

Proposal on Single Governance

From All Nations Indian Church, affiliate of the Council for American Indian Ministry of the United Church of Christ

June 2010

Submitted by Rev. Marlene Helgemo, at the request of Juanita Helpfrey, CAIM's member to the Unified Governance Working Group II. Received electronically June 17, 2010.

Ten members of All Nations Church representing a wide range of voices concerning the congregation prayerfully discussed the direction of creation of a single governance of the United Church Board. Overall, the focus on inclusiveness concerning people of color, women and Historically Under-represented groups was an important aspect of creating a single group of representation. This direction is fully supported because it is the future of what congregations will look like. However, one aspect of inclusiveness that we found was the need for an economically diverse representation. As a group, we feel that there is a need to represent the poor working class regardless of race working alongside those of a higher economic status. With this in mind, this body could have a stronger voice for the UCC.

Some positive aspects of this proposal were seen as essential in creating a new governing body. When allocating funds, we agreed that it was essential for this body to have full autonomy over decisions made. Under one body, this group could have the capacity to achieve more. As one member put it, "More cooks don't make a better soup". In addition, during this current economic climate, this decision would be fiscally responsible. With shrinking resources of churches everywhere, creating one governing body sets an example for responsible governance.

Our vision of the future for the UCC is to focus on environmental stewardship. The need to walk with the earth is a call that is both fiscally and faithfully responsible. We also see the need to continue to be a place where people have a sense of belonging despite what type of situation they are coming from. With increasingly changing demographics of membership, this focus is essential.