

Southwest Conference United Church of Christ
Annual Meeting Minutes
April 23-25, 2010
Church of the Red Rocks
Sedona, Arizona

Behold: Something New

Rev. George Ault, Senior Minister of Church of the Red Rocks, welcomed delegates and visitors to the 48th annual meeting of the Southwest Conference.

Business Session I

Call to Order

With 37 out of 43 churches represented , 189 delegates in attendance, two new churches present, two out of the four churches in formation present, 70 visitors for a total of 259 attendees and ballot items passing (110 ballots- yes; 1 abstention), the meeting was called to order at 1:06 p.m. by Moderator Alissa Marquis.

Two minute videos submitted by churches of the conference were played at various times during our time together.

Approval of Minutes of the 2009 Annual Meeting

Minutes of the 2009 annual meeting were amended to include the announcement of Katrina Glenn as Youth and Outdoor Ministries Coordinator. Minutes approved by voice vote as amended.

Special Guests

Special guests were recognized with voice but no vote:

Geoffrey Black, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ
Cameron Trimble, Co-executive director of the Center of Progressive Renewal
Gordon Gilles, Cornerstone Fund
Priscilla Bizer, UCC Church Building and Loan Fund
Don Hart, United Church Funds
Tracy Hughes, Borderlinks
Vy Nguyen, Church World Service

Thanks to:

Judith Glenn, Local Church arrangements
Dan Loven, Audio Visual
Ginger Willets, Church of the Red Rocks administrator
Mark Clark, Parliamentarian

Vote to accept Black Mountain and First Christian Church into the SWC

Lee Albertson, on behalf of CoCAM and the Board, recommended that Black Mountain Community Church, Scottsdale, Az, be accepted as a United Church of Christ congregation and that First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Las Cruces, NM, be approved for dual affiliation with the United Church of Christ. Rev. Tyler Connoley spoke to the process with the First Christian Church and Donna Gentry spoke to the process with Black Mountain Community Church.

Moved and seconded that Black Mountain Community Church be accepted as a United Church of Christ and that First Christian Church(Disciples of Christ) be approved for dual affiliation with the UCC. Motion carried by voice vote.

Pastors and delegates of these congregations have full rights and privileges for this annual meeting.

Introduction and vote of National UCC Constitution change (See Appendix A)

Moved and seconded to approve the changes to the UCC Constitution voted by the Twenty-seventh General Synod, relating to the Pronouncement, "Ministry Issues: Forming and Preparing Pastoral Leaders for God's Church," adopted by the Twenty-fifth General Synod. Motion carried by voice vote.

Introduction and vote of CoCAM resolution regarding Continuing Education

The Committee on Church and Ministry (CoCAM), with affirmation from the Southwest Conference Board of Directors, calls upon all active clergy (that is, all licensed, ordained, and commissioned clergy who are not retired) to meet a minimum annual goal of 15 hours of continuing education; and to report to CoCAM in their Annual Information Review how the 15 hours were used. Recommendation seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.

Introduction of Immigration Resolution (See Appendix B)

Liana Rowe introduced the resolution sponsored by many clergy. Vote will be during Saturday afternoon business session.

Phil Reller, while endorsing the resolution, will offer two amendments to it.

It is announced that Governor Brewer has signed into law SB1070. A moment of silence and prayer is offered.

Introduction of By-law Resolution

Brendan Mahoney introduced the Board of Director's resolution calling for amending the By-laws:

Delegates to the 2010 Southwest Conference Annual Meeting grant authority to their Board of Directors, notwithstanding Article IX, Section A of the By-Laws and during the period of April 24th, 2010 and May 5, 2011, to prudently amend the By-Laws in those circumstances which it deems justifiable.

Introduction of the Nominating Slate

Nancy Meister presented the slate of candidates. There is an opening in the class of 2011 on the Youth Ministry Committee. If you are interested please contact her before the vote on Saturday.

Financial Report

Rita Bourgeois presented the 2010 final budget and the 2011 top-line budget that will be voted on Saturday. The 2010 budget is balanced with reduced reliance on reserves and renegotiating the office lease. With diminished OCWM funds, difficult decisions had to be made: staff cuts were necessary and the communications position has been eliminated. For the 2011 budget the youth ministry position is funded through the general funds, not reserve, and an increase of \$1/per capita is assumed.

