

WHEREAS, the United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ have common commitment to the visible unity of the church of Jesus Christ and to the one ecumenical movement;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ have common Congregational and Reformed heritage and sit in common witness to mission, worship, theological conversation and commitment to justice;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ and the United Church of Canada have engaged in dialogue and have identified similarities and differences that can commonly strengthen who they are and their witness in North America as united and uniting churches;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the twenty-ninth General Synod United Church of Christ recognize the United Church of Canada as an ecumenical partner;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ mutually commit to forming the United Church Ecumenical Partnership Committee, an ecumenical partnership committee of ten (10) persons – five from each communion;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the United Church Ecumenical Partnership Committee brings back to the thirtieth General Synod recommendations for further steps and activities to bring the two communions toward full communion and visible unity.

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 or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

12. RESOLUTION ON RESTRUCTURING OF CONFERENCE BOUNDARIES

Assistant Moderator Bonds called on Mr. Darryl Cruz, Chairperson of Committee 11, to present the committee's resolution.

Mr. Cruz moved the adoption of the resolution Restructuring of Conference Boundaries and spoke to the motion.

Discussion:

Geoff Brace (JWM) spoke in support of the resolution, stating we are at a critical point in our middle judicatories.

Dan Furman (MICH) spoke against the resolution and disapproved of the word “sustainable” future in Line 1369. He prefers a thriving future.

George Peters (RI) believes there needs to be a conversation among covenant partners involved and this action invites that conversation.

Lisa Gaul (SC) moved to change “sustainable” to “thriving” in Line 1369. The motion was seconded. The Executive Council liaison requested instead of changing sustainable to thriving, that “thriving” be added after sustainable. This was accepted by the Committee Chairperson.

Galen Russell moved to include “and future General Synods if necessary” in Line 1379. The motion was seconded.

The Committee Chairperson rejected the motion on the grounds that this was discussed in committee and not approved.

David Stewart (ILL) agrees with the proposer of the amendment.

Bertrice Wood (OHIO) spoke against the amendment. There are already conversations going on. The committee felt we need something done now.

13-GS-18 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes to defeat the amendment to include “and future General Synods if necessary” in Line 1379.

Discussion on the original motion:

Marc Stewart (MONT-NO. WY) spoke to the resolution

Tim Ahrens (OHIO) called the question. The motion was seconded.

13-GS-19 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes to call the question on the original motion.

13-GS-20 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod adopts the resolution Restructuring Conference Boundaries, as amended.

RESTRUCTURING CONFERENCE BOUNDARIES

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Twenty-ninth General Synod invites each of the thirty-eight conferences and their covenant partners (such as associations, local churches and authorized ministers) to engage in a prayerful process of discernment in order to assess what they may need to assure a sustainable and thriving future for their ongoing missional responsibilities as well as effective ministries; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Twenty-ninth General Synod calls upon the Collegium of Officers to work collaboratively and pastorally with any and all conferences and their covenant partners in a mutual process of discernment in order to develop viable proposals designed to revitalize conferences, share resources among them, and/or reconfigure conference boundaries in ways faithful to our church’s calling and which make practical sense; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any such proposals from conferences and a report from the Collegium will be transmitted to the Thirtieth General Synod for further deliberation and approval as necessary.