

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fifth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Kansas City July 11-July 15, 2025.

Vote: 25-GS-15
Minutes Page Number: 21
Plenary: 4

**MOTION OF PENN WEST, PENN CENTRAL, PENNSYLVANIA SOUTHEAST, AND
PENN NORTHEAST CONFERENCES TO JOIN TOGETHER TO FORM THE
KEYSTONE CONFERENCE**

1 **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

2
3 **WHEREAS** the Penn West, Penn Central, Pennsylvania Southeast, and Penn Northeast
4 Conferences of the United Church of Christ together discerned that they: *Affirm* devotion to our
5 Creator God, to Jesus Christ our savior, teacher, and friend, and to the Holy Spirit who binds us
6 together in one body and lights the way into the future; *Recognize* that division and change
7 surround and strain the Christian church, challenging faithful people of good will to create novel
8 communities of faith, action, and love for a new age; *Believe* a Conference must model unity and
9 healing in response to theological and ideological shifts in the Body of Christ as a whole and in
10 the United Church of Christ in particular; *Serve, Nurture, and Empower* authorized ministers and
11 all settings of the church within their boundaries; and *Desire* to live into Jesus' hope for his
12 followers "that they all may be one" [John 17], reflecting the desire for unity in our predecessor
13 denominations and in the entire United Church of Christ; and

14
15 **WHEREAS** the Penn West, Penn Central, Pennsylvania Southeast, and Penn Northeast
16 Conferences propose to join together to create the Keystone Conference; and

17
18 **WHEREAS** the proposed Keystone Conference as a Conference of the United Church of Christ
19 aspires to be one body, affirming its commitment to unity centered in Christ Jesus, working
20 diligently to maintain a large tent wherein its members may experience authentic welcome,
21 mercy, empowerment, and hope, striving to share renewed life, fellowship, witness, and gospel
22 proclamation together; and

23
24 **WHEREAS** the four Conferences have collectively discerned that the ministry and mission of
25 their Associations will be stronger as one unified Conference;

26
27 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fifth General Synod of the United Church
28 of Christ does hereby recognize the Keystone Conference, created with geographic boundaries
29 encompassing those previously of the Penn West, Penn Central, Pennsylvania Southeast, and
30 Penn Northeast Conferences, effective January 1, 2026; and

31
32 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fifth General Synod grants the new Keystone
33 Conference of the United Church of Christ standing as a Conference of the United Church of
34 Christ, including all the powers, privileges, and responsibilities of a Conference of the United
35 Church of Christ; and

36

37 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fifth General Synod acknowledges that,
38 effective January 1, 2026, each Association of the said four Conferences shall automatically
39 become an Association of the new Keystone Conference of the United Church of Christ, as
40 determined by the new Keystone Conference; and

41

42 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fifth General Synod does hereby approve the
43 termination of the standing of the Penn West, Penn Central, Pennsylvania Southeast, and Penn
44 Northeast Conferences with the General Synod, effective January 1, 2026.