We currently have \$30,000-\$35,000 in undesignated reserve funds.

The Conference exists through OCWM support. Moderator Alissa Marquis thanked the churches for their support.

Business Session in recess

Program Session I

Church Growth & Development Committee

Teresa Blythe spoke of the organic development of the committee and its work: sustainable growth, revitalization and new growth. She encouraged churches to discern how they might share in this mission. Churches will be contacted to see how they can support the work of this committee.

Justice and Witness Committee

Brian Frederick-Gray presented a power point video of the SWC in mission-the justice of God being played out in our churches. The Committee hosted listening sessions throughout the conference and asked:

1. What are you doing in your local community?
2. What is on your heart?

Out of these sessions four areas were defined to support the mission work of local churches:

- Facilitate
- Network
- Resource
- Communication

Information about installing solar panels on churches is available through the JWC and Conference Office.

Lay Academy

Judy Green-Davis announced the launch of the Lay Academy on September 25, 2010. There will be four sessions each year. The first session will be lead by Alyce Hunt, President of Chicago Theological Seminary. Churches are encouraged to send at least one lay person. Detailed information will soon be available on the conference website.

Milestones:

50th Anniversary: Church of the Red Rocks, Sedona, Arizona
United Church of Sun City

Five For Five: Churches recognized for their contributions to OCWM, Strengthen the Church, OGHS, NIN and The Christmas Fund
Casas Adobes Congregational Church
Church of the Beatitudes
Church of the Painted Hills
Desert View United Church of Christ
First Congregational United Church of Christ (Albuquerque)
First Congregational United Church of Christ (Phoenix)
First Congregational United Church of Christ (Prescott)
Good Shepherd United Church of Christ
Oro Valley United Church of Christ
Rincon Congregational Church
St. Paul's United Church of Christ (Rio Rancho)
Sierra Vista Community United Church of Christ
Valley Community Church
West Congregational Church
Yuma United Church of Christ
TOX Ministries

Seven for Seven: In addition to their 5 for 5 contributions, churches were recognized for their contributions to the two SWC special offerings Spread the Word Fund and Sow the Seed
Desert Palm United Church of Christ
Scottsdale Congregational United Church of Christ (a tithing congregation)
Shadow Rock Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
United Churches Fellowship

Tithing Congregations:

Good Shepherd United Church of Christ
Scottsdale Congregational United Church of Christ
Yuma United Church of Christ

Open and Affirming: First Congregational Church, Tempe

50th Anniversary of Ordination: Rev. Leroy Calbom
Rev. Jud Souers
Rev. Clint Reynolds
Rev. Fritz Hardt

Business Session II

Meeting reconvened at 9:15 by Moderator-Elect Brendan Mahoney

Wider Church Ministries

Tyler Connoley noted the commemoration of 200 years of working in the world. We are working with local partners in Haiti, Turkey and other areas of the world. Giving for OGHS is down this year. The response for aid after the earthquake in Haiti impacted the OGHS offering. Churches are encouraged to have an additional offering for OGHS. The UCC responds to pleas for aid one out of every three days.

Church World Service

Vy Nguyen thanks the Southwest Conference for its support of the Church World Service ministry, specifically the emergency kits destined for Haiti. More than 100 kits were donated by annual meeting attendees.

Young Adult Service Volunteers

The Young Adult Service Community is a group of 3-5 young adults serving in social service or justice advocacy agencies in the local community of a Companion Communities' host church. The volunteers also form intentional community with one another, participate in activities of leadership development with the local host church and engage in faith conversations. This is a UCC sponsored program, through Volunteer Ministries.

Brendan Mahoney introduced the four community volunteers:

Jack Farrell, serving at the Beatitudes Campus

Emily Fleissner, serving at Lutheran Social Services

Erin O'Keefe, serving at AgeLink

Elizabeth Koebel, serving at ICM's food bank

Members in Discernment

Brendan Mahoney introduced members in discernment that were present:

Bonnee Henry

Andy Schweibert

Teresa Blythe

Lorraine Cenicerros

Judy Green-Davis

Chris Hinkle

Michele Mellott

Noel Anderson

State of Conference Address

Conference Minister John Dorhauer thanked Moderator Alissa Marquis and Moderator-Elect Brendan Mahoney for the countless hours they have given in service to the Southwest Conference. Our focus: "It's about the Mission!" What does our mission look like "on the ground"? There have been decisions made this past year that reflect this focus:

- Justice Witness Ministry have defined their role to support and facilitate local efforts; to be in partner with others as they serve to facilitate, network, resource and communicate

- Church Growth and Development has rebuilt itself organically. Thanks to the people who have worked diligently the past five years laying the foundation for the work to come. A new committee of people who feel called to this work has formed to ensure that the unique proclamation of the gospel declared by the UCC is heard in the SWC. A goal of eight new church starts by annual meeting of 2011 has been set.
- The Lay Academy will begin in September. This effort to develop lay leaders is an essential component to restoring and invigorating the church.
- Plans to expand our use of technology
- Identify a structure that does not impede our ministry
 - Assess our by-laws
 - Develop shared ministries that are enhanced by our by-laws, not impeded
 - Present a new structure at the annual meeting in 2011
- 2010 pledged income is \$88,200 less than 2007. Using figures from 2007 income, accumulated shortfalls in 2008, 2009 and 2010 total \$181,520. The first year staff reduction was not necessary, but this year it became evident there would need to be staff changes. A difficult decision to eliminate the communication director position. We are working on creative solutions to communication challenges.

Thank you to a conference staff that works tirelessly for us all: much appreciation to Holly Herman, Barbara Decker, Peggy Ice and Katrina Glenn.

Appeal and Challenge

Daniel Erdman spoke of the importance of communication, especially at this time of revitalization of our conference. On behalf of the Iglesia Congregacional Unida he pledged \$500 to the SWC for the communication position and challenged other churches to make a financial commitment for this position.

Moderator's Report

Alissa Marquis thanked John Dorhauer for his vision, energy and evangelistic spirit. He is a bringer of "good news." She also thanked the support staff of the Conference and the Board, noting Board members had given over 1000 hours of volunteer hours this year.

The financial health of our Conference has improved. The budget for 2011 is a balanced budget. An audit has been scheduled. We have begun planning strategically. The Board spent numerous hours on the questions, what is our vision? What is our mission? What is it the Conference can do that local churches cannot? We developed a working mission statement: As the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ, we are extravagantly inclusive and affirming followers of Christ, called to embody God's unconditional justice and love; and we identified shared values.

Moderator-Elect's Report

Brendan Mahoney thanked Alissa Marquis for her leadership. It clearly is a time of change. Hopefully, after today's vote, Lee Milligan will be Moderator-Elect.

Financial Development Report

Jim Briney reminded delegates that there is no virtue in being complacent about the funding of the SWC. The campaign theme is WANTED: DEAD AND ALIVE-people to fund the SWC mission.

Youth Report

Katrina Glenn and members of the Youth Council reviewed the Conference activities of the past year: Super Camp and Sr. High Camp, Thanksgiving Alive, graduated Youth Retreat, Sr. Sneak Trip, and the Jr. High Retreat. Information from the Justice and Witness listening session held during Thanksgiving Alive is helping to formulate programming for the coming year. There is a need for a young adult ministry.

Offering Opportunity

Rachel Chapman encouraged churches to participate in the Strengthen the Church special offering. This offering is divided between the Conference and the national church. It supports youth ministry, new church starts, the God is Still Speaking campaign, consultants for women's ministries, etc. The suggested date is May 23.

Business Session in recess

Program Session II

General Minister and President Geoffrey Black spoke.

Two sessions of workshops were offered.

Business Session III

Meeting reconvened by Moderator Alissa Marquis at 5:00 p.m.

Alissa Marquis thanked her predecessor, Len Silvester.

2011 Budget Vote

Moved and seconded to accept top line budget and \$1 increase per capita.

Discussion included update on monies pledged for communications position - \$4,850.

The Financial Oversight Team welcomes suggestions on trimming the budget expenses and increasing revenue.

Motion carried by voice vote

Nominating Slate Vote

Moved and seconded to accept the slate of the Nominating Committee with the addition of Judy Gilman serving in the class of 2011 Youth Ministry Committee.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Immigration Resolution Vote (Appendix B)

Moved and seconded to accept the Resolution; discussion ensued alternating arguments for and against the Resolution.

Amendment to the Resolution proposed and seconded.

The Southwest Conference authorizes our Conference Minister to meet with Governor Brewer and other public officials to personally present this resolution on behalf of our Conference.

Motion carried by standing vote with seven abstentions noted.

