-were-found-hanged-in-3-weeks-what-is-happening/
A RESOLUTION TO ADVOCATE AND ACT TO CHANGE THE CASH BAIL BOND SYSTEM TO ELIMINATE RACIAL AND SOCIAL INJUSTICES INHERENT IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM

A Resolution of Witness

WHEREAS the U.S. has the highest rate of incarceration in the world, and African Americans, Latinos, Latinas, and indigenous peoples are disproportionately incarcerated in the United States [i];

WHEREAS since 2000, the vast majority of the jail population increase was caused by the detention of individuals prior to trial (pretrial) of which 60 to 70% were classified nonviolent minimum-security [ii];

WHEREAS cash bail bonding is an over 2-billion-dollar industry [iii];

WHEREAS the inability to make cash bail extracts an untold human cost on the accused due to their loss of employment, housing and, often times, family support [iv];

WHEREAS there are proven instances of inadequate health care for incarcerated persons, death and injury suffered by incarcerated persons [v];

WHEREAS at least 70% of inmates in local jails are not convicted of any crime 8 [vi];

WHEREAS persons who cannot make bail are poor and four times more likely to receive jail time with sentences three times longer than those who do make bail [vii], [viii];

WHEREAS bail set for people of color exceeds that for whites by 35% and Latinos by 19% [ix];

WHEREAS three out of four criminal cases in state trial courts are for misdemeanors that, if proved, would result in fines and/or less than a year in jail [x];

WHEREAS political contributions made by the Bail Industry in between 2002 and 2016 exceeded $5,000,000 [xi];

WHEREAS money-based systems release nearly half of the most dangerous defendants with little to no meaningful supervision [xii];

WHEREAS the US is the only nation besides the Philippines to have a legal commercial bail bond industry;

WHEREAS corporate and/or systemic structures, or individuals which derive profit from the imprisonment of human beings serve to perpetuate the legacy of slavery, oppression and heartless greed which the United Church of Christ has long sought to expose and correct;

WHEREAS we are admonished as followers of Christ to “Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured;” (Hebrews 13:3)
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:
a. That the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ strongly urges the reform of
the bail bond systems within individual states and the United States in order to eliminate the racial
and social injustices in the present cash bail bond systems;
b. That the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages the individual
states and the United States to institute alternatives to cash bail bond systems;
c. That the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all settings of the
church to raise their consciousness of the theological, social, racial, ethnic and economic inequities
which make possible the existence of the unfair and unjust bail bond systems;
d. That, to accomplish these goals, the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ
calls upon all settings of the church to seek partnerships with other organizations also working
toward the goals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of
Christ calls upon the U.S. Congress and state legislatures to reform the cash bail bond systems to be
more just and humane.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with
the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or
other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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[i] “Highest to Lowest - Prison Population Rate.” The Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research,
School of Law, Birkbeck, University of London. https://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-
lowest/prison_population_rate?field_region_taxonomy_tid=All. “8 Facts You Should Know About
the Criminal Justice System and People of Color.” Jamal Hagler, 2015. The Center for American
Progress. https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2015/05/28/113436/8-facts-you-
should-know-about-the-criminal-justice-system-and-people-of-color/. “American Indians and
Crime”. Lawrence A. Greenfeld and Steven K. Smith. 1999, NCJ 173386, U.S. Department of
Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/aic.pdf
http://www.naco.org/sites/default/files/documents/Final%20paper_County%20Jails%20at%20a%20
Crossroads_8.10.15.pdf. Presbyterian Church (USA) "Bail Curriculum", June 5, 2018;
https://www.presbyterianmission.org/opw/2018/06/06/pcusa-bail-out-curriculum
of Family Physicians. https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/incarcerationandhealth.html
https://www.prisonpolicy.org/graphs/pie2017_jail_detail.html. Bail system is unfair to poor, reform
advocates say. Tammy Grubb. The News and Observer 8/5/2018
%2F2018%2F08%2F05&entity=Ar03600&sk=C385BCE1&mode=text. A closer look at cash bail


A COMMITMENT TO GENDER SAFETY & EQUITY IN MINISTRY SETTINGS

A Resolution of Witness

WHEREAS The General Synod of the United Church of Christ has taken a firm, unyielding stance for the human rights and safety of women, refuses to condone any form of violence against vulnerable people, [i] and strongly encourages clergy and laity to support survivors of sexual violence; [ii] and

