

## **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.*

## **15. DEVELOPING WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE, SUPPORTIVE AND ENGAGED CONGREGATIONS FOR MENTAL HEALTH**

Ms. Artt called on Ms. Lessie Williams (CPC) chair of the committee to introduce the resolution and the amendments made by the committee. Ms. Williams moved the adoption of the resolution by the Thirtieth General Synod.

She then called on Mr. Alan Johnson (RM) who spoke in support of the resolution.

Discussion:

Ms. Linda Bigler – Disabilities Ministries (CPC) spoke in favor of the resolution.

Mr. Paul Clay (CA NV, S) spoke in favor of the resolution and urged the body to learn how to be a welcoming and inclusive congregation.

Mr. Mark Stewart (MNWC) spoke in favor of the resolution.

Mr. Kevin Pettit (RM) spoke in favor of the resolution.

Mr. Samuel Conde (FLA) and Mr. Chris Davis moved to make a motion to amend the resolution, adding the following to the final Be It Resolved:

Proposed Amendment:

“BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirtieth General Synod encourages advocacy by all settings of the Church for broader and more just access to quality mental health services including private and public insurance coverage. This advocacy includes services for all persons with mental illness who are falling through the fraying safety net, especially persons in jails/prisons, persons who are homeless, persons of color, persons across all spectrums of sexuality and transgender and gender non-conforming who are experiencing mental illness.”

Discussion:

Ms. Manda Adams (NY) spoke in favor of the amendment.

Ms. Artt called the order of the day and indicated that the discussion would be picked up during the fifth plenary.

## **16. REPORT ON THE COMMISSION OF THE FUTURE OF GENERAL SYNOD**

Ms. Artt called upon Mr. Black to bring a report to this General Synod outlining its work to date and bringing forth any recommendations it might have.

**4. CONTINUATION OF RESOLUTION DEVELOPING WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE SUPPORTIVE AND ENGAGED CONGREGATIONS FOR MENTAL HEALTH.**

Mr. Samuel Conde (FLA) requested permission to withdraw previous amendment in favor of a new amendment. Amendment withdrawn.

New Amendment:

Ms. Kelli Parrish-Lucas (UCC Disabilities Ministries) Proposed the following:

“Line 1093 – move on line 1087 – Read as follows: This advocacy includes services for all persons with mental illness who are falling through the fraying safety net, especially persons in jail/prisons, and persons who are homeless, as well as persons of color, persons of all sexual orientation, and/or persons of all gender identities who experience mental health issues.”

Seconded by: Chris Davies (Coalition for LGBT Concerns)

Ms. Thea Racelis (Business Committee) spoke in favor of the new amendment.

Mr. Steven Moore (IK) spoke against the amendment since the committee agreed that it would not include a laundry list of people who are impacted by the issues.

Ms. Danielle Rochford (UCC Disabilities Ministries) spoke in favor of the amendment.

Ms. Brittany LaFleur (CONN) spoke against the amendment.

Ms. Linda Bigler (Business Committee) Spoke in support of amendment

Mr. Samuel Conde (FLA) Spoke in support of amendment

Mr. Paul Clay (CA NV, S) called the question.

**15-GS-21 VOTED** The Thirtieth General Synod votes to close debate on the amendment.

**15-GS 22 VOTED** The Thirtieth General Synod votes to defeat the amendment to the resolution.

Discussion on original resolution:

Mr. Eric Kendall (KO) spoke in favor of the resolution.

Mr. Ian Winham (CONN) moved the following amendment which was seconded.

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirtieth General Synod encourages congregations to work to eradicate stigma around mental illnesses/brain disorders and advocate for better mental health services for those who are falling through the fraying safety net.” Remove any reference to specific persons.

Mr. Lloyd Schneider (CA NV, N) spoke in favor of the amendment.

Ms. Mary Alice Suitors (IL) spoke against the amendment.

Mr. Steven Moore (IK) spoke in favor of the amendment.

Mr. Patrick Cage (MASS) spoke against the amendment.

**15-GS-23 VOTED:** The Thirtieth General Synod defeated the amendment.

**15 GS-24 VOTED:** The Thirtieth General Synod adopts the resolution on developing welcoming, inclusive, supportive and engaged congregations for Mental Health.

***DEVELOPING WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE, SUPPORTIVE  
AND ENGAGED CONGREGATIONS FOR MENTAL HEALTH***

*WHEREAS, most people believe that mental illnesses are rare and “happen to someone else,” when in fact, mental illnesses are common and widespread with an estimated 61.5 million Americans (1 in 4) experiencing some form of mental illness in a given year;*

*WHEREAS, there continues to be strong stigma and discrimination in society against people with these brain disorders in housing, employment, social relationships, (including how they are treated in our churches);*

*WHEREAS, many uninformed people believe people with mental illnesses are likely to be violent, while in reality, people with mental illnesses are more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators;*

*WHEREAS, the public mental health system, which previously served as a safety net for people with the most severe mental illnesses, has suffered from dramatic funding cuts in the last decade, and our prisons and county jails now house more people with mental illnesses than psychiatric hospitals do;*

*WHEREAS, faith and spirituality can be an important component of recovery from mental illnesses and addictions;*

*WHEREAS, a mental illness or brain disorder in the family affects not only the ill family member, it profoundly affects other family members and loved ones and the entire family structure;*

*WHEREAS, people having a diagnosable brain disorder and/or substance abuse disorder are potentially at a higher risk for suicide;*

*WHEREAS, the church is called to be a community that breaks through fear and isolation to offer love, hope, care and healing;*

*WHEREAS, Jesus showed us the way to reach out to those who are ill or marginalized to offer companionship, compassion and support;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod encourages United Church of Christ congregations to adopt covenants to be WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) Congregations for Mental Health.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirtieth General Synod encourages congregations to work to eradicate stigma around mental illnesses/brain disorders, and to offer support to persons with and those impacted by mental health challenges, including their family members, loved ones and others concerned.*

*BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirtieth General Synod encourages advocacy by all settings of the church for broader and more just access to quality mental health services including private and public insurance coverage. This advocacy includes services for all persons with mental illness who are falling through the fraying safety net, especially persons in jails/prisons, and persons who are homeless.*

**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 and other entities of the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.*

**5. POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE.**

Ms. Jaramillo asked to lift up Ms. Loey Powell whose mother passed away a few moments ago. Ms. Jaramillo offered a prayer on behalf of Ms. Powell and her family.

**6. ELECTION OF JAMES MOOS**

Ms. Artt recapped that on Friday General Synod received the re-nomination of Mr. Moos as Executive Minister of Wider Church Ministries and the nomination of Mr. Dorhauer as General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

The motion is as follows:

On October 17, 2014 the United Church of Christ Board of Directors, sitting as the Wider Church Ministries Board of Directors, re-nominated for election by the Thirtieth General Synod the selection of its Re-nomination Committee, Mr. Moos of the Northern Plains Conference for a second four-year term as Executive Minister of Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ and submits its re-nomination for consideration by delegates to the Thirtieth General Synod, meeting June 26-30, 2015 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Ballots were then distributed in accordance with the instructions previously announced.

**15-GS-25 VOTED:** The Thirtieth General Synod calls Mr. Moos for a second four-year term as Executive Minister of Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

**7. ELECTION OF THE NEXT GENERAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**