Amendment to the Resolution proposed and seconded. (Appendix C)

Our Southwest Conference approves the letter dated April 24, 2010, offered by our Justice Witness Team and directs that this letter accompany our Immigration Resolution.

Amendment to the Amendment proposed and seconded

Replace the six bullet items in the letter with the following two bullet items:

- *We oppose SR1070*
- *We encourage non-compliance with SB1070*

Question of legal counsel was raised. John Dorhauer stated counsel has not prepared a complete dossier but it is possible that any organization that encourages non-compliance could open itself up to prosecution. This is very unlikely as a religious organization.

Motion failed by standing vote. (Yeas-43; Nos-46+)

Amendment to the Amendment proposed and seconded.

Omit the word "racist" in the first bullet line stating "Encouraging individuals to pledge non-compliance with the unjust and racist law SB 1070.

Discussion ensued; Call for the question moved and seconded Motion carried by voice vote.

Motion failed by standing vote.

Vote on second amendment proposed to the Resolution.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Moved and seconded to amend the Immigration Resolution.

Strike "Be It FURTHER RESOLVED that General Synod XXVI urges the Covenanted Ministries of the UCC and the various setting of the Church to seek opportunities for building and participating in existing interfaith coalitions and partnering with global and U.S. organizations/institutions that advocate for justice and provide services for those in the undocumented community most in need, e.g. abandoned immigrant children, abused women, and families facing or in the deportation process." as we cannot speak for General Synod.

Strike the word congregations from the statement, "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in keeping with the aforementioned we give voice to our conference minister of the

Southwest Conference to speak for justice regarding issues of immigration reform on behalf of congregations of the Southwest Conference.” as we cannot speak for individual congregations, only the conference.

Motion carried by voice vote

Vote on Immigration Resolution

Motion carried by voice vote.

By-Law Resolution Vote

Moved and seconded that:

Delegates to the 2010 Southwest Conference Annual Meeting grant authority to their Board of Directors, notwithstanding Article IX, Section A of the By-Laws, and during the period of April 24, 2010 and May 5, 2011, to prudently amend the By-Laws in those circumstances which it deems justifiable.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Plaque Drawing

Lisa Roger won the plaque donated by Karl Hallsten. Proceeds of the raffle benefit Youth Ministries.

Thank Yous

John Dorhauer, Alissa Marquis and Lisa Roger thanked Peggy Ice for her creativity and service as Communications Director.

Also acknowledgement of the honorable discussion during the votes taken.

Thanks to Alissa Marquis for her dedicated leadership this past year.

The medallion and gavel, as symbols of office, were passed to Moderator Brendan Mahoney.

Annual Meeting 2011

With the agreement of Church of the Palms (hosts prior to the passage of the letter accompanying the Immigration Resolution), First Congregational United Church of Christ, Albuquerque, has offered to host the Southwest Conference Annual Meeting April 29-May 1, 2011.

Motion to adjourn made and seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.

Program Notes

Thanks to the Marshallese Choirs for enhancing our worship Friday evening, the Pick'n Pastors on Saturday evening and the Church of the Red Rocks Choir on Sunday morning. Offerings were designated for Marshallese Mission Trips, Church Growth and Development and Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

Appendix A

National UCC Constitution Changes Resolution

From the Ministry Issues Implementation Committee

Changes to the UCC Constitution voted by the Twenty-seventh General Synod, relating to the Pronouncement, “Ministry Issues: Forming and Preparing Pastoral Leaders for God’s Church,” adopted by the Twenty-fifth General Synod.

November 9, 2009

Calling forth and equipping leadership for God’s Church is central to the mission and ministry of the United Church of Christ. After many years of study across the Church, the Pronouncement, “Ministry Issues: Forming and Preparing Pastoral Leaders for God’s Church” and accompanying Proposals for Action were adopted by the Twenty-fifth General Synod in Atlanta, Georgia. A diverse group of UCC laity and clergy were asked to guide implementation of the Pronouncement. As part of their work, and in conjunction with Parish Life and Leadership and Local Church Ministries, suggested revisions to both the UCC Constitution and By-laws were presented to and approved by the Twenty-seventh General Synod in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The proposed Constitutional amendments are now returned to Conferences for ratification before being declared effective.