WHEREAS The majority of women, both cisgender and transgender, whether they identify as women or as non-binary, are objectified and subjected to the violence and degradation of sexual assault and unwanted sexual advance; [iii] and

WHEREAS Sexual harassment and gender discrimination, including attacking, undermining and dismissing women and non-binary persons’ leadership, is a form of violence; and occurs within a national context of escalating violence against women in positions of public leadership; and

WHEREAS Women and non-binary persons risk further discrimination, violence, loss of employment, ostracism or death in daring to say no or confront the harasser, and penalty of being silenced or not believed when they dare to report; and

WHEREAS Gender expression continues to be a minefield for women and non-binary persons, who are pressured to exude the amount of femininity that makes others comfortable – “too feminine” is seen as helpless or intentionally seductive, but “too masculine” is considered confrontational and disrespectful - and women are still judged on their appearance, rather than on their skills, ideas, achievements, or other non sexual/non-gendered attributes; and

WHEREAS Women are still subject to economic violence, primarily in that they are paid less than men for the same or similar work, and this lower pay in turn reduces their pension, retirement benefits and Social Security payments; they are overcharged for “women’s products” and penalized for carrying out the responsibilities of home and family; and

WHEREAS These experiences of bias, discrimination and violence occur in ministry settings, and are experienced by clergy and lay women and non-binary persons holding positions of leadership within the Church; and

WHEREAS Such discrimination is founded in misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and racism, which are antithetical to the way of Jesus; and

WHEREAS Our society is in the midst of a cultural transformation, with the #metoo movement empowering survivors to break the silence and share their stories of rape, abuse, and sexual harassment, and women and non-binary persons have begun sharing their #churchtoo stories of how this occurs within the Church; and

WHEREAS Clergy, chaplains and faith leaders are called upon to provide pastoral care to those navigating gender discrimination, sexual harassment and violence, some of which occurs within our ministry settings; and
WHEREAS The United Church of Christ Ministerial Code of Ethics requires ministers to “not use my position, power, or authority to exploit any person”; [iv]

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ, confesses its complicity, active participation with, and passive acceptance of systems of sexism, misogyny, transphobia, and gender oppression that inhibit and limit leadership; directs the United Church of Christ Board and urges all other settings of the United Church of Christ – including (but not limited to) local congregations, Committees on Ministry, and Justice and Local Church Ministries Teams – to explore ways to promote gender safety, to empower women, transgender, gender-expansive, nonbinary, genderqueer, gender fluid, gender non-conforming, and two-spirit persons (hereinafter referred to as “Included Persons”), both lay and authorized ministers, and to raise issues regarding sexism and discrimination, reinforcing the covenants and standards of behavior which bind us together as conferences, associations, congregations, authorized ministers, lay leaders and members; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms the physical and sexual autonomy of Included Persons: the right not to have any other person invade their personal space without permission; the right not to be touched, or abused, either emotionally or physically, in any way by another person; the right to express gender in the ways they choose; the right to communicate autonomously, without reproach or censure based on sexism, misogyny, transphobia and gender oppression; the right to expect that any such action will in no way be held against them for any reason in the workplace, including all ministry settings, or in any social situation; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ directs the UCCB and urges all settings of the UCC to commit to gender equity and address inequities (e.g., compensation, benefits, senior leadership roles, other employment opportunities, hiring, promotion, and termination, etc.) for all Included Persons, both authorized ministers and laity who serve the Church; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod asserts that this work must simultaneously address the threats and realities of violence that result from racism, heterosexism, classism, xenophobia, immigration status (real and assumed), ableism, and other intersectional oppressions impose on the daily life and leadership of Included Persons in the Church.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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THE ALLIANCE OF ASSOCIATE CONFERENCE MINISTERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST REQUEST TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A FORMAL GROUP
A Prudential Resolution

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ takes seriously our individual Christian covenant with God as the primal covenant from which our human covenants are derived and by which they are shaped. 1

WHEREAS in the above view it is “the covenantal relationship with God that creates the church and, in turn created a covenantal relationship among the people who are the church.”2

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ holds seriously the call to be an open and welcoming faith community, accepting into the church body and leadership all facets of expression found in God’s people, creating a rich diversity of expression, background, culture, sexual and gender identity and expression.

