

1 **RESOLUTION AGAINST BULLY AND DISCRIMINATION**

2 **Approved As Amended**

3
4 **A Resolution of Witness**

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6 **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

7 WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ supports the right of students to attend schools that are safe
8 and free from violence, harassment, bullying, and discrimination; and

9 WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ encourages and expects all churches of the denomination to
10 provide and enforce church policies to ensure the safety of all children and youth participating in church
11 activities; and

12 WHEREAS, providing safe learning environments in all settings, be it churches, schools, sports
13 complexes, etc., that ensure both the physical and emotional safety of students, and create the conditions
14 necessary to foster success in all endeavors where children and youth are involved; and

15 WHEREAS, bullying is one of the more common and vicious ways by which such success is imperiled;

16 WHEREAS, bullying is any behavior that happens when someone is subjected to negative actions from
17 one or more people and has a hard time defending him or herself. Moreover, bullying takes various
18 forms: teasing, taunting or verbal abuse, punching, shoving and physical acts, spreading rumors,
19 ganging up on others, or excluding someone from a group; and

20 WHEREAS, cyber-bullying occurs when a person uses the Internet, mobile phones, or other electronic
21 devices to bully, the impact can be more long-lasting. Some examples of cyber-bullying are: sending
22 mean or threatening texts, e-mail, or instant messages; posting damaging pictures or hurtful messages
23 online; tricking someone into revealing personal information and sending it to others; and creating
24 websites to make fun of someone; and

25 WHEREAS, children ache to be considered a viable and vital part of their community and yearn to be
26 treated with dignity; and

27 WHEREAS, some significantly effective practices are being developed around the country, increased
28 collaboration among schools, churches, community service organizations, and civic clubs needs to be
29 encouraged and those various entities need to be equipped to develop strategies to enhance their
30 effectiveness in reducing bullying; and

31 WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ supports communities that develop, implement and monitor
32 policies and programs that address the prevention, intervention and elimination of violence, harassment,
33 bullying, and discrimination.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-ninth General Synod of the United Church
35 of Christ encourages all Conferences of the United Church of Christ to work with a broad spectrum of
36 local community stakeholders, clergy, coaches, instructors, parents, staff, students and teachers, and to
37 develop, implement, and monitor policies and programs that foster and support a positive learning
38 climate free from violence, harassment, bullying, and discrimination based on, but not limited to, age,
39 race, ethnicity, language, national identity, political or theological perspectives, appearance, gender
40 identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, economic status or class.

41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call for further education for all people in all settings of our
42 church about the definition, causes and effects of bullying, so that we foster climates of greater safety,
43 and so that we grow in our capacity to love our neighbors as ourselves in word and deed.

44 BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-ninth General Synod of the United Church of
45 Christ urges all settings to invest in, promote, and support comprehensive, coordinated, and
46 collaborative strategies to prevent violence, harassment, bullying, and discrimination in places of
47 learning so that all students have the opportunity to attend school, engage in the classroom, achieve
48 academic success, and participate in other school activities.

49 **FUNDING**

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

52 **IMPLEMENTATION**

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