ON ACTIONS OF HOSTILITY AGAINST ISLAM AND THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY
Submitted by Wider Church Ministries
A Resolution of Witness

SUMMARY

This resolution speaks against anti-Muslim hatred and fear—indeed all types of hostility to other faith groups—which is contradictory to our Christian faith. It also encourages increased learning and interaction between settings of the UCC and members of the Muslim community, in the US and globally.

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

In the Gospels, Jesus responded to the question, “Which is the greatest commandment?” by stating, “you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. And the second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:29-31). As Christians, it is incumbent upon us to live out these commandments with our neighbours locally, nationally, and globally, whoever they may be, and stand against actions that are inconsistent with this commandment.

BACKGROUND

The Muslim community is among the fastest growing religious communities in the United States. It has also experienced increased suspicion, as well as elevated hostility—both rhetorical and physical—based on ignorance and prejudice toward them. Such actions are reprehensible from a Christian point of view. The ill treatment of Muslims in the United States has been injurious to the Muslim American community, and has had severe consequences around the world, including attacks on Christians and churches in majority-Muslim countries. The UCC engages in interfaith relations with Jews and Muslims in the United States, and with interfaith partners around the world. The UCC is on the steering committee of the US-based interfaith campaign called “Shoulder-to-Shoulder,” which opposes anti-religious prejudices, and anti-Muslim bigotry in particular. The UCC has spoken clearly against anti-Semitism, and is consistent in its condemnation of racially-motivated violence by word and deed. Given recent events in the United States that have targeted Muslim Americans and Islam, the UCC reasserts its clear stance against religious-based hostility, in this case against Muslims and Islam.

RESOLUTION

Whereas, recent anti-Muslim actions, including but not limited to rhetorically violent demonstrations at a fundraiser of the Islamic Circle of North America in Yorba Linda,
Whereas, we are concerned that the approach of the tenth anniversary of September 11, 2001 may witness increased hostility toward the American Muslim community, and that Islam has already become a political issue that could play prominently in the November 2012 elections; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

**FUNDING**

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

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