A Resolution to Increase Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) Basic Support

Source: Proposed by the Our Church's Wider Mission Covenanted Ministry of the Missouri Mid-South Conference United Church of Christ on June 7, 2013.

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Summary: This resolution seeks to advocate for the importance of faithful giving through Our Church' Wider Mission (OCWM) Basic Support, and to encourage all local congregations in the Missouri Mid-South Conference, United Church of Christ, to give at least a tithe (10% of the local expense budget) to OCWM Basic Support.

Background Statement

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) Basic Support is about keeping covenant in the United Church of Christ. Covenant Is the commitment to remain connected—No Matter What! We believe that God has gathered us together to be Christ's Church. OCWM provides funding from local churches for ministries of the Missouri Mid-South Conference, United Church of Christ, as well as for the national ministries of the United Church of Christ (Wider Church Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, General Ministries and the Pension Boards). The Missouri Mid-South Conference has a long-standing commitment to share OCWM Basic Support with the national setting. Currently, we send 22% of OCWM Basis Support to sustain and strengthen our national ministries.

This is a pivotal moment in the United Church of Christ. Our Church' Wider Mission (OCWM) Basic Support has been called the “lifeblood” of our covenant. “It IS who we are; it IS what we do.” In 2012, OCWM Basic Support represented almost 91.5% of our Conference revenue. The Conference deficit is projected to be $22,630 in the 2013 budget. OCWM Basic Support is essential for keeping covenant with one another.

We believe that—as is true in every setting of the United Church of Christ—the local church, association, conference and General Synod are each called to model faithful and generous giving. God has entrusted everything we have and have; these resources are for sharing, for loving God and our neighbor. The biblical tithe should also be applied to our communal giving. Giving at least 10% of a local church's expense budget to OCWM Basic Support is a sign of commitment to the covenant we share. It is an important witness in a larger culture that is more inclined to speak a message of scarcity and survival.
We believe that God is gracious and generous, blessing us “far more than we can ask or imagine.” God calls us to participate in transforming ministries of the Holy Spirit through our proportionate and generous giving.

**Rationale**

Whereas we are called together for ministry by a God who is extravagantly loving and generous; and

Whereas we are blessed with a great legacy of faithful giving from those who have engaged in this ministry before us; and

Whereas we are committed to the covenant that binds us together in the United Church of Christ; and

Whereas we affirm the biblical tithe of at least 10% as a basic symbol of faithfulness and generosity; and

Whereas we know the need for faithful and generous giving to **Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM)** Basic Support:

**Statement of Resolution**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the United Church of Christ encourages each local church to give at least 10% of its local expense budget through **Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM)** Basic Support as an expression of the covenant we share;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that local churches be challenged to increase their annual giving to **Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM)** Basic Support by 1% per year until they reach the level of the biblical tithe;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Conference Council members and all leaders of the Conference are encouraged to serve as advocates for such generosity by their words and examples;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that local churches that achieve this level of generosity be recognized at the Conference Annual Gathering