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2 **ON ACTIONS OF HOSTILITY AGAINST ISLAM AND THE MUSLIM**  
3 **COMMUNITY**

4 **Submitted by Wider Church Ministries**  
5 **A Resolution of Witness**  
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8 **SUMMARY**  
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10 This resolution speaks against anti-Muslim hatred and fear—indeed all types of hostility  
11 toward other faith groups—which is contradictory to our Christian faith. It also  
12 encourages increased learning and interaction between settings of the UCC and members  
13 of the Muslim community, in the US and globally.  
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15 **BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE**  
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17 In the Gospels, Jesus responded to the question, “Which is the greatest commandment?”  
18 by stating, “‘you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with  
19 all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. And the  
20 second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other  
21 commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:29-31). As Christians, it is incumbent upon  
22 us to live out these commandments with our neighbours locally, nationally, and globally,  
23 whoever they may be, and stand against actions that are inconsistent with this  
24 commandment.  
25

26 **BACKGROUND**  
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28 The Muslim community is among the fastest growing religious communities in the  
29 United States. It has also experienced increased suspicion, as well as elevated hostility—  
30 both rhetorical and physical—based on ignorance and prejudice toward them. Such  
31 actions are reprehensible from a Christian point of view. The ill treatment of Muslims in  
32 the United States has been injurious to the Muslim American community, and has had  
33 severe consequences around the world, including attacks on Christians and churches in  
34 majority-Muslim countries. The UCC engages in interfaith relations with Jews and  
35 Muslims in the United States, and with interfaith partners around the world. The UCC is  
36 on the steering committee of the US-based interfaith campaign called “Shoulder-to-  
37 Shoulder,” which opposes anti-religious prejudices, and anti-Muslim bigotry in  
38 particular. The UCC has spoken clearly against anti-Semitism, and is consistent in its  
39 condemnation of racially-motivated violence by word and deed. Given recent events in  
40 the United States that have targeted Muslim Americans and Islam, the UCC reasserts its  
41 clear stance against religious-based hostility, in this case against Muslims and Islam.  
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43 **RESOLUTION**  
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45 Whereas, recent anti-Muslim actions, including but not limited to rhetorically violent  
46 demonstrations at a fundraiser of the Islamic Circle of North America in Yorba Linda,

47 CA (February 13, 2011); Congressional hearings entitled “The Extent of Radicalization  
48 in the American Muslim Community and that Community's Response” (March 10, 2011),  
49 sponsored by Rep. Peter King (R-NY); and the burning of a Qur’an by a Christian pastor  
50 in Florida (March 20, 2011), have heightened our concern; and

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52 Whereas, we are concerned that the approach of the tenth anniversary of September 11,  
53 2001 may witness increased hostility toward the American Muslim community, and that  
54 Islam has already become a political issue that could play prominently in the November  
55 2012 elections; and

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57 Whereas, the United Church of Christ has affirmed its relationships with the Muslim  
58 Community (GS 1989) and engages ecumenically in interfaith dialogue with Muslims,  
59 including with the Islamic Society of North America and the Islamic Circle of North  
60 America, and supports interfaith dialogue and action worldwide, including Christian-  
61 Muslim cooperation; and

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63 Whereas, the United Church of Christ consistently opposes rhetoric and actions that are  
64 based on discrimination or hatred of a race, gender, culture, or faith,

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66 Therefore be it resolved, that the 28<sup>th</sup> General Synod of the United Church of Christ  
67 expresses its clear support for neighbors in the Muslim community, both in the United  
68 States and around the world, who feel the impact of anti-Islamic rhetoric and action; and  
69 denounces actions against Islam or Muslims based on ignorance or fear;

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71 Be it further resolved that the General Synod encourages all settings of the United Church  
72 of Christ to seek ways to learn more about Islam, to engage in relationships with  
73 Muslims, and to invite other ecumenical and inter-faith bodies to join with us in this  
74 effort .;

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76 Be it further resolved that the national setting of the United Church of Christ make  
77 available resources to learn about and engage with people of other faiths, and Muslims in  
78 particular, and document and publicize actions taken in support of Muslims and people of  
79 other faiths, especially in the face of hatred, fear, ignorance, and what has been labeled  
80 Islamophobia.

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82 Be it finally resolved that members and settings of the United Church of Christ speak out  
83 against religiously and racially-motivated hatred, violence and actions, such as the  
84 desecration of religious symbols and sacred texts, and support and publicize public  
85 policies, governmental actions, and public activities that ensure our value of religious  
86 diversity.

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## 88 **FUNDING**

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

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**IMPLEMENTATION**

Wider Church Ministries is requested to be the primary implementer of this resolution.