WHEREAS the work of conference ministry and associate conference ministry places those doing the work at the intersection of church life, between the Local Church and the National Setting, including associations where those exist calling for “keeping communication flowing in all directions, nurturing relationships, articulating and supporting covenantal relationships.”3

WHEREAS in response to “[t]he Proposal for Action adopted by the Twentieth General Synod called upon local churches, conferences and associations, those called and employed by the church, and various national bodies to act in a variety of ways in support of the fair and just compensation of all persons called and employed by the church”4 the AACM states it provides resources and advocacy to support ACMs in their positions.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes the establishment of the Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers, a Self-Created Group serving to support those who serve in a staff or called position doing conference ministry in the support of the conference minister and conference.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED the Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers be identified as related in covenant to the United Church of Christ, through a primary relationship as a Self-Created Group with the United Church of Christ Board.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

4 Fair & Just Compensation A Report to the Twenty-first General Synod 97-GS-50 62-65
DECLARATION FOR A JUST PEACE BETWEEN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL
A Resolution of Witness

WHEREAS for over seventy years Palestinian people have faced dispossession of their land, displacement from their homes, a harsh military occupation, severe restrictions on travel, the military detention of their children, home demolitions – over 120,000 to date and the constant threat of more – and vast inequities in access to natural, economic, and medical resources when compared to that enjoyed by Israeli citizens living in illegal West Bank settlements, and also on a daily basis face severe restrictions on access to their olive groves, farms, and holy sites; [1] and

WHEREAS there are more than 5.6 million Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Administration representing a global displacement of Palestinian people dating back to 1948 whose future status remains unresolved; [2] and

WHEREAS the Israeli government has maintained an illegal military occupation of Palestinian territories since 1967 that includes the establishment of illegal Jewish-only settlements throughout the West Bank and more recently has enacted formal discrimination against its Arab citizens through the passage of the Nation State Law in 2018; [3] and

WHEREAS provocative actions under the Trump administration, including moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, the suspension of humanitarian aid to the United Nations Relief and Works Administration, and support for Israel’s proposed illegal annexation of land in the occupied West Bank have further injured the Palestinian community and imposed serious road blocks to peace; [4] and

WHEREAS the Trump Administration’s Department of Education has issued a rule labeling any criticism of the State of Israel as an antisemitic act in order to suppress advocacy for Palestinian rights on university campuses, and has joined many state governments in further suppressing freedom of speech in support of Palestinian civil society’s call for boycotts, divestment, and sanctions; [5] and

WHEREAS actions by Israel, with tacit and overt support from the United States government, have established conditions comparable to those in force under Jim Crow in the United States south between Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement, with segregation laws that enshrined systematic domination and oppression by whites over blacks. Israel’s acts of domination and oppression include, but are not limited to adoption of the Nation State Law in 2018, the building of the separation barrier, implementation of a restrictive pass system for Palestinians, the creation of Israeli-only highways through the West Bank, and imposed military detention of Palestinian children accused of crimes; and

WHEREAS the General Synod of the United Church of Christ and its officers have for over fifty years advocated for a negotiated process leading to a just peace between Israel and Palestine marked by adherence to international law and international standards of human rights and honoring the principle of self-determination and the rights of Palestinian refugees; [6] and

WHEREAS, reminiscent of historical examples such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and Southern Africa, Israel exhibits a current-day form of settler colonialism [7], actively engaged in the
removal and erasure of the indigenous Palestinian population, through a matrix of control that includes: the imposition of a harsh military occupation; the de facto annexation of Palestinian lands and threats of further annexation; the expansion of illegal Jewish only settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank; the contraction of Palestinian-controlled land; and the restriction of travel for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza;

WHEREAS Cry for Hope: A Call for Decisive Action issued by Palestinian Christian leaders and theologians in July, 2020 [8], states that “the very being of the church, the integrity of the Christian faith, and the credibility of the Gospel is at stake. We declare that support for the oppression of the Palestinian people, whether passive or active, through silence, word or deed, is a sin. We assert that Christian support for Zionism as a theology and an ideology that legitimize the right of one people to deny the human rights of another is incompatible with the Christian faith and a grave misuse of the Bible”;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopts the following Declaration:

1. We affirm that the continued oppression of the Palestinian people remains, after more than five decades of oppression of the Palestinian people, a matter of theological urgency and represents a sin in violation of the message of the biblical prophets and the Gospel, and that all efforts to defend or legitimize the oppression of the Palestinian people, whether passive or active, through silence, word, or deed by the Christian community, represent a fundamental denial of the Gospel. Therefore, we reject the notion that Israel’s occupation of Palestine is a purely political problem outside the concern of the church or that the oppression of the Palestinian people is an inevitable consequence of global or regional geopolitical interests.

