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4 A Proposal for Unified Governance of the National Setting  
5 of the United Church of Christ:  
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8 Introduction  
9

10 In service to the mission of God in the world through the Church of Jesus Christ;  
11 grounded in prayer, worship, and thoughtful reflection on God’s call as the Creator,  
12 Redeemer, and Sustainer of our common life; and in response to the General Synod and  
13 the Executive Council of the United Church of Christ, the Unified Governance Working  
14 Group proposes the United Church of Christ Board.  
15

16 The purpose of the United Church of Christ Board shall be the responsible governance of  
17 the national setting of the United Church of Christ in faithful service to God. Toward  
18 that end, the membership of the Board shall include the diversity of God’s children. The  
19 Board is elected by and accountable to the General Synod.  
20

21 The Board members are to be called to their positions because of their demonstrated  
22 skills, competencies, and particular experiences, as well as their diversity, to meet the  
23 current and future governance needs of the United Church of Christ. Such governance  
24 shall provide leadership for policy setting and strategic direction and shall empower  
25 increased engagement in mission.  
26

27 The background theological documents for the current structure of the national setting,  
28 including the paper, “*Missio Dei*,” called into question the continued separation of church  
29 and mission structures. Mission belongs to God, not to societies or churches in isolation.  
30 The whole church is called to participate together in God’s mission. This new proposal  
31 calls for the separate mission boards to be integrated as the United Church of Christ  
32 Board, accountable to the General Synod and following the best practices of good  
33 governance, to enable the mission of the church. This proposal further calls for broad  
34 and robust opportunities for all the settings of the church to engage in mission together.  
35

36 The United Church of Christ Board shall act for the General Synod, ad interim, and  
37 replace the Executive Council. The Board will also serve as the Board of each of the  
38 continuing, separately incorporated Covenanted Ministries: Local Church Ministries,  
39 Justice and Witness Ministries, and Wider Church Ministries.<sup>1</sup> (Consultation with the  
40 General Synod is required prior to a decision to dissolve any of the current Covenanted  
41 Ministry Boards, should such be proposed at any time.) The Board will be responsible to  
42 provide the United Church of Christ with accountable, strategic leadership. The Board

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<sup>1</sup> The Office of General Ministries will be dissolved and oversight of its areas of responsibility will be continued by the United Church of Christ Board.

43 will relate covenantally to all settings of the Church, including the Associated and  
44 Affiliated Ministries, Conferences, Associations, Local Churches, seminaries, colleges,  
45 health and human service ministries, and other bodies.  
46

47 Initially, all Board members will serve on one of three Ministry Committees within the  
48 Board: Justice and Witness, Local Church, and Wider Church. Ministry Committee  
49 members will bring expertise and passion to carry forward the historic commitments and  
50 relationships of the current Covenanted Ministries and of the General Synod, including  
51 Common Global Ministries, to honor the diversity of the commitments of the UCC, to  
52 work in covenant with one another, to support ecumenical relationships, and to keep the  
53 vision alive. Ministry Committees will formulate program recommendations for the full  
54 Board's approval and monitor their implementation, but they are not separate decision-  
55 making bodies. The Board will be open to future reconfiguration of the Ministry  
56 Committees.  
57

58 Ministry Committees will be accountable to one another within the Board, thus providing  
59 attention to the mission of the whole church, to responsible stewardship of all resources,  
60 and especially to effective witness in God's world and in the church itself. Along with  
61 accountability to the General Synod, the diversity of Board membership, the covenantal  
62 relationships of the Board and other church settings, the Ministry Committees serve as  
63 one of the "checks and balances" within this proposed unified governance structure.  
64

65 The United Church of Christ Board and the national setting will continue to be led by a  
66 Collegium of Officers. There shall be four, a General Minister and President and three  
67 Executive Ministers. These Officers of the Church, will be accountable to the United  
68 Church of Christ Board.<sup>2</sup>  
69

70 Honoring the calls, gifts, and experiences of the members of the United Church of Christ  
71 participating in God's mission, the Unified Governance Working Group strongly affirms  
72 the need to continue Sacred Conversations on Race that we might honor and care for one  
73 another as children of God and members of the Body of Christ.  
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<sup>2</sup> The position of Associate General Minister as an elected officer and member of the Collegium is eliminated in this proposal. Many functions currently assigned to that position may be assigned to a staff position of Chief Administrative Officer.

