The Executive Council recommends this resolution be sent to a committee of the General Synod.

A CALL TO BE GLOBAL MISSION CHURCHES
IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
A Prudential Resolution

APPROVED

Submitted by: Wider Church Ministries

Summary

This resolution requests that the United Church of Christ underscore the priority of the Church to be involved in mission around the world through faith, justice and advocacy. Churches involved in global mission will be recognized for their commitment to reach out and respond to needs in the world by being designated as “Global Mission Churches.”

Biblical and Theological Rationale

God’s mission imperative for the Church is to be evangelical, to share the Good News (Gk. “evangel”) of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving, and serving from our doorsteps “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). As members of the United Church of Christ, our mission imperative is “that they may all be one” (John 17:21). This ministry of reconciliation and unity to which we are called is both local and global. Wider Church Ministries and Global Ministries partners with churches, conferences and associations on the journey of faithful mission. A global mission church is a vital church. Churches equipped for mission are flexible and growing. Global mission churches have strong local and global relationships, and know that mission involvement brings abundant blessings.

The character of a global mission church is expressed in scripture, attesting to the diversity of faithful and vital witness that demonstrates the transformative power of the Good News:

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer” (Romans 12:12); and

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2); and

“What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8); and

“At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality” (2 Corinthians 8:14); and

“Just as you excel in everything...see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (2 Corinthians 8:7); and

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’” (Isaiah 52:7); and
“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” (Galatians 6:9)

Christ calls for a commitment to hear the cries of people around the world; to find the energy and enthusiasm to reach out and respond with grace; to proclaim the joys as well as denounce the suffering of God’s people; to seek wisdom and guidance in building global connections in the life of all settings of the church; and to be immersed in the church’s work for the healing of the nations.

Local churches as well as UCC conferences seeking the designation “Global Mission Church” (or “Global Mission Conference”) will be encouraged and guided in study, exploration, dedication, and growth in order to live out that commitment by:

- praying regularly for partners, missionaries and the world,
- educating its members about global issues from preschool to adult,
- seeking justice for the “least of these” in the international community,
- receiving the gifts of the worldwide Church,
- giving to the work of global mission,
- sending its members into the world to share the Good News, and
- growing in sharing the story of God’s mission with others.

**The Resolution**

**Whereas** throughout the past two centuries, for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, global presence and witness have been at the core of God’s mission through the church; and

- since 1996 Global Ministries has been a common witness of the Division of Overseas Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and of Wider Church Ministries, United Church of Christ, an ecumenical endeavor unique among American Protestant denominations which today continues to walk with 270 global partners in some 68 countries discerning together priorities of critical presence and action with the sole purpose of timely and appropriately meeting God’s people and creation at the point of deepest need: spiritually, physically, emotionally and/or economically; and

- in keeping with the critical presence priority, over 150 persons in mission are currently serving as missionaries, volunteers, interns and associates in 50 countries, and missionaries sent by our global partners are welcomed to serve in the United States and Canada in fulfillment of our commitment to mutuality in mission; and

- the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, in a joint effort with various ecumenical initiatives in the United States and Canada and others throughout the world including the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA and the World Council of Churches, continue to seek ways to respond to God’s people and creation who are in need of wholeness and transformation, calling us to renew our commitment to God’s mission of reconciliation and unity which is both local and global; and
Whereas both denominations were founders of and still actively participate in bringing leadership to the ecumenical service organizations known as Church World Service and Action by Churches Together, providing sustainable self-help and development, disaster relief, and refugee assistance in some 80 countries; and

Whereas a local church engaged in ministry globally is a vital and faithful church, one that is dynamic and growing in strong local and global relationships, bringing abundant blessings, creating understanding and building communities of justice and service; and

Whereas Global Ministries seeks to facilitate the engagement of local churches and other settings of the church more intentionally in global mission; and

Whereas God’s call to mission is already embodied and celebrated in all settings of the church in myriad expressions of relationship, service, mission presence, justice witness, worship and advocacy; and

Whereas partnership means receiving the gifts and learning from the experiences of others in our world, building greater effectiveness through collective efforts and mutually recognizing and encouraging each other in ministry;

Therefore, let it be resolved that the Twenty-seventh General Synod, meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 26-30, 2009, promotes and encourages all settings of the church to claim and implement the Global Mission Church designation; and

Be it further resolved that the Twenty-seventh General Synod invites all settings of the United Church of Christ—National, Conferences, Associations and UCC conferences, and all age groups of the church, especially youth and young adults as well as adults, to utilize the assessment and implementation tool resources, such as Be a Global Mission Church; and

Be it finally resolved that the Twenty-seventh General Synod declares itself a “Global Mission Church,” and recognizes such designation as one of the priorities of the church; and, furthermore, the Twenty-seventh General Synod encourages local churches all settings of the United Church of Christ to claim the identity of being a Global Mission Church.

FUNDING

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

IMPLEMENTATION

Local churches, Associations and Conferences of the United Church of Christ, The Office of General Ministries, Wider Church Ministries, Justice & Witness Ministries and Local Church Ministries are requested to implement this resolution.