

# Community of Christ

## 2010 World Conference Legislation

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World Church leaders acknowledge that the following resolutions may cause individuals and groups pain and frustration because of differences in their personal, scriptural, theological, legal, and sacramental perspectives. As an international community of faith, this issue is further complicated by the diverse customs and languages of our members.

As the body of Christ, it is imperative that the church approaches these legislative issues with great care, understanding, and sensitivity to the voices and perspectives of members throughout the world. As an international church represented in nearly fifty nations, it is important that we learn to talk about divisive issues without separating from the body.

We have been counseled as a church to “Listen together to one another, without judgment or predisposition. Do not assume that the answers to matters of conflict have yet been perceived. There is much labor to be done. Reason together in love, and the Spirit of truth will prevail” (Doctrine and Covenants 162:5c).

While the church seeks agreement or common consent in important matters, we must commit to ongoing dialogue and lovingly upholding our common faith in Jesus Christ and the mission of the church.

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### **G-15**                      **World Trade Day**

*From the Michigan Blue Water USA Mission Center:*

Whereas, Community of Christ is a worldwide church dedicated to the pursuit of peace, reconciliation and healing of the spirit; and

Whereas, according to Jimmy Carter, a former U.S. President, and Jennifer Smith Stepanek, Mattie J.T. Stepanek’s mother, the late peace activist and poet Mattie J.T. Stepanek spoke about and pursued peace all the days of his young life through his “Heartsongs” poetry (*Reflections of a Peacemaker*) and as he continues to impact the world through *Just Peace: A Message of Hope* that was published after he died on June 22, 2004; and

Whereas, in response to the World Trade Center tragedy he wrote a 9/11 Anniversary composition proposing a true World Trade Day that would annually occur on September 11, hoping that people around the world would find some way to trade something significant with someone else. This act of kindness and sharing could help unite people with each other, and spread the message of hope and peace around the planet. This new World Trade Day could foster relations between and among people of all ages and nationalities and beliefs. In commemorating this tragic event in a way that promotes positive growth, we can move beyond our anger and fears without forgetting the truth of the past. By celebrating World Trade Day with a respectful and future-oriented attitude, we are paying the highest honor to those

who suffered on September 11, 2001, and we are planting seeds of peace for all those who will live through the future of September 11 each year; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that Community of Christ designate September 11 as World Trade Day throughout the church in honor of Mattie J.T. Stepanek and the victims of the 9/11 tragedy and seek to implement his proposal throughout the world as we continue in our pursuit of peace.

## **G-16 Request to Authorize Ordinations**

*From the Australia Mission Centre:*

Whereas, Community of Christ has affirmed repeatedly that individuals are called by God according to their giftedness (Doctrine and Covenants 119:8b; 156:9b-c and WCR 1226 Affirmation of Human Diversity), and

Whereas, Some members of the church are being denied opportunity to serve in priesthood specifically because of their sexual orientation even when a call has been discerned by the appropriate leaders; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That this World Conference ask the First Presidency to consider allowing for the ordination of individuals regardless of their sexual orientation in those jurisdictions of the church where such priesthood calls are received, or have been received and duly processed and approved by the appropriate leaders, and where such ordinations are accepted by the will of the congregation and/ or mission center or World Conference.

## **G-17 Abundance**

*From the Pacific Islands Mission Centre:*

Whereas, God's generous gifts to humankind include spiritual, mental, emotional, and material aspects, and as disciples of Christ we are called to magnify and develop all such good gifts, and

Whereas, The current stewardship program of the church, "A Disciple's Generous Response," provides good guidance for using God's generous gifts wisely, but lacks guidance on how to create, magnify, and accumulate material abundance, and

Whereas, The mission and ministry of the church depend on the creation, collection, and effective deployment of such material abundance for the sake of others; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That an appropriate resource development team be identified to explore the feasibility of developing culturally sensitive and language specific teaching materials and practical guidelines to encourage and enable members to develop healthy and righteous attitudes and practices toward creating, magnifying, and accumulating material abundance; and be it further

*Resolved*, That this Conference requests the Presiding Bishopric to explore sources of funding both inside and outside the budget to fund such a project; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the resource team and the Presiding Bishopric report their findings at the next World Conference.



risk the well-being of the church's ministers in those areas; and

Whereas, As an Enduring Principle, Community of Christ affirms the worth of all persons, understanding that God views all people as having inestimable and equal worth wanting them to experience wholeness of body, mind, spirit, and relationships; challenging unjust systems that diminish human worth; and joining with Jesus Christ in bringing good news to the poor, sick, captive, and oppressed; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That Community of Christ members and ministers work with communities to affirm homosexual persons as no less than heterosexual persons as individuals of sacred worth and continue their support for the rights and liberties of homosexual persons as an issue of justice; and be it further

*Resolved*, That all the legislation to the 2010 World Conference pertaining to matters of ordination of homosexual persons be referred to the First Presidency for consideration, looking for the means by which these matters could be considered more fully in a culturally contextual manner by the mission centers of the church rather than the World Conference determining a universal stance for the entire church.