78 The Proposal: The United Church of Christ Board

79

80 1. The General Synod and the United Church of Christ Board

81 We affirm the General Synod as the gathering of a faith community representative of the  
82 wider church to listen for and discern the call of God to the United Church of Christ.

- 83 1. The General Synod deliberates, discerns, and identifies the mission of the wider  
84 church of the United Church of Christ in God's world and receives and offers  
85 suggestions, invitations, challenges, and assistance in covenant with Local  
86 Churches, Conferences, and other settings as they engage in mission together.
- 87 2. The United Church of Christ Board oversees the implementation and management  
88 of the UCC's mission in the national setting as discerned by the General Synod.
- 89 3. Officers of the Church and members of the United Church Board are elected by  
90 and responsible to the General Synod
- 91 4. General Synod will be composed of delegates from Conferences (as current  
92 practice), the Officers of the Church, members of the United Church Board, and  
93 four delegates from each of these groups: Council for American Indian Ministries,  
94 Council for Hispanic Ministries, Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and  
95 Transgender Concerns, Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries, United  
96 Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries, Ministers for Racial, Social, and  
97 Economic Justice, Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries, and United  
98 Black Christians. All these are Synod delegates with voice and vote. Their  
99 expenses are the responsibility of the sending groups.
- 100 5. Synod delegates and leadership will be selected with attention to diversity as  
101 affirmed in UCC values and commitments.
- 102 6. All settings of the United Church of Christ will be invited to participate in mission  
103 discernment and speak to each Synod of the call of God to mission as heard in  
104 their context(s), of their engagement in mission, and of the ways in which that  
105 mission might be shared throughout the Church. The discernment processes are  
106 to be designed and refined under the leadership of the United Church of Christ  
107 Board. All settings will also be encouraged to initiate their own processes of  
108 discernment and engagement with one another.
- 109 7. Synod will receive the results of discernment processes and include them in its  
110 own discernment as delegates (and other attendees) join in conversation and  
111 deliberation.
- 112 8. General Synod Standing Rules will be revised to enable Synod to meet its  
113 responsibility as a primary setting for the discernment and establishment of the  
114 mission of the United Church of Christ. The Rules will
- 115 a. Provide for all delegates to participate in discernment and to bring that  
116 discernment to its goal of shaping the mission of the United Church of  
117 Christ
- 118 b. Offer ways for all settings of the Church to share ideas, invitation, and  
119 concerns and to participate in mission discernment for the whole Church  
120 toward the goals of enlisting all who are called by God in responding

121 faithfully to that call and of inspiring Local Churches and all other UCC  
122 settings to engage in best practices of witnessing effectively to God's love  
123 in the world.

124

## 125 2. The United Church of Christ Board

126 The United Church of Christ Board shall be responsible for the governance of the  
127 national setting of the Church between meetings of the General Synod. The Board shall  
128 be rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, honor the Statement of Faith and the Preamble to  
129 the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, and be faithful to the Constitution of the  
130 United Church of Christ as well as to the historical, covenantal, and legal commitments  
131 of the United Church of Christ and its related mission bodies.

132 The membership of the Board shall be diverse, as expressed in the Constitution, and  
133 members shall bring the necessary skills, competencies and experiences required to fulfill  
134 their responsibilities.

135 The United Church of Christ Board shall

- 136 1. Provide responsible governance of the national setting of the United Church of  
137 Christ in faithful service to God
- 138 2. Serve as the Corporate Board of the national setting and of each of the  
139 Covenanted Ministries: Local Church, Justice and Witness, and Wider Church
- 140 3. Provide for visioning and strategic planning, including the development and  
141 articulation of comprehensive, integrated strategies and goals for the national  
142 setting
- 143 4. Provide fiduciary oversight and monitoring for the national setting of the United  
144 Church of Christ and provide for developing and acquiring resources to advance  
145 God's mission for the church.
- 146 5. Provide for the continuing evaluation of policy, program, and governance
- 147 6. Provide for the continuing participation of the United Church of Christ as a  
148 partner in ministry with the Christian Church Disciples of Christ, including the  
149 Common Global Ministries Board.<sup>3</sup>
- 150 7. Continue and honor the role of the United Church of Christ as a united and  
151 uniting church.

