

1 | ~~The Executive Council recommends this proposed amendment to the Bylaws be sent to a~~  
2 | ~~committee of the General Synod~~

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4 | **Proposed Change to the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ**  
5 | **ON THE FREQUENCY OF THE MEETINGS OF GENERAL SYNOD**  
6 | **Proposed by the Illinois South Conference**  
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9 | **BACKGROUND:** The General Synod has been meeting biennially for over fifty years. The  
10 | costs for General Synod increased 115% between 1981 and 2003. As costs increase and  
11 | resources decline, these costs place a financial strain on all members, churches, regional and  
12 | national settings of the United Church of Christ, and prompting a number of conversations about  
13 | the frequency of meeting since 1981. \*  
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15 | In addition to the cost concerns, the actions of each General Synod generate a significant amount  
16 | of additional work for staff in the national setting who are tasked with the implementation of  
17 | these action. The number of staff in the national setting has decreased by nearly 50% over the  
18 | past decade, significantly affecting the staff's ability to implement General Synod actions.  
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20 | In 2003, the Twenty-fourth General Synod, received but failed to approve a proposed  
21 | amendment to the UCC by-laws to change the frequency of General Synod from every two years  
22 | to every four years, and requested that the Executive Council appoint a committee **“to create a**  
23 | **new vision of the function and form of General Synod to promote the ministry and mission**  
24 | **of the United Church of Christ by the year 2005”**. Some work was done to address this and  
25 | has resulted in a “blended” Synod that attempts to provide educational and renewing experiences  
26 | as well as processing the business.  
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28 | The cultural realities facing the United Church of Christ in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are not those that our  
29 | predecessors and church founders faced in the 1950's, but we remain committed to the  
30 | empowering original vision of the unity of the Body of Chris. We believe that God is still  
31 | speaking to our conference and local churches in innovative ways, and advances in technology  
32 | offer us a variety of other ways to work together and to maintain connection across the church;  
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34 | **REQUESTED ACTION:** that bylaw 181 of the United Church of Christ Constitution be  
35 | changed as follows:

36 |       Strike the word “biennially”

37 |       Insert in its place the phrase “every three or four years”  
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39 | Thus the full sentence will read:

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41 | ***181 Regular meetings of the General Synod shall be held every three or four years effective***  
42 | ***after General Synod 29 in 2013.***  
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44 | \*Additional data on costs will be provided