

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

Source: Proposed by the Our Church's Wider Mission Committee of the New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ (NHCUCC) on June 20, 2012.

Submitted: June 21, 2012

Contact: Nora Larsen, Chairperson, Our Church's Wider Mission Committee
Phone: 603.756.3966

Summary: This resolution seeks to advocate for the importance of faithful giving through **Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) Basic Support**, and to encourage all local congregations in the New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ to give 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 New Hampshire 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 New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ, has a long-standing commitment to share OCWM Basic Support with the national setting. We currently send 45% of OCWM Basic Support to sustain and strengthen our national ministries.

This is a pivotal moment in the United Church of Christ. **Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) Basic Support** has been called the lifeblood of our covenant. In 2012, OCWM Basic Support represents almost 59% of the New Hampshire Conference's projected revenue. The Conference deficit is projected to be (\$96,526). In the national setting of the United Church of Christ, OCWM Basic Support receipts are projected to be \$7.1 million; a revenue shortfall of \$4.9 million is anticipated. 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 are and have; these resources are for sharing, for loving God and our neighbor¹. 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 world that shrinks before a message of scarcity and survival.

We believe God is gracious and merciful, generous and life-giving. God calls us to participate in the transforming ministries of the Holy Spirit by giving, even as Jesus Christ has given to us.

Rationale

Whereas we are called together for ministry by a God who is extravagantly loving and generousⁱⁱ; 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 titheⁱⁱⁱ 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 New Hampshire 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 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 by the Gathered Conference each year during the annual meeting.

A Plan of Action for the Resolution to Increase Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) Basic Support

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Implementing Body: Our Church's Wider Mission Committee of the New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ (NHCUCC)

Financial Implications:

The costs for promotional materials and events to implement this resolution will be included in the budget request of the NHCUCC Our Church's Wider Mission Committee. It is anticipated that such costs will be less than \$1,000 per year.

Directional Statements and Goals:

The impact of this resolution will be monitored by the NHCUCC Our Church's Wider Mission Committee and reported annually to the Conference Council, local churches, and the Gathered Conference. The resolution is intended to be in effect from this time forward, unless superseded by another resolution.

ⁱⁱ Mark 12:28-31; Mt. 22:34-40; Lk. 10:27

ⁱⁱ Luke 15:11-32, Parable of the Prodigal

ⁱⁱⁱ Malachi 3:10