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<sup>3</sup> The United Church of Christ will continue to provide the same number of representatives (currently 20) to the Common Global Ministries Board as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Because of the unique covenantal commitments embodied by the CGMB, additional care must be given to nurturing the partnership. Because of the number of meetings required by those serving on the CGMB, the United Church of Christ Board may select representatives from among its own members and/or representatives from the broader church to serve on the CGMB.

- 152 8. Facilitate the identification of, and attend to, concerns and ideas related to  
153 communication, identity, fund development, strategic planning, evangelism, and  
154 other issues critical for the life of the whole church  
155 9. Be accountable to the General Synod.

156 Initially, all Board members will serve on one of three Ministry Committees: Justice and  
157 Witness, Local Church, and Wider Church. Ministry Committee members will bring  
158 expertise and passion to carry forward the historic commitments and relationships of the  
159 current Covenanted Ministries and of the General Synod, including Common Global  
160 Ministries, to honor the diversity of the commitments of the UCC, to work in covenant  
161 with one another, to support ecumenical relationships, and to keep the distinctive United  
162 Church of Christ core values alive. Ministry Committees of the United Church of Christ  
163 Board will formulate recommendations for the full Board's approval and monitor their  
164 implementation. The Ministry Committees will be open to future reconfiguration to  
165 address mission priorities discerned and adopted by General Synods.

166

### 167 3. Membership of the United Church of Christ Board

168 The United Church of Christ Board shall have 52 members, all of whom are elected by  
169 the General Synod. 36 members serve in "at-large" positions, others are ex-officio. All  
170 members shall have voice and vote.

#### 171 3.A. At-Large Members of the United Church of Christ Board

- 172 1. Fifty percent (50%), or more, shall be persons of color  
173 2. Fifty percent (50%), or more, shall be women  
174 3. One-third (1/3) shall be persons with ordained ministerial standing or ordained  
175 ministerial partner standing  
176 4. One-third (1/3) shall be laymen  
177 5. One-third (1/3) shall be laywomen.  
178 6. Twenty percent (20%) shall be under 30 years of age at the time of election. To  
179 the extent possible, the under-30 members shall include both youth of high school  
180 age and young adults. All have full voice and vote, except as legally proscribed.  
181 7. At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as having a disability  
182 8. At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as gay, lesbian,  
183 bisexual, or transgender  
184 9. Members at large shall serve for one term of six years, with a class of 12 being  
185 elected at each General Synod. A member-at-large who has served more than  
186 one-half of a full term may not be nominated to serve again until at least two

187 years have passed. In the first election, the 36 at-large members shall be elected  
188 as follows:<sup>4</sup>  
189 a. Twelve (12) for a term of two years, to include two (2) members each  
190 from the current Office of General Ministries Board, Local Church  
191 Ministries Board, Wider Church Ministries Board, Justice and Witness  
192 Ministries Board, and the Executive Council, and two (2) members from  
193 among the Historically Under-Represented Groups.  
194 b. Twelve (12) for one term of four years  
195 c. Twelve (12) for one term of six years  
196 10. Nominations for the at-large positions will be solicited from all entities and  
197 organizations within the United Church of Christ. There shall be not more than  
198 three at-large members from any one conference at the time of an individual's  
199 election. The nominating Committee shall be strongly encouraged to ensure that,  
200 over time, every conference has one or more members serving on the Board with  
201 no more than six years intervening without such participation.

### 202 3.B. Ex-Officio Members of the United Church of Christ Board

203 The following will serve as members of the United Church of Christ Board, ex-officio,  
204 with voice and vote, in these three categories:

205

#### 206 *Elected by the General Synod*

207 Four Members of the Collegium/Officers of the Church  
208 The Moderator and Vice Moderator of the General Synod<sup>5</sup>

209

#### 210 *Conference Ministers Recommended by the Council of Conference Ministers*

211 Six Conference Ministers, one from each of the Regions

212

#### 213 *Other Ex-Officio*

214 The Executive of the Pension Boards, UCC  
215 The Executive of United Church Funds  
216 The Executive of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries  
217 One Member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

### 218 4 The General Synod Nominating Committee

219 The General Synod Nominating Committee shall bring the slate of candidates to serve as  
220 members of the United Church of Christ Board to the General Synod for an uncontested  
221 election. Composition of the slate shall provide for the diversity of Board membership as  
222 described above.