Several themes included in the Ministry Issues project are reflected in the proposed changes:

- **Emphasis on authorized ministry as the way to identify the ordering of ministry in the United Church of Christ:** All Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ—ordained, commissioned, licensed—serve on behalf of the whole Church and are to be regarded by the Church and by each other with mutual respect and care.
- **Emphasis on on-going covenants of mutual accountability:** All Authorized Ministers serving on behalf of the Church are in mutually accountable covenantal relationships with an Association and a Local Church of the United Church of Christ. These on-going covenants include encouraging life long learning as well as offering on-going support from and to all settings of the Church.
- **Emphasis on the various settings of the Church as covenant partners throughout the process of discernment:** The Local Church and the Association continue to be the primary covenant partners for members discerning a call to authorized ministry in, and on behalf of, the United Church of Christ.
- **Change in terminology:** As the discernment of call is an ongoing, communal activity, and not all who are potential candidates for authorization are currently “student,” the term “Member in Discernment” replaces “Student in Care” to denote a UCC member in covenant with a Local Church and Association, considering authorized ministry.

Additional information regarding the Ministry Issues Project, including the text of the Pronouncement, is available at: <http://www.ucc.org/ministers/ministry-issues-project/>. To review the work of the Implementation Committee, see especially the “Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ” and, for a fuller report, Ministry Issues, Draft 3.1. The work continues, including preparation of resources for all settings of the Church and training for members of Committees on the Ministry.

Appendix B (as passed)

**A Call for a More Humane US Immigration Policy; End Migrant Deaths;
Support Immigrant Communities
(Resolution of Witness)**

Resolution:

WHEREAS, Jesus and the scriptures give us clear instruction on how we are to treat the foreigner and neighbors in need; and

WHEREAS, the Biblical heritage of the Judeo Christian tradition specifically identifies the “stranger” in our midst as deserving of our love and compassion; and

WHEREAS, we have been called by the one God to tear down all the borders we have built between us so that we may see each person as a child of God, so that we may learn to love and welcome all God’s children as members of one family and one world; and

WHEREAS, our consciences are affronted by federal, state, and local policies and actions that detain immigrants, that prosecute undocumented workers, that fracture families and prosecute those who would give them aid; and

WHEREAS, more than 3,000 men, women and children have died attempting to cross the US/Mexico border since the implementation of the blockade strategy of border enforcement and there is little evidence that this policy has been effective in slowing the tide of illegal immigration; and

WHEREAS, many of us are in local churches and communities where we are aware of migrant peoples, but largely unaware of their personal, communal, and national stories; and

WHEREAS, the United States is affected by the presence of new immigrants from all over the world, and

WHEREAS, although countries have the right to control their own borders, it is not an absolute right; the Church recognizes a basic God given right for shelter, food, clean water and other basic necessities; and

WHEREAS, the blockade strategy of border enforcement has created an underground market for the smuggling of human beings which exploits its vulnerable victims, and has encouraged an upsurge in vigilante activities, fosters an anti--immigrant atmosphere and represents the potential for violence; and

WHEREAS, current immigration policy forces upon migrant families potentially deadly choices which separate and dislocate them from one another, precluding free travel and mobility to return to their families; and

WHEREAS, migrant workers and their families enter the United States to live and work and the current immigration policy makes that passage dangerous, illegal, disorderly, and inhumane with very few of the basic rights afforded to all workers under international law; and

WHEREAS, approximately ten to twelve million undocumented workers and their families currently living in the United States are pressured to live covertly, without rights, and in vulnerable situations all over the United States; and

WHEREAS, the root causes of this migration lie in environmental, economic, and trade inequities between the United States, Mexico, and all of Latin America, policies which reduce tariffs and taxes that would support the poor in Mexico and Latin America; eliminate agricultural subsidies and low-interest loans for the poor in Mexico and Latin America while keeping those subsidies in the United States and in Canada; reduce social spending for health care, food stamps, and welfare reform in Mexico and Latin America; liberalize land ownership policies, thus limiting the ability of the poor in Mexico and Latin America to own or share in the land; deregulate environmental and labor laws in Mexico and Latin America; and limit the rights of Mexican and Latin American workers to protest or seek remedies for wrongs done to them; and

WHEREAS, the fragile desert environment has sustained severe damage as a result of migrant and responding enforcement patrols moving through remote desert regions; and

WHEREAS, General Synod XIII of the United Church of Christ (1981) adopted a Pronouