

**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. SOUTHERN ASIA INITIATIVE**

Assistant Moderator Lowes welcomed Rev. Dr. James Moos, Associate General Minister for Global Engagement and Operations and the Co-Executive of Global Ministries, and Dr. Darshan Ambalavanar, Director of Diaconal Ministries, Church of American Ceylon Mission, Sri Lanka, to introduce the Southern Asia Initiative.

**10. REV. DR. JAMES MOOS RECOGNITION**

Assistant Moderator Lowes introduced a video and expressed thanks to Rev. Dr. James Moos for his commitment to the church, to building relationship, to leading impactful ministries and we celebrate and give thanks for his ministry.

**11. RECESS**

Assistant Moderator Lowes declared the Fifth Plenary of the Thirty-second General Synod to be complete.

**Monday, June 24, 2019  
Sixth Plenary Session**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

Assistant Moderator Lowes called the Sixth Plenary of the Thirty-second General Synod to order at 7:00 p.m.

Assistant Moderator Lowes indicated it was time to hear from a major partner and major financial sponsor, the Cornerstone Fund. Assistant Moderator Lowes thanked the Cornerstone Fund.

**2. SPEAK OUT**

**3. DISCERNING, ARTICULATING AND RESOURCING THE NATURE, PURPOSE, COMPOSITION, COVENANTAL AUTONOMY AND DEFINITION OF THE 'BASIC UNIT OF LIFE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST' FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.**

Assistant Moderator Lowes called on Rev. Elliott Munn of the Connecticut Conference to present the recommended action from Committee #11.

On behalf of Committee #11, Rev. Elliott Munn moved that the Thirty-second General Synod adopt the Resolution Discerning, Articulating, and Resourcing the Nature, Purpose, Composition, Covenantal Autonomy and Definition of 'the basic unit of life and organization of the United Church of Christ' for the Twenty-first Century and Rev. Munn spoke to the motion.

Amendment made and seconded. Amendment ruled out of order.

Discussion:

One person spoke against.

**19-GS-26 VOTED:** The Thirty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopts the resolution Discerning, Articulating, and Resourcing the Nature, Purpose, Composition, Covenantal Autonomy and Definition of ‘the basic unit of life and organization of the United Church of Christ.’

(Vote: 369 yes; 230 No; 86 Abstentions – 685 electronic submissions registered)

**DISCERNING, ARTICULATING, AND RESOURCING THE NATURE, PURPOSE,  
COMPOSITION, COVENANTAL AUTONOMY AND DEFINITION OF ‘THE BASIC  
UNIT OF LIFE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST’ FOR  
THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY  
A Prudential Resolution**

**Text of the Resolution**

Whereas, Article V, paragraphs 10 and 11 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ employ objectionable language; and

Whereas, Article V of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ met with criticism during the hearing preceding its adoption at the Twenty-Seventh General Synod, but rules prevented changes in the language of the Article that delegates found objectionable; and

Whereas, the Bylaws adopted by the Thirty-First General Synod contain that same objectionable language; and

Whereas, General Synods 9, 11, 12, 14, 16 and 17 have affirmed the use of inclusive language; and

Whereas, Article III of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ describes the ideals of covenantal relationships but does not describe or provide for the accountability necessary to live into these covenantal relationships; and

Whereas, Article V, paragraph 10, of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ limits to three the purposes for which a Local Church may be organized: Christian worship, for the furtherance of Christian fellowship, and for the ongoing work of Christian witness; and

Whereas, Article V, paragraph 10 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ omits as a purpose for which a local church may be organized creating a just world for all; and

Whereas, Article V of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ does not include the word “covenant;” and

Whereas, Article V, paragraph 17 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ uses the word “fellowship” instead of the word “covenant;” and

Whereas, Article V, paragraph 16, of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ singles out Congregational Christian local churches and prohibits them from a dual affiliation with the UCC, calling into question the UCC value of extravagant welcome; and

Whereas, the current practice of conferences and associations is to “admit, or continue to fellowship with” Local Churches from other denominations and affiliations as well as faith communities that do not identify as a church in the spirit of the UCC value of extravagant welcome; and

Whereas, the words “to formulate its own covenants and confessions of faith; to admit members in its own way” in paragraph 18 seem to conflict with paragraph 11 which prescribes three methods for being admitted to a Local Church belonging to the UCC;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Thirty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on the United Church of Christ Board to convene a working group representative of the whole of the United Church of Christ to:

1. lead the United Church of Christ in a process of discernment regarding Article V of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ; and
2. recommend revisions to Article V in accordance with the working group’s discernment and conclusions including, but not limited to, equal clarity about Local Church covenant and autonomy, parameters for local church accountability and the oversight of local churches, a provision for releasing congregations from the United Church of Christ, and amendments to Articles III and VIII and other sections of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ so that the whole of the document is consistent; and
3. produce a Manual on the Local Church, akin to the Manual on Ministry, for use by all settings of the Church to fully live into their covenantal responsibilities and privileges under the Constitution of the United Church of Christ; this Manual will speak to items including, but not limited to, a Congregational Code, Marks of Faithful and Vital Congregations, and processes and resources for birthing, admitting, strengthening, revitalizing, and releasing congregations; and
4. report its progress along with its recommendations for revising Article V of the Constitution to the next General Synod.

Be it further resolved that the General Synod of the United Church of Christ invites and encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to pray for and participate with this discernment process locally.

**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.

**4. OVERSIGHT OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND ITS COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ASSOCIATION IN WHICH IT HOLDS STANDING AS A LOCAL CHURCH OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.**

Assistant Moderator Lowes called on Rev. Jim CastroLang from the Pacific Northwest Conference to present the recommended action from Committee #13.

On behalf of Committee #13 Rev. Jim CastroLang moved that the Thirty-second General Synod adopt the Resolution Oversight of the Local Church and its Covenantal Relationship with the Association in which It Holds standing as a Local Church of the United Church of Christ and recommended that the Thirty-second General Synod take no action. He then he spoke to the resolution.

Discussion:

A motion was made and seconded to table the Motion.

**19-GS-27 VOTED:** The Thirty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ tables the resolution Oversight of the Local Church and its Covenantal Relationship with the Association in which It Holds Standing as a Local Church of the United Church of Christ.

(Vote: 605 Yes; 70 No; 18 Abstentions – 693 electronic submissions registered)

**5. STEWARDSHIP OF EXHIBIT SPACE**

Assistant Moderator Lowes called on Brian Burke of the Ohio Conference to present the recommended action on behalf of Committee #8.

On behalf of Committee #8, Brian Burke moved that the Thirty-second General Synod adopt the Resolution Stewardship of Exhibit Space and recommend disapproval of the resolution and asked that the General Synod vote no on the resolution.

Discussion:

A motion was made and seconded to postpone the vote on the resolution regarding Stewardship of Exhibit Space.

The Motion was defeated.

(Vote: 242 Yes; 404 No; 36 Abstentions – 682 electronic submissions registered)

A motion was made and seconded to extend discussion into the next Plenary should the body not