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<sup>4</sup> All recommendations here are based upon General Synod continuing to meet once every two years. Should that pattern be changed, terms of office will need to be adjusted. However, terms shall be determined so that there will always be some persons with experience continuing to serve as new members begin and no at-large member serves a term of more than eight years.

223 The General Synod Nomination Committee shall in its membership and in its function  
224 emphasize the church's values and commitments to be a radically welcoming community.  
225 Members of the Committee must demonstrate a thorough understanding of what it means  
226 to be a multicultural, multiracial, open and affirming, and accessible to all church.

227 The General Synod Nominating Committee shall select candidates who will bring to the  
228 United Church of Christ Board the knowledge, competencies, skills and experiences  
229 needed to serve effectively and faithfully.

230 The General Synod Nominating Committee shall consist of 16 members elected by the  
231 General Synod.

232  
233 Of these 16 members

- 234 1. ten (10) shall be chosen from a pool of nominees submitted by Conferences;
- 235 2. four (4) shall be chosen from a pool of nominees submitted by Historically Under-  
236 Represented Groups (including the Council for American Indian Ministries, the Council  
237 for Hispanic Ministries, the Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries, the United  
238 Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries, the Ministers for Racial, Social, and Economic  
239 Justice, the Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries, the United Black Christians  
240 and the United Church of Christ Coalition for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender  
241 Concerns;
- 242 3. and two (2) shall be chosen from among the members of the United Church of Christ  
243 Board.

244 The diversity of the Nominating Committee shall reflect the diversity of the Board. See  
245 section 3A.

246 The General Synod Nominating Committee shall

- 247 1. recommend a process to the Board to approve for receiving names from  
248 conferences, underrepresented groups, educational institutions, health and human  
249 service ministries, ministry partners and settings and individual members of the  
250 United Church of Christ;
- 251 2. actively search for candidates for nomination and
- 252 3. develop a form to identify candidate's background, knowledge, experience, skills,  
253 and competencies.

254 The General Synod Nominating Committee shall consider, but not be limited to, such  
255 attributes as candidates' leadership, a wide range of life experience and background  
256 including socio-economic, cultural competency, financial knowledge, fund raising  
257 experience, community building skills, commitment to justice, and understanding of good  
258 governance.

259 All candidates considered for nomination to the United Church of Christ Board, and all  
260 members of the Board, shall provide the Nominating Committee with appropriate

261 information about themselves, including their local church membership, their experience  
262 in the United Church of Christ, their personal demographic background, and the skills,  
263 knowledge, experiences and competencies they would bring to the Board.

264

## 265 5. The Collegium of Officers

266 The United Church of Christ shall continue to be led by a Collegium of Officers, the  
267 General Minister and President and three Executive Ministers, who will oversee the work  
268 of the Covenanted Ministries (Justice and Witness, Wider Church, and Local Church).

269 The Officers of the Church (Collegium) shall be nominated by the United Church of  
270 Christ Board and elected by the General Synod. They shall be accountable to the United  
271 Church of Christ Board and through the Board to the General Synod. They shall function  
272 as a team of peers, modeling mutual accountability, collegiality, coordination,  
273 collaboration, open communication, transparency, and support. They will reflect the  
274 commitment of the United Church of Christ to be inclusive and diverse.

### 275 5.A. The General Minister and President

276 The General Minister and President shall be the spiritual leader and pastor of the church,  
277 charged with the care and nurture of the spiritual life of the church

278 The General Minister and President shall be the principle leader in interpreting the  
279 theological perspectives and values of the United Church of Christ as guided by the  
280 General Synod and in consultation with the Collegium.

281 The General Minister and President shall be the chief representative of the United Church  
282 of Christ in the public square and at ecumenical, interdenominational, and interfaith  
283 tables.

284 The General Minister and President shall convene and preside at meetings of the  
285 Collegium. S/he shall be responsible for coordinated communication, fund raising, and  
286 planning in collaboration with the Executive Ministers.

287 The General Minister and President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the General  
288 Synod and is its principle spokesperson. The General Minister and President shall serve  
289 as the president and chief executive officer of the corporation of the United Church of  
290 Christ Board and as president of each of the continuing Covenanted Ministries and other  
291 corporations within the national setting.

