

**11. THE UNITED SAMOAN MINISTRIES OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
REQUEST TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED  
GROUP AND MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL FOR RACIAL & ETHNIC MINISTRIES  
RESOLUTION**

Assistant Moderator Holeman called on Mr. Bob Bachelder, Chairperson of Committee 8, who moved the adoption of The United Samoan Ministries of the United Church of Christ Request to be Recognized as a Historically Underrepresented Group and Member of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries resolution. He then spoke to the motion and recommended approval.

Discussion:

Jessica Cole (CA NV, S) stated it's obvious how enthusiastic and involved the Samoan youth are in the United Church of Christ. It's important to recognize and honor the rich culture of Samoa.

Deborah Dean Ware (MICH) stated she is sad to oppose this resolution. As she read the resolution and sat in on the committee meeting, she would like to trust that this resolution represents most of the Samoan churches. However, she does not believe it does. Is this a resolution that will promote unity especially as it relates to the PAAM as well as the COREM?

Felix Villanueva (CA NV, S) feels the resolution represents three of the five groups. The Samoan community understands what covenant means. The Samoan church in his conference is the largest growing community in the United Church of Christ. He urged support of the resolution.

Charles Buck (HI) stated the Samoan churches are a major portion of the United Church of Christ membership. He has some reservations about the resolution however. We're talking about some churches that are affiliated with other denominations. He thinks we need to take some time to understand the situation. He supports the concept, but not this particular resolution.

Sally Buffington (CA NV, S) urged support of the resolution and stated the Samoan people have a deep faith and much to say.

Julia Swain (CA NV, N) stated she would like to understand this issue more deeply. She does have concerns about the resolution as it currently stands. There is a need for continuing conversation and urged a negative vote. She also urged the Samoan community to bring this issue back to General Synod Thirty.

Alison Morales (CA NV, S) said this has not happened quickly. The Conference has worked for years to grow with our Samoan brothers and sisters. Not everyone is on the same page, but the Samoan community has asked to be recognized. They are still growing and have unique gifts. We can learn from them. She urged approval of the resolution.

Marilyn Pagan Banks (EC) opposes the resolution. She loves the Samoan community, but to separate them would diminish their role. COREM represents caucuses of unified peoples.

Assistant Moderator Brian Holeman called for a vote to stop debate.

**13-GS-49 VOTED:** The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes not to cease debate on the resolution.

Additional discussion:

Michiko Reyes (OGM) strongly supports our Samoan brothers and sisters. This is God's vision for us. Let's celebrate the diversity in our denomination.

Christopher Jenkins (MASS) objects on general principles. This is another effort to segment us. We say that they may all be one, but to add another group segments us further.

Madison Shockley (CA NV, S) is thrilled and excited about interacting with Samoan brothers and sisters. They need to be recognized. Hopes the resolution is affirmed.

A visitor (CA NV, S) stated the Samoan community has been trying to find a place to belong. There are 183,000 Samoans in the country.

Madaline Allsup (RM) doesn't want to vote until we hear from more Samoan voices.

Julia Swain (CA NV, N) moved to table this motion until the next General Synod.

Assistant Moderator Holeman advised that a motion to postpone indefinitely is in order. A new resolution would be required. The motion to postpone indefinitely was seconded and Ms. Swain spoke to the motion.

Paul Clay (CA NV, S) is against postponing this issue. There will be discussion about this issue no matter how we vote.

Charles Buck (HI) supports the motion to postpone indefinitely. We need more conversation.

Alison Morales (CA NV, S) urged delegates not to postpone indefinitely. This would send a hurtful message to our Samoan brothers and sisters. They have asked for recognition.

Mike Underhill (OHIO) stated many Samoans were present at the committee meeting hearing and are in favor of this resolution. We need to move ahead. He encouraged a "no" vote on the motion to postpone.

David Anderson (ME) called the question and it was seconded.

**13-GS-50 VOTED:** The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes to end debate on the motion to postpone indefinitely.

**13-GS-51 VOTED:** The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes not to postpone action indefinitely on the resolution.

The question was called on the main motion.

**13-GS-52 VOTED:** The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes to close debate on the main motion.

**13-GS-53 VOTED:** The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes to approve the resolution The United Samoan Ministries of the United Church of Christ Request to be Recognized as a Historically Underrepresented Group and Member of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries.

**THE UNITED SAMOAN MINISTRIES OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**REQUEST TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED**  
**GROUP AND MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL FOR RACIAL AND**  
**ETHNIC MINISTRIES**

WHEREAS, the Nineteenth General Synod adopted the "Statement of Christian Conviction of the Proposed Pronouncement Calling the United Church of Christ to be a Multiracial and Multicultural Church," and

WHEREAS, the Samoan churches have been related to COREM through PAAM from its inception, and

WHEREAS, PAAM's 16 ethnicities have always been hospitable and inclusive of their Samoan partners, nevertheless, Samoans feel they have sufficiently unique needs and experiences to have a separate voice in COREM, and

WHEREAS, Southern California PAAM has voted to support this request.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Twenty-ninth General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes that the five streams of Samoan ministries have been historically underrepresented in the United Church of Christ.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Twenty-ninth General Synod supports the creation of the United Samoan Ministries as an Historically Underrepresented Group of the United Church of Christ.

LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Executive Council (or its successor body) consider a change in bylaws that would grant the United Samoan Ministries a seat at the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries (COREM) table.

**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.

James Moos, Executive Minister for Wider Church Ministries, stated the United Church of Christ is committed to engaging our global partners so all voices are heard, continuing "We are committed to engaging the Samoan community in the implementation stage of this resolution."

A moment of silent prayer was requested following the vote on this resolution.

Art Cribbs (EC) stated he doesn't believe we have to have a unified voice to request recognition. We need to be cautious about this issue.