## **G-20 Referring Matters of Marriage**

*From the South Central Africa Mission Centre:*

Whereas, Community of Christ has been counseled in Doctrine and Covenants 162:5c to "Listen together to one another without judgment or predisposition" and to not assume that the answers to matters of conflict have yet been perceived as there is much labor to be done with a need to reason together in love and that the Spirit of truth will prevail; and

Whereas, Further counsel has been given in Doctrine and Covenants 163: 11b that "There are many issues that could easily consume the time and energy of the church. However, the challenge before a prophetic people is to discern and pursue what matters most for the journey ahead;" and

Whereas, An important part of being Community of Christ, a true worldwide community, is learning to talk about divisive issues without division through a process that incorporates healthy decision making and common consent that is seen, regardless of the outcome, as fair by those who have different views; and

Whereas, As a worldwide community we are always confronted with challenges such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, homelessness, orphans and vulnerable children, social injustice, and issues related to human sexuality, etc.; and, on such important matters, a spirit of trust should prevail in order to avoid situations where one side is closed to the other's situation or point of view making it difficult, if not impossible, to hold meaningful discussion; and

Whereas, In some states and nations the law of the land needs to be considered in these discussions so that inappropriate decisions do not adversely impact the mission of the church and put at risk the well-being of the church's ministers in those areas; and

Whereas, As an Enduring Principle, Community of Christ affirms the worth of all persons, understanding that God views all people as having inestimable and equal worth, wanting them to experience wholeness of body, mind, spirit, and relationships; challenging unjust systems that diminish human worth; and joining with Jesus Christ in bringing good news to the poor, sick, captive, and oppressed; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That Community of Christ members and ministers work with communities to affirm homosexual persons as no less than heterosexual persons as individuals of sacred worth and continue their support for the rights and liberties of homosexual persons as an issue of justice; and be it further

*Resolved*, That all the legislation to the 2010 World Conference pertaining to matters of same-sex marriage be referred to the First Presidency for consideration, looking for the means by which these matters could be considered more fully in a culturally contextual manner by the mission centers of the church rather than the World Conference determining a universal stance for the entire church.

## **G-21 Common Consent on Definition of Marriage**

*From the Central America Mission Center:*

Whereas, Concepts expressed in Section 111 of the Doctrine and Covenants have guided Community of Christ on matters of marriage since at least 1835; and

Whereas, Section 111: 2a–c of the Doctrine and Covenants refers to marriage as being between a man and a woman (husband and wife); and

Whereas, World Conference Resolution 1182 repeatedly uses language referring to marriage as being between a husband and wife; and

Whereas, The Bible provides no other model for marriage than that of between a man and a woman (Genesis 2:24, Mark 10:7, Ephesians 5:31); therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That WCR 1182 be amended so that in the first sentence in the fourth point the word “heterosexual” be inserted so it reads, “The church upholds the validity of a heterosexual legal marriage...”; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 2010 World Conference indicate through common consent their understanding that marriage be defined as between one man and one woman (husband and wife).

## **G-22 Common Consent on Officiating Same-sex Marriages**

*From the Central America Mission Center:*

Whereas, a growing number of nations, states, and provinces have begun to allow same-sex marriage; and

Whereas, The preface to Section 111 of the Doctrine and Covenants states that “the church knows no other law of marriage than that which is set forth here;” and

Whereas, Section 111: 2a–c of the Doctrine and Covenants refers to marriage as being between a man and a woman (husband and wife); and

Whereas, World Conference Resolution 1182 repeatedly uses language referring to marriage as being between a husband and wife; and

Whereas, The Bible provides no other model for marriage than that of a man and a woman (Genesis 2:24, Mark 10:7, Ephesians 5:31); and

Whereas, No language in the basic guiding documents used by the church provides for same-sex marriage; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the 2010 World Conference indicates through common consent the understanding that Community of Christ priesthood members should not be authorized by the church to officiate in same-sex marriages, even where it is legal to do so.

**G-23                    Common Consent for Not Ordaining Homosexuals**

*From the Central America Mission Center:*

Whereas, The church is to be faithful to the demands of the gospel, going beyond the boundaries of certainty to explore its implications in a complex world; and

Whereas, God's people are called to live together in love and to embrace the rich diversity of our global family; and

Whereas, The body of Christ will always be challenged to seek unity within the body and to increase in understanding; and

Whereas; since its beginning, the church has never permitted the calling and ordination of persons involved in sexual relationships with persons of the same sex; and

Whereas, The World Church Leadership Council declared in 2002 that the church would not make exceptions to the 1982 guidelines on calling and ordination unless those guidelines be first adjusted through the common consent of the people; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That this 2010 World Conference indicates through common consent support for continuing the policy of not permitting the ordination of homosexuals involved in a sexual relationship with another person of the same sex.