

1 The Business Committee of the Thirty-first General Synod has recommended this proposed  
2 resolution be sent to a Committee of the General Synod.

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5 **ON ENHANCED SUPPORT OF AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION**  
6 **FOUNDED CHURCHES THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE MERGER FORMING THE**  
7 **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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9 **A Prudential Resolution**

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11 **Submitted by Ministers for Racial, Social, and Economic Justice**

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14 **SUMMARY**

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16 This resolution is intended to be an expression that recognizes the importance of the historic  
17 mission of a predecessor body of the United Church of Christ, which was to support and advance  
18 persons of African descent through the means of church development, Christian education, and  
19 leadership training. Furthermore, it seeks to call relevant agencies and expressions of the current  
20 denomination back to a focus on the aforesaid mission, in light of racial, social, and economic  
21 exigencies that confront the African American constituency within the United Church of Christ,  
22 including challenges to the very survival of these churches, which are in need of support and  
23 encouragement.

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25 **BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL RATIONALE**

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27 Amos 9:7 is particularly striking witness for remembrance and inclusion, with its bold  
28 proclamation, “Are you not like the Ethiopians to me, O people of Israel? says the Lord. Did I not  
29 bring Israel up from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from  
30 Kir? (NRSV)” Here, Israel is reminded, as should the United Church of Christ be also, of the  
31 critical role of people of African descent in its history. The United Church of Christ has seen  
32 African Americans make critical contributions as prophetic voices, spiritual innovators, and  
33 embodiments of our unique faith, whether that be Lemuel Haynes (in Colonial times), Andrew  
34 Young and Yvonne Delk (in Civil Rights times) or Otis Moss, III (in contemporary times).  
35 Accordingly, in the midst of many AMA founded churches facing fiscal, logistical, and  
36 operational challenges in the present time, we ought to be compelled to “Love each other with  
37 genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other” (Romans 12:10, NLT) and take  
38 concerted action to assist them with their needs.

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40 **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

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42 Whereas, the recent murder of the Charleston Nine by Dillon Roof, and the extrajudicial killings  
43 of persons of color at the hands of police, such as Gregory Gunn, Akiel Denkins, Walter Scott,  
44 and Keith Scott, demonstrate that the words W.E.B. Dubois spoke in an earlier time still ring  
45 true. A major problem in American life is the issue of race. While we have, by order of law, come  
46 to physically share many public and private spaces, not enough people have come to the point of

47 sharing hearts, minds, and spirits around a uniting vision of freedom, justice, and equality.

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49 Whereas, if the color line in America is to be fully broken, there must be a change in  
50 understanding and attitude. That will be a work of capacity building that moves individuals  
51 where they live; in areas and communities where these historic American Missionary  
52 Association (AMA) founded African American churches are located, such as Montgomery,  
53 Alabama and Charlotte, NC. If these churches are given more resources and attention aimed at  
54 vitality and excellence, they can be the needed impact to move people and communities along a  
55 spectrum of empathy that begins with cognition and develops into compassion, and prophetic  
56 social action; and

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58 Whereas, the United Church of Christ, as a denomination has numerous entities and agencies  
59 that are capable of providing focused and enhanced support of these small to medium sized  
60 congregations with low to no cost options within a comprehensive denominational initiative.  
61 Among these are: UCC Building and Loan, UCC Insurance Board, Pension Boards of the United  
62 Church of Christ, Local Church Ministries, and Justice and Witness Ministries; and

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64 Whereas, once strengthened by this enhanced support, these churches are then empowered to  
65 begin or increase giving to Our Churches Wider Mission through financial contribution and  
66 more active participation, which would be a measurable and quantifiable outcome.

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68 Therefore be it resolved, that the Thirty First General Synod of the United Church of Christ  
69 commits iteself to bringing the resources of the varous agencies and expressions of our church to  
70 an enhanced and focused program of supporting the development of the churches that were  
71 founded through the anti-racism work of the American Missionary Association, and who remain  
72 affiliated with the United Churchof Christ.

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74 Be it further resolved that the Thirty First General Synod encourages all settings of the United  
75 Church of Christ to seek ways to understand the needs of, provide aid and assistance to, and  
76 work in partnership with these historic AMA churches by framing local initiatives that advance  
77 the purposes for which they were founded;

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79 Be it further resolved that the national setting of the United Church of Christ provide, with  
80 appropriate representation and input from each setting, both the human and capital resources  
81 necessary to spur this initiative;

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83 Be it finally resolved that members and settings of the United Church of Christ be encouraged  
84 to join and/or partner with Ministers for Racial, Social, and Economic Justice as they seek  
85 to speak out against and remedy racially motivated hatred, violence and actions, and  
86 systemic injustices such as gerrymandering, voter disenfranchisement, police brutality, and  
87 regressive public policies when and where they occur.

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89 **FUNDING**

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

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94 **IMPLEMENTATION**

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