2. We affirm that the biblical narrative beginning with creation and extending through the calling of the Israelites, the corrective admonitions of the prophets, the incarnation and ministry of Jesus and the witness of the apostles to the “ends of the earth” . . . speaks of God's blessing extending to “all the families of the earth.” (Genesis 12.3) Therefore, we reject any theology or ideology including Christian Zionism, Supercensionism, antisemitism or anti-Islam bias that would privilege or exclude any one nation, race, culture, or religion within God’s universal economy of grace.

3. We affirm that all people living in Palestine and Israel are created in the image of God and that this bestows ultimate dignity and sacredness to all: Therefore, we reject any laws and legal procedures which are used by one race or religion or political entity to enshrine one people in a privileged legal position at the expense of another, including Israel’s apartheid system of laws and legal procedures.

4. We affirm that all peoples have the right to self-determination and to their aspirations for sovereignty and statehood in the shaping of their corporate religious, cultural, and political life, free from manipulation or pressure from outside powers, and that a just resolution of conflicting claims is only achieved through the equal protection of civil rights, the fair and just sharing of land and resources, and peaceful negotiation based on international law and UN resolutions. Therefore, we reject the use of Scripture to claim a divine right to the land as the rationale for Israel’s illegal seizure and annexation of Palestinian land as well as the imposition of so-called peace agreements by Israel or the United States through the exercise of political and military domination.
that leaves Palestinians without equal rights, full citizenship, and the opportunity to thrive religiously, culturally, politically, and economically.

5. We affirm the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes if they so choose or to be compensated for their loss of property, consistent with UN General Assembly resolution 194 (1948). Therefore, we reject the denial of this right, just as we reject efforts to manipulate internationally-agreed upon definitions of refugees to attempt to erase this right which extends across generations.

6. We affirm the First Amendment constitutional right to freedom of speech and assembly to protest the actions of the State of Israel and to uphold the rights of Palestinians, including the use of economic measures to support justice as a First Amendment right and joining the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement by individuals, institutions, corporations, and religious bodies that advocate peace with justice or participate in any aspect of the use of economic measures to support justice. Therefore, we reject the idea that any criticism of policies of the State of Israel is inherently antisemitic, in confession that some criticism is antisemitic in intent or impact, and we oppose the efforts of U.S. federal and state governments to limit free speech on university campuses and to restrict or ban support of the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that national setting of the United Church of Christ send the text of this Declaration to Local Churches, Associations and Conferences; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that all settings of the United Church of Christ be encouraged to receive this Declaration as a prophetic call for renewed and continued advocacy for a just peace in Palestine and Israel and use it as a plumbline for taking action, including, for example:

a. Committing to hearing the voices of Palestinians regarding their situation, including the voices of Palestinian Christians through the study of Palestine Liberation Theology, attention to statements and appeals such as Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth (2009) and a Cry for Hope (2020), participation in travel seminars that expose visitors to the Palestinian community, and use of resources from Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

b. Implementing the calls of prior General Synod resolutions, including the 2015 Resolution, “A Call for the United Church of Christ to Take Actions Toward a Just Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” and the 2017 Resolution, “A Call for the United Church of Christ to Advocate for the Rights of Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation.”

c. Examining critically our use and interpretations of Scripture as well as liturgies and hymns that equate ancient Biblical Israel with the modern state in ways that promote settler colonialism and the dispossession of Palestinian land, rights, and cultural expressions.

d. Offering support and encouragement to college students and faculty members as well as the human rights groups (including Students for Justice in Palestine, Jewish Voice for Peace, American Muslims for Palestine, and many other allied groups), whose freedom to speak, witness and advocate on university campuses is threatened in any way by state or local governments, or by college administrators.
e. Advocating for the cessation of U.S. military aid to Israel until such time that Palestinian human rights, civil rights, and self-determination are fully realized and protected in compliance with international law, US laws on foreign military assistance, and the principles of human rights.

f. Supporting the full restoration of US funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency which carries out critical services by and for Palestinian refugees, and encouraging continued support for UCC partners which serve Palestinian refugees.

g. Demanding that the plight of Palestinian refugees be addressed by Israel and the international community based on United Nations Resolution 194 guaranteeing that “refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.”