292 The General Minister and President shall oversee the administration of the national  
293 setting of the United Church of Christ and shall select a Chief Administrative Officer and  
294 Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Collegium. The Administrative Officer



295 and the Financial Officer are accountable to the General Minister and President, and  
296 through that office, to the United Church of Christ Board. The Chief Financial Officer  
297 shall serve as Treasurer of all corporations.

298 The General Minister and President shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Boards of  
299 the Associated Ministries and Affiliated Ministries of the United Church of Christ as  
300 determined by their bylaws.<sup>5</sup> S/he shall have voice, but not vote, in the meetings of all  
301 Commissions, Councils, and Committees of the United Church of Christ.

#### 302 5.B. The Executive Ministers

303 The Executive Ministers shall oversee the programs of the Ministries (Justice and  
304 Witness, Wider Church, Local Church). Responsibilities shall include program  
305 development and implementation, financial management, and personnel. Executive  
306 Ministers shall have other responsibilities as required to provide leadership for the  
307 national setting in response to God's call to mission. With the General Minister and  
308 President, they will participate in visioning and planning, communications, development  
309 and management of budgets, development and leadership of staff, and implementation of  
310 policies adopted by the General Synod and the United Church of Christ Board.

311 Each Executive Ministers shall serve as the chief executive officer of a continuing  
312 Covenanted Ministry corporation.

313

#### 314 6. Committees of the United Church of Christ Board

315 There shall be three Ministry Committees of the United Church of Christ Board as  
316 described above.

317 There shall be at least four standing committees of the United Church of Christ Board:  
318 Executive, Finance and Budget, Investment and Endowment, and Audit. The Board may  
319 create other standing committees and special committees as needed, and each may draw  
320 on expertise beyond the Board if necessary.

#### 321 6.A .The Executive Committee

322 The Executive Committee of the United Church of Christ Board may act on behalf of the  
323 full Board when necessary and in accordance with the standing rules of the United  
324 Church of Christ Board.

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<sup>5</sup> The Unified Governance Working Group recommends that all Associated and Affiliated Ministries provide for the President and General Minister to serve as an ex-officio member of their boards, with voice and vote.

325 The authority of the Executive Committee shall be governed by the standing rules of the  
326 United Church of Christ Board as adopted by the Board.

327 Members of the Executive Committee shall be members of the United Church of Christ  
328 Board. The Executive Committee shall include twelve (12) positions:

- 329 1. The Chair and Vice Chair of the United Church of Christ Board, elected by the  
330 Board.
- 331 2. One representative from each of the three Ministry Committees.
- 332 3. Four Officers of the Church (Collegium)
- 333 4. One Conference Minister
- 334 5. One member of the Budget & Finance Committee
- 335 6. One additional member

336 6.B. The Finance and Budget Committee

337 The Finance and Budget Committee of the United Church of Christ Board shall  
338 recommend and oversee financial policy. The Committee shall

- 339 1. Review the annual available resources and be responsible for financial planning
- 340 2. Review the proposed Annual Budget recommended by the Collegium in  
341 consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and other key staff and mission  
342 partners, including the Common Global Ministries Board
- 343 3. Recommend an Annual Budget to the United Church of Christ Board
- 344 4. Receive and review regular and comprehensive financial reports

345 Members of the Finance and Budget Committee shall be members of the United Church  
346 of Christ Board. There shall be up to twelve (12) members of the Committee, including:

- 347 1. The Chair or Vice Chair of the United Church of Christ Board
- 348 2. Two (2) representatives with financial expertise from each of the Ministry  
349 Committees
- 350 3. The General Minister and President

351 6.C. The Investment and Endowment Committee

352 The Investment and Endowment Committee shall assure that the legacy and historic  
353 restrictions on the use of funds, and the intended use of the unrestricted funds of each of  
354 the historic ministries related to the United Church of Christ through its Covenanted  
355 Ministries are faithfully maintained, monitored, accounted for, and reported out to the  
356 United Church of Christ Board and through the Board to the General Synod and the  
357 church.

