

1 The Executive Council recommends this resolution be sent to a committee of the General
2 Synod.

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5 **A CALL TO BE GLOBAL MISSION CHURCHES**
6 **IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

7
8 **A Prudential Resolution**

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10 **Submitted by: Wider Church Ministries**

11
12 **Summary**

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14 This resolution requests that the United Church of Christ underscore the priority of the
15 Church to be involved in mission around the world through faith, justice and advocacy.
16 Churches involved in global mission will be recognized for their commitment to reach
17 out and respond to needs in the world by being designated as “Global Mission Churches.”
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19 **Biblical and Theological Rationale**

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21 God’s mission imperative for the Church is to be evangelical, to share the Good News
22 (Gk. “*evangel*”) of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving, and serving from our doorsteps “to
23 the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). As members of the United Church of Christ, our
24 mission imperative is “that they may all be one” (John 17:21). This ministry of
25 reconciliation and unity to which we are called is both local and global. Wider Church
26 Ministries and Global Ministries partners with churches, conferences and associations on
27 the journey of faithful mission. A global mission church is a vital church. Churches
28 equipped for mission are flexible and growing. Global mission churches have strong local
29 and global relationships, and know that mission involvement brings abundant blessings.

30 The character of a global mission church is expressed in scripture, attesting to the
31 diversity of faithful and vital witness that demonstrates the transformative power of the
32 Good News:

33 *“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer”* (Romans 12:12); and

34 *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your*
35 *minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable*
36 *and perfect* (Romans 12:2); and

37 *“What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and love mercy and to walk*
38 *humbly with your God”* (Micah 6:8); and

39 *“At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their*
40 *plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality”* (2 Corinthians 8:14); and

41 *“Just as you excel in everything...see that you also excel in this grace of giving”*
42 (2 Corinthians 8:7); and

43 *“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who*
44 *proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”*
45 (Isaiah 52:7); and

46 *“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if*
47 *we do not give up.”* (Galatians 6:9)

48 Christ calls for a commitment to hear the cries of people around the world; to find
49 the energy and enthusiasm to reach out and respond with grace; to proclaim the joys as
50 well as denounce the suffering of God’s people; to seek wisdom and guidance in building
51 global connections in the life of all settings of the church; and to be immersed in the
52 church’s work for the healing of the nations.

53 Local churches as well as UCC conferences seeking the designation “Global
54 Mission Church” (or “Global Mission Conference”) will be encouraged and guided in
55 study, exploration, dedication, and growth in order to live out that commitment by:

56 praying regularly for partners, missionaries and the world,
57 educating its members about global issues from preschool to adult,
58 seeking justice for the “least of these” in the international community,
59 receiving the gifts of the worldwide Church,
60 giving to the work of global mission,
61 sending its members into the world to share the Good News, and
62 growing in sharing the story of God’s mission with others.

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64 **The Resolution**

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66 **Whereas** throughout the past two centuries, for the Christian Church (Disciples of
67 Christ) and the United Church of Christ, global presence and witness have been at the
68 core of God’s mission through the church; and

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70 **Whereas** since 1996 Global Ministries has been a common witness of the Division of
71 Overseas Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and of Wider Church
72 Ministries, United Church of Christ, an ecumenical endeavor unique among American
73 Protestant denominations which today continues to walk with 270 global partners in some
74 68 countries discerning together priorities of critical presence and action with the sole
75 purpose of timely and appropriately meeting God’s people and creation at the point of
76 deepest need: spiritually, physically, emotionally and/or economically; and

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78 **Whereas** in keeping with the critical presence priority, over 150 persons in mission are
79 currently serving as missionaries, volunteers, interns and associates in 50 countries, and
80 missionaries sent by our global partners are welcomed to serve in the United States and
81 Canada in fulfillment of our commitment to mutuality in mission; and

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83 **Whereas** the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, in a
84 joint effort with various ecumenical initiatives in the United States and Canada and others
85 throughout the world including the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA
86 and the World Council of Churches, continue to seek ways to respond to God’s people
87 and creation who are in need of wholeness and transformation, calling us to renew our
88 commitment to God’s mission of reconciliation and unity which is both local and global;
89 and

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91 **Whereas** both denominations were founders of and still actively participate in bringing
92 leadership to the ecumenical service organizations known as Church World Service and

93 Action by Churches Together, providing sustainable self-help and development, disaster
94 relief, and refugee assistance in some 80 countries; and

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96 **Whereas** a local church engaged in ministry globally is a vital and faithful church, one
97 that is dynamic and growing in strong local and global relationships, bringing abundant
98 blessings, creating understanding and building communities of justice and service; and
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100 **Whereas** Global Ministries seeks to facilitate the engagement of local churches and other
101 settings of the church more intentionally in global mission; and

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103 **Whereas** God’s call to mission is already embodied and celebrated in all settings of the
104 church in myriad expressions of relationship, service, mission presence, justice witness,
105 worship and advocacy; and

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107 **Whereas** partnership means receiving the gifts and learning from the experiences of
108 others in our world, building greater effectiveness through collective efforts and mutually
109 recognizing and encouraging each other in ministry;

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111 **Therefore, let it be resolved** that the Twenty-seventh General Synod, meeting in Grand
112 Rapids, Michigan, June 26-30, 2009, promotes and encourages all settings of the church
113 to claim and implement the Global Mission Church designation; and

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115 **Be it further resolved** that the Twenty-seventh General Synod invites local churches,
116 UCC conferences, and all age groups of the church, especially youth and young adults as
117 well as adults, to utilize the assessment and implementation tool, *Be a Global Mission*
118 *Church*; and

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120 **Be it finally resolved** that the Twenty-seventh General Synod declares itself a “Global
121 Mission Church,” and recognizes such designation as one of the priorities of the church;
122 and, furthermore, the Twenty-seventh General Synod encourages local churches to claim
123 the identity of being a Global Mission Church.

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125 **FUNDING**

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127 Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the
128 overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

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130 **IMPLEMENTATION**

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132 Local churches, Associations and Conferences of the United Church of Christ, The Office
133 of General Ministries, Wider Church Ministries and Local Church Ministries are
134 requested to implement this resolution.