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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[1] Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions: https://icahd.org/
[4] https://www.globalministries.org/ecumenical_statement_on_current_u_s_policy_and_israel_palestine
https://www.globalministries.org/ucc_disciples_leaders_issue_joint_statement_in_response_to_the_peace_and_prosperity_proposal
https://www.globalministries.org/not_peace_but_apartheid_b_tselem_s_brief_response_to_the_trump_plan
https://www.globalministries.org/ucc_disciples_leaders_issue_statement_on_israeli_settlements
A RESOLUTION TO BAN THE PRACTICE OF CONVERSION THERAPY
A Resolution of Witness

WHEREAS the medical practice known as “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” regards LGBTQ+ persons as abnormal or defective, and attempts to change or “repair” non-conforming sexual orientation or gender identity through widely-discredited therapeutic practices; [1] and

WHEREAS conversion therapy for adults is legal in 50 states and all U.S. territories, while conversion therapy for youth and children is still legal in 30 states; [2] and

WHEREAS many studies have shown that attempts to change or “repair” sexual orientation or gender identity are associated with compromised mental health including, among other harms, lifelong suffering as the result of internalized shame, increased risk of suicide, and difficulty in forming stable and lasting relationships; [3] and

WHEREAS a survey of at-risk LGBTQ+ youth published by the Trevor Project in 2020 showed that 42 percent who were subjected to conversion therapy had attempted suicide, while the attempted suicide rate of transgender and non-binary youth during or after conversion therapy was even higher at 57 percent; [4] and

WHEREAS virtually every professional association in the health care industry has declared that conversion therapy is ineffective, unethical or harmful, including the American Medical Association, the American College of Physicians, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychoanalytic Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Counseling Association, and the National Association of Social Workers; [5] and

WHEREAS in December 2020 UCC denominational leaders joined Archbishop Desmond Tutu and more than 400 other Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Sikh and Hindu faith leaders as signatories of the statement “Declaring the Sanctity of life and the Dignity of All” which called “for all attempts to change, suppress or erase a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression—commonly known as ‘conversion therapy’—to end, and for these harmful practices to be banned”; [6]

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ, affirming the dignity and worth of all people, deplores the practice of “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” that denies LGBTQ+ youth, children, and adults the opportunity to experience the blessings of love and human integrity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod strongly urges parents and guardians, caregivers, and authorized ministers in the United Church of Christ to protect those in their care from any practice or program that purports to “cure” their sexual orientation or gender identity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod strongly urges congregations and all other settings of the church to advocate for state and federal laws protecting youth, children, and adults from “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” by banning the practice; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod encourages congregations and other settings of the church to work with ecumenical and interfaith partners to raise awareness of the harms of “conversion therapy” or “reparative therapy” and to advocate for banning the practice; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that The Thirty-Third General Synod strongly urges congregations and other settings to strengthen their efforts to reach their LGBTQ+ neighbors, especially youth and children, with the Good News that their sexual orientation and gender identity or expression are gifts from God.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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“WHO WILL SPEAK FOR THE TREES?” A RESOLUTION ON THE RIGHTS OF NATURE  
A Resolution of Witness

FINAL TEXT

WHEREAS all rights, human and the more than human lives, depend on the flourishing and vital natural cycles of life, and healthy Earth living systems. We are all interconnected to all living beings, and when we diminish or fail to recognize the rights of the natural world, we diminish our own life. Humanity and nature are interconnected, The Rights of Nature recognizes a reciprocal and responsible human relationship with Nature; [1]

WHEREAS The UCC has a long history of creation-care, starting with the recognition of environmental racism in the 1980s, its studies on toxic pollution (1987, 2007, 2020), responsibly and the campaign of the Three Great Loves: Neighbor, Children, and Creation (2017), programs on Green and Creation Justice Churches, and the formation of Environmental Justice Teams. The United Church of Christ Synod has passed resolutions that directly express concerns for Earthcare; [2].

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ boldly proclaims in the public square that:

• Humans need a dramatic shift from the point of view that the Earth and all her resources are available for our sole benefit.

• Nature is not ours for enslavement but was created as a mutually sustaining ecosystem, which is not to be destroyed or abused. People of faith are stewards of the land in our care. We proclaim publicly, “The Earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it” (PS. 24:1).

