

1 **A CALL FOR THE CENTRAL ATLANTIC CONFERENCE TO**
2 **ADDRESS CLERGY COMPENSATION INEQUALITIES AND TO**
3 **ESTABLISH PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES, AND GOALS REGARDING**
4 **THE PASTORAL SEARCH AND CALL PROCESS THAT AFFIRM**
5 **THE MINISTRIES AND THAT SEEK TO INCREASE ITS**
6 **REPRESENTATION OF PERSONS OF COLOR, WOMEN, AND**
7 **LGBTQ CLERGY**

8
9 **Summary:** A resolution sponsored by ten members of the Potomac
10 Association Racial Justice Working Group – Xzana Tellis, Lucille
11 Dickinson, Leslie Dowdell-Cannon, Graylan Hagler, Anne Holmes,
12 Vivian Jackson, Alexis Kassim, Tim Tutt, Art Waidmann, and Anne
13 Weissenborn – to be submitted for consideration by the CAC
14 delegates to the 2016 CAC Annual Meeting. In employing biblical-
15 theological reasoning and taking into account the various barriers
16 that have been erected against the ministries of historically
17 underrepresented groups, *including* women, this resolution calls for
18 the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ to
19 establish priorities, strategies, and goals regarding the pastoral search
20 and call process that affirm the ministries and that seek to increase its
21 representation of persons of color, women, and LGBTQ clergy. In so
22 doing, it makes certain calls upon: the candidates for the called
23 positions of the congregations of the Conference; the congregations of
24 the Conference; the search committees of the congregations of the
25 Conference; those responsible for the administration and oversight of
26 the Conference's Search and Call process; the Church and Ministry
27 Committees of the Associations of the Conference; the Associations of
28 the Conference; the Pension Boards United Church of Christ, Inc.; the
29 UCC's Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization team
30 (MESA); and the Board of Directors of the Conference.

31
32 WHEREAS, "God created humankind in God's image," so that human
33 beings have been gifted to become co-creators with the divine and are
34 thus ultimately responsible for what they are to make of their own
35 lives together (Genesis 1:27a [NRSV]);

36
37 WHEREAS, our life together means that "we, who are many, are one
38 body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another," so
39 that we are called by God to create a beloved community of mutuality
40 whereby each person can be the benefactor and beneficiary of all

41 persons and therefore can realize her full humanity (Romans 12:5
42 [NRSV]);

43

44 WHEREAS, we acknowledge and confess that we have no right to
45 disregard this call and thereby prevent all God's children from
46 becoming fully who they are created to be;

47

48 WHEREAS, we acknowledge and confess that in our fractured world
49 racism, sexism, heterosexism, and cisgender bias have vitiated our
50 attempts to form the beloved community and are therefore an affront
51 to God as well as to our oneness in Jesus Christ, in which there is to
52 be “no longer Jew or Greek, . . . slave or free, . . . male and female”
53 (Galatians 3:28a [NRSV]);

54

55 WHEREAS, we are called accordingly to denounce institutional
56 structures that separate God’s people based upon differences in race,
57 ethnicity, gender, and gender identity and expression;

58

59 WHEREAS, we are also called to dismantle institutional structures
60 and shadow ministries that – by intention or effect – construct or
61 perpetuate systems and processes that objectify, exclude, and divide
62 persons, as well as those that establish and propagate prejudices or
63 maintain the status quo, including “pulpit requirements” that result
64 in the installation of pastors and leaders who most closely resemble
65 the congregations whom they are called to serve and thereby prevent
66 those same congregations from enjoying the gift of diversity;

67

68 WHEREAS, as God’s children we know that we must do more to love
69 others as we do ourselves and must acknowledge that God has given
70 us the beauty and magnificence of the full spectrum of race, gender,
71 and sexuality in our world and that that spectrum must be more fully
72 represented in the pulpits of the church;

73

74 WHEREAS, we in the United Church of Christ (UCC) should
75 continually strive for wholeness and completeness in our attempt to
76 grow and deliberately share God’s gifts and goodness with one
77 another;

78

79 WHEREAS, the historic social justice witness of the UCC has
80 manifested itself in multiple strategies to create social, political, and

81 environmental change that is inspired by the biblical writings, the
82 prophets, the teachings and life of Jesus, the historic cloud of
83 witnesses to the Christian faith, and the leaders of transformational
84 movements for universal peace, justice, and equality, and that is
85 enacted in the light of God’s unbounded love for all creation;

86

87 WHEREAS, UCC theology and polity permits and encourages its
88 different ministries to witness and advocate in ways that are faithful
89 to the Christian gospel, fitting to their unique gifts, and functional in
90 their particular contexts;

91

92 WHEREAS, such diversity in ministry is a good and a blessing, and
93 just as it has been facilitated by the establishment of clear and
94 attainable pathways to ordination for members of historically
95 underrepresented groups, so also it must be encouraged by the
96 enactment of pro-active policies designed by congregational search
97 committees to engage such individuals in the congregational search
98 process;

99

100 WHEREAS, as illustrated by the fact that in the UCC, active female
101 Ordained Ministers comprise over two-thirds (70.3%) of the
102 denomination’s associate and assistant pastors but comprise fewer
103 than forty percent (38.3%) of its solo and senior pastors,¹ there is still
104 much work to be done in realizing a truly representative, just, and
105 inclusive ordained ministry in our churches;

106

107 WHEREAS, the absence of attention to the experience of clergy of
108 color and LGBTQ clergy is revealed through the failure of the UCC to
109 *try* to collect in proper and legal ways data by race, sexual orientation,
110 and gender identity or expression regarding: composition of the
111 pastorates at assistant, associate, senior, and solo levels; comparative
112 compensation; and representation in selection pools – and all in
113 order to track and measure the realization of a truly representative,
114 just, and inclusive ordained ministry in our churches; and

115

¹ *The United Church of Christ: A Statistical Profile – with reflection/discussion questions for church leaders (Fall 2015)*, Research from the UCC Center for Analytics, Research and Data (card), p.19.

116 WHEREAS, experience has taught us that women, Black, and Latino
117 clergy are (at least sometimes) paid less than their white male
118 counterparts and that there is no current means to *attempt* to certify
119 that there is fair application of compensation guidelines, resulting (at
120 least sometimes) in women, Black, and Latino clergy having less in
121 their pension funds for retirement than their white male
122 counterparts;

123

124 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2016 Annual Meeting of
125 the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ call
126 upon:

127

128 1) the congregations of the Conference to carry out search processes
129 for their authorized ministers in ways that heed the Holy Spirit's call
130 for inclusivity and justice;

131

132 2) the congregations of the Conference to examine and, if need be,
133 amend or emend their personnel policies to make sure they
134 adequately address matters of diversity and inclusiveness;

135

136 3) the congregations of the Conference to heed this call not only by
137 eliminating explicit and implicit policies and procedures that exclude
138 candidates to such positions on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender,
139 and gender identity and expression but also – and perhaps more
140 importantly – by implementing policies and procedures, including
141 statements in their church profiles, that welcome and include the
142 widest diversity of candidates as possible;

143

144 4) the congregations of the Conference to seek, through open dialogue
145 and discussion, to identify and eliminate barriers to ministry that are
146 based upon institutional bias for all their authorized ministers;

147

148 5) the search committees of the congregations of the Conference to
149 interview at least one person of an historically underrepresented
150 group for all their authorized ministerial positions;

151

152 6) the search committees of the congregations of the Conference to
153 certify to those responsible for the administration and oversight of
154 the Conference's Search and Call process that there is diversity of
155 race, gender, and/or sexual orientation *to the extent that such can be*

156 *and is known* in the candidacy pool, beginning at the first interview
157 stage, and to certify that candidates other than white males are
158 interviewed for all authorized ministerial positions, and that where
159 there is lack of such diversity the search committees of the
160 congregations of the Conference will work with those responsible for
161 the administration and oversight of the Conference's Search and Call
162 process to identify such candidates;

163

164 7) the candidates for authorized ministry in local churches to be in
165 contact with the Conference offices and those responsible for the
166 administration and oversight of the Conference's Search and Call
167 process to assist such candidates as they prepare for the search
168 interview process;

169

170 8) the congregations of the Conference to commit to comparable
171 compensation and promotion of its authorized ministers who have
172 similar backgrounds, qualifications, and responsibilities, regardless of
173 their race, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity and
174 expression, and to be assisted in this endeavor by attending and
175 adhering closely to the Conference compensation guidelines;

176

177 9) those responsible for the administration and oversight of the
178 Conference's Search and Call work to develop a strategy to ensure fair
179 and equitable compensation packages and to explore ways in which
180 local congregations can certify that their pay package(s) are meeting
181 certain minimum standards, including compensation guidelines,
182 benefits, and pension;

183

184 10) the Board of Directors of the Conference, in consultation with the
185 Associations of the Conference, to explore together with the Pension
186 Boards United Church of Christ, Inc., ways to subsidize clergy
187 compensation that does not meet the Conference's recommended
188 guidelines for compensation, making for equality in at least the
189 retirement contributions;

190

191 11) those responsible for the administration and oversight of the
192 Conference's Search and Call process to encourage the inclusion of
193 members of historically underrepresented groups in all local church
194 authorized ministerial searches and to specify a means to provide
195 leadership, guidance, and training, including inclusion strategies and

196 practices, to all church search committees in order to recruit, include,
197 and hire a diverse ministerial leadership for local churches;

198

199 12) those responsible for the administration and oversight of the
200 Conference's Search and Call process to identify a means to collect
201 and disseminate annual demographic data of all local church
202 authorized ministers in the Conference beginning no later than 2018;

203

204 13) those responsible for the administration and oversight of the
205 Conference's Search and Call process to develop and implement a
206 strategic plan, based upon the initial demographic data collected, that
207 sets out specific diversity goals and objectives as a means of
208 informing and alerting the congregations of the Conference of best
209 practices in creating opportunities and meeting expectations for
210 greater inclusion, as well as for comparable compensation and
211 promotion, of historically underrepresented individuals in and to
212 local church authorized ministerial positions;

213

214 14) those responsible for the administration and oversight of the
215 Conference's Search and Call process to deliver to the Board of
216 Directors of the Conference a copy of the aforementioned strategic
217 plan within six (6) months of the collection of the initial demographic
218 data;

219

220 15) the Associations of the Conference to assist in encouraging and
221 supporting their churches' progress in reaching these specified
222 diversity goals and objectives and the Board of Directors of the
223 Conference to certify to the apposite Annual Meeting of the
224 Conference the status of that progress;

225

226 16) the UCC's Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization team
227 (MESA) to develop a strategic plan to collect in proper and legal ways
228 data by race, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression
229 regarding: composition of the pastorates at assistant, associate,
230 senior, and solo levels; comparative compensation; and
231 representation in selection pools – and all in order to track and
232 measure the realization of a truly representative, just, and inclusive
233 ordained ministry in our churches; and

234

235 17) the Board of Directors of the Conference to send a copy of this
236 resolution, if adopted, to the Pension Boards United Church of Christ,
237 Inc., and to the UCC's Ministerial Excellence, Support and
238 Authorization team (MESA).

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240 For further information, please contact the resolution's author, Xzana
241 Tellis, [telliast@msn.com](mailto:tellieast@msn.com).