358 The Investment and Endowment Committee shall

- 359 1. Recommend to the United Church of Christ Board investment policies for all  
360 funds, including investment screens that reflect the commitment of the United  
361 Church of Christ to corporate social responsibility.
- 362 2. Manage the endowed funds and other assets, including real property, in  
363 accordance with investment policies approved by the United Church of Christ  
364 Board.
- 365 3. Monitor and report on the management of invested funds to the United Church of  
366 Christ Board.
- 367 4. Recommend to the United Church of Christ Board the annual draw rate on  
368 invested funds that may be used to carry out the mission entrusted to the  
369 Covenanted Ministries.
- 370 5. Review, Monitor, and recommend to the United Church of Christ Board the  
371 allocation of annual dollar amounts resulting from the application of the spending  
372 rate to each of the restricted endowment funds and to each of the historic donor-  
373 intended uses of unrestricted endowment funds.
- 374 6. Monitor and oversee the allocation of both restricted and unrestricted funds to  
375 ensure that they will be allocated based on donor intent, whenever that can be  
376 determined, and to provide the full Board an overview of all funds to encourage  
377 the most effective collaborative and faithful use of those funds to further the  
378 mission of the United Church of Christ.
- 379 7. Provide United Church of Christ Board representation to the Investment  
380 Committee of the United Church Foundation (United Church Funds).

381 Any Investment and Endowment Committee recommendation of the annual draw rate  
382 and allocation of dollar amounts from restricted and unrestricted endowment funds shall  
383 not be modified by the United Church of Christ Board except upon two affirmative votes,  
384 each of not less than eighty-five percent (85%) of the members present at one or more  
385 meetings of the full Board, with not less than twelve (12) hours between the two  
386 affirmative votes, in order to ensure adequate discernment by the full Board. This policy  
387 shall be included in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

388 The Investment and Endowment Committee shall be members of the United Church of  
389 Christ Board, except as noted below. There shall be up to 14 members, including:

- 390 1. Two (2) representative from each of the Ministry Committees, selected by each  
391 Committee
- 392 2. Four Officers of the Church, the General Minister and President and the three  
393 Executive Ministers
- 394 3. The Executive of the United Church Foundation (United Church Funds), voice  
395 without vote
- 396 4. Up to three members of the United Church of Christ, who are not members of the  
397 Board, who bring legal and/or investment expertise, may be elected to the  
398 Committee by vote of the full Board. They will serve on the Committee with  
399 voice and vote.

400 6.D. The Audit Committee

401 The Audit Committee of the United Church of Christ Board shall

- 402 1. Select the audit firm to perform the annual financial audit of all funds  
403 2. Receive and review the report of the auditors and report to the full Board

404 The size of the Audit Committee may be determined by the United Church of Christ  
405 Board. Members of the Board will comprise the majority of the members of the Audit  
406 Committee. Additional members of the United Church of Christ, who are not members  
407 of the Board, who bring financial and/or legal expertise, may be elected to the Committee  
408 by vote of the full Board. They will serve on the Committee with voice and vote.

409

410 Additional Comments

411 The Unified Governance Working Group recognizes the need for additional opportunities  
412 to engage more members and settings of the United Church of Christ in our common  
413 mission with one another. That mission is initiated and engaged everywhere among us  
414 and we urge all to invite one another to participate. We look forward to General Synods  
415 and other gatherings (regional, national, virtual) in which we share with one another in  
416 listening for God's call to us through Jesus Christ and discerning how we will respond as  
417 communities and individuals in the name of the United Church of Christ.

418 We recommend renewed consideration of the meeting patterns, composition and  
419 frequency of the General Synod toward further engagement in the discernment of,  
420 preparation for, and participation in mission.

421 We recommend that events sponsored by the national setting, such as Leaders in  
422 Koinonia (LinK), Mission Works, Justice LED (Leaders Engaging and Developing), and  
423 the Congregational Vitality workshops be enhanced and increased with the specific  
424 purpose of engaging United Church of Christ members in mission opportunities in  
425 partnership with the national setting. We trust new opportunities and events will be  
426 developed and offered.

427 The Unified Governance Working Group is grateful to the Executive Council for being  
428 trusted to create this proposal. We believe we have been faithful to the mandate given to  
429 us by the Executive Council and the General Synod to prepare a proposal for the unified  
430 governance of the national setting of the United Church of Christ. We have been blessed  
431 in discovering a new depth of community as we have worked together. We have listened  
432 to one another and, we hope and trust, to the voice of God. We have not all heard the  
433 same things; two of our members disagree with this proposal for unified governance.  
434 The other 27 members of our diverse group offer this proposal with our strong support.

435 We pray the Holy Spirit will carry our beloved United Church of Christ; we believe that  
436 will happen.