• The Earth is an original gift to sustain all life.

• We are indebted to the leadership and witness of Indigenous Peoples and the labor of generations of those who have actively been engaged in the conservancy and stewardship of the earth as central to their being.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ listens to the cries of the Earth, adopts this “Rights of Nature” resolution, and takes the following prophetic actions:

• Promote compassionate care, foster love, and co-live responsibly with the Earth Community of Life. [3] Safeguard the common goods, space and shared resources of the Earth, for humanity and biokind. Uphold the rights of ecological integrity, biodiversity, and healthy bioregions. Advocate intergenerational responsibility for the biotic community of the Earth and gratitude of the natural world as divine gift. Promote the value of interdependence of humans and Nature as fundamental to sustainable life on Earth. Affirm that co-living with Nature involves distributive justice, a fair sharing and responsible participation of natural resources.
• Uphold the ecological principle that the Rights of Nature supersedes harmful and destructive property rights, for the balanced cycles of the natural world must be protected as a common good for the present and future generations of human life and biokind. Advocate for EPA regulations and protections that promote the Rights of Nature. Promote economies of life rather than unregulated extractive economies that exploit resources. Seek financial reparations and restoration to the habitats when corporations and/or government projects harm and damage habitats.

• Support the Earth Charter, the Nature Rights movement, and the movement of Indigenous Peoples to grant legal standing to nature. [4] Urge all corporate and/or governmental land and water projects to perform environmental impact studies on minimizing damage to habitats (waterways, lands, atmosphere) and wildlife. Promote the right of local communities or environmental organizations to represent the unheard voices and cries of Nature.

• Foster respect and gratitude for Nature as a divine gift. Combat attitudes that relegate Nature to mere capital for profit or a dumping ground for toxic waste.

• Promote the Rights of Nature to be free from human harm, including the right to healthy habitats, the right to species flourishing, the right to a fair share of the bio-region and its goods, and the right to fulfil their ecological potential without human infringements.

• Prioritize renewable energies over fossil fuels and prioritize the economies of life - such as the Green New Deal - over extractive and unbridled economies that pollute and damage the Earth.

• Encourage organic farming and regenerative agriculture. Encourage the reduction of pesticides and insecticides that negatively impact the soil, aquifers, and other life. Support family farming and local farmers’ markets. Work for food justice and security for all people.

• Support the upholding of all treaties with indigenous nations, respecting their lands and kinship natural relations. Ally with and support Indigenous Peoples in their de-colonization of Nature, protecting their kinship rights and access to sacred lands.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on all settings of the church to respond to the Rights of Nature by taking intentional actions such as:

• Participating in the Season of Creation for September Sundays; [5] incorporating creation care into each liturgical season (Tenebrae, Easter sunrise service outdoors, and Earth Day); preaching often on Earth Justice; celebrating outdoors or bringing the outdoors into the church.

• Ritualizing environmental grief by observing occasions such as International Day for Biological Diversity (May 22), Remembrance Day for Lost Species (November 30); starting environmental grief support groups.

• Fostering love of God’s creation, organizing walks in botanical gardens and wilderness areas, planting trees, taking nature hikes, and attending summer camps.
• Studying and implementing “A Kairos Call to Action”, a 10-year mobilization plan on climate change and inequality. [6]

• Becoming a Creation Justice Church and green church. [7]

• Subscribing to the UCC Environmental Justice newsletters and environmental newsletters, sharing webinars, and reading and studying about creation care and climate change, as spiritual practices to equip us for creation care.

• Working for the Green New Deal (the transition to renewable energies) and the Blue New Deal (protection and restoration of oceans and waterways); advocating for the Rights of Nature and taking part in climate strikes and non-violent protests.

• Organizing locally by partnering and building community networks with conservationist and environmental groups, and finding common ground to restore damaged environments.

• Being creative and imaginative in defense of the Rights of Nature.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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[7] https://www.ucc.org/how_it_works_becoming_a_creation_justice_church
A RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING TO END 128 YEARS OF WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM
A Resolution of Witness

WHEREAS Henry Opukahaia is known as the missionary from the Hawaiian Kingdom that encouraged American missionaries to arrive in Hawaii; [i], [ii] and

WHEREAS the first Christian nation in the pacific, the Hawaiian Kingdom constitution in 1840 began with a quote from the bible “God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on the face of the earth in unity and blessedness”; [iii], [iv], [v] and

WHEREAS on December 19, 1842, United States President John Tyler agreed to recognize the independence of the Hawaiian Kingdom; [vi] and

WHEREAS the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom through treaties with friendly nations around the world, successfully modernized Hawaiian self-governance at the time to prosper in peace, trade and friendship through treaties with friendly nations around the world for fifty years; [vii] and

WHEREAS Rev. Rufus Anderson, the author of the three-self method (self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating) and the long-term secretary of the ABCFM (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission) arrived in Hawai‘i in 1863 to tell the missionaries to create self-reliant, self-governing churches and "to devolve upon it (the Hawaiian churches) the responsibilities of self-government in ecclesiastical matters"; [viii] and

WHEREAS Rev. Anderson’s advice was not followed and the government of the Hawaiian Kingdom was overthrown on January 17, 1893; [ix] and

WHEREAS on December 18, 1893, President Grover Cleveland’s executive agreement to restore the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom was signed by Liliuokalani and received by U.S. ambassador Albert Willis; [x] and

WHEREAS in 1991, the Eighteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ directed President Paul Sherry to issue an apology on the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy for the complicity of the church in the overthrow; [xi], [xii] and

WHEREAS in 1993 President Clinton, with senators and representatives from Hawaii, signed Public law 103-150 apologizing for the United States role in the illegal occupation; [xiii] and

WHEREAS the National Lawyers Guild recommended to the Governor of the State of Hawaii “to begin to comply with international humanitarian law in its prolonged and illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Islands”; [xiv] and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has historically stressed the importance of Justice as a key faith component for the Church; and
WHEREAS the correction of injustices depends upon correct history based upon factual matters, and history is often based upon who writes the history and factual information available; and

WHEREAS the information included in this resolution will be available at https://ahecchurch.weebly.com/ about the founding of the Hawaiian Kingdom to correct false history about the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom; and

WHEREAS various General Synods of the United Church of Christ have taken proactive stands on Justice; and

WHEREAS justice depends upon action, not just stating what is true and just and right (pono in Hawaiian);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all settings of the church, denomination officers, conferences, associations, and congregations to live into the 1993 Apology of the United Church of Christ delivered to the Native Hawaiian People by President Paul Sherry;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the United Church of Christ’s General Counsel’s office to listen to and consider recommendations from the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches, other Native Hawaiian organizations, and Native Hawaiian voices drafting communications to local, national and international leaders and organizations calling for compliance with international humanitarian law and an end to the illegal occupation of the Hawaiian islands;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirm its commitment to stand alongside and in support of the efforts of Native Hawaiians to seek redress and restitution for the war crimes of the US against the Hawaiian Kingdom including, but not limited to, the crime of denationalization;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ Board will provide the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ with a written and oral update on the progress on the implementation of this resolution.

FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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[i] Papa Makua Wendell Davis 6th generation descendant of Henry Opukahaia
[iv] https://www.hawaii-nation.org/constitution-1840.html
[v] http://hooilina.org/cgi-bin/journal?e=d-0journal--00-0-0-004-Document---0-1--1en-50---20-
frameset-search-issue---001-
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[vi] International Treaties,” Hawaiian Kingdom Government, accessed December 13, 2020,
[vii] International Treaties,” Hawaiian Kingdom Government, accessed December 13, 2020,
(London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1872), 284
[x] The Hawaiian Kingdom Blog,” National Lawyers Guild Calls Upon State of Hawai`i to Comply
with International Law of Occupation, November 12, 2020,
https://hawaiiankingdom.org/blog/national-lawyers-guild-calls-upon-state-of-hawaii-to-comply-with-
international-law-of-occupation/
[xi] Charles McCollough, “Why Our Church Apologized to Hawaii,” Why our church apologized To
Hawai`i, December 13, 2020,
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy_url/11261/mccollough.pdf?1418
437063
49a311bc4489/ucoc0000/UD000001/00000019
[xiii] 103d Congress Joint Resolution, “Public Law 103-150,” Statute-107-Pg 1510, November 23,
[xiv] Sai, Dr. Keanu. “National Lawyers Guild Calls Upon State of Hawai`i to Comply with
https://hawaiiankingdom.org/blog/national-lawyers-guild-calls-upon-state-of-hawaii-to-comply-with-
international-law-of-occupation/