1 2	A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF OUTDOOR MINISTRIES OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
3 4 5	Approved As Submitted
6	A Prudential Resolution
7 8 9	TEXT OF THE MOTION
10 11 12 13	Whereas, we affirm the crucial support in the past from our national UCC and from many Conferences in both proclaiming and celebrating the vital and visible outdoor ministry to our youth, our churches and the wider church, and
14 15 16 17	Whereas, we recognize the power of Outdoor Ministry sites in promoting wider church/conference financial appeals, including capital campaigns and Our Church's Wider Mission; and further we affirm the crucial support in the past from the national UCC setting and from many conferences, and
19 20 21 22 23 24	Whereas, we honor the foresight of founding mothers and fathers of the faith to purchase, develop and invest in Outdoor Ministry camp and retreat sites for the UCC's faith journeys and to grow and raise up leadership in every generation, and Whereas, we celebrate further investments in the infrastructure and improvements to our Outdoor Ministry sites, and
25 26 27 28 29	Whereas, the UCC, in recognition of the significant number of ordained ministers who claim their Outdoor Ministry experience as foundational to their hearing and heeding of the Call (for example, over 200 clergy credit their experience at Silver Lake Conference Center with hearing the Call), and
30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37	Whereas for over 50 years, our outdoor ministries have been developing leaders who live their faith in every walk of life and consider their experiences there as major touchstones in their lives as they make ethical and professional decisions, and Whereas, we further name and recognize the correlation between the alarming closing of Outdoor Ministry sites (from over 65 in 1995 to 35 current member sites) and the lost opportunity for raising up young seminarians, and faith leaders of the Church and Conferences, and for future generations of youth to experience this unique ministry of Jesus, and
38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46	Whereas since OMA's inception, we've lost Blakes Grove (IA), Atkinson Center, VT; Deer Hill Conference Center NY; Camp Laurent, NY; Camp Fernbrook PA; Pilgrim Haven, MI; Pleasant Valley Outdoor Center IL; Lake, Camp Western Hills MO; Dillon, RMC; Pilgrim Park, ND; Deering Conference Center NH (BHM); Pilgrim Haven, MI; Warner Farm, MA; Ingraham House, CT; Rockcraft Lodge, ME; Dillon Hi Country, Rocky Mountain Central Conference and Pilgrim's Playground, AZ, and more recently, Lake Byrd, Florida; Camp Fernbrook PA SE, Lani Kamaha'o, Oahu Association, HI; Bows Lake Camp and Conference Center, MI Conference, and many others,

In recognition that Camps have closed and been sold by our UCC Conferences and Associations across the country; and in recognition of current sites in distress even now, (Mensch Mill Conference and Retreat Center, PSE) and in light of the disturbing trend of closings of faithbased camps across the country,

And whereas, it would not be inappropriate to describe the state of Outdoor Ministry in the UCC as the 'Canary in the Coalmine' for our denominational lifecycle,

Now therefore be it resolved, that the Twenty-Ninth General Synod of the UCC gathered in Long Beach, CA declares its advocacy and support of the Outdoor Ministries Association (OMA), and

Be it further resolved that the Twenty-Ninth General Synod requests that the conferences, associations and other settings of the wider church, prayerfully discerning the long term consequences to the youth and future leaders of the church when considering the ramifications of closing a camp or center, seek the counsel of the OMA, and

Be it finally resolved that the Twenty-Ninth General Synod, requests that the conferences, associations and other settings of the wider church provide timely notification to OMA in the event of impending Outdoor Ministry site or program closing so OMA may have the opportunity to provide resources, support and consultation to the distressed body and to programs at risk.

## **FUNDING**

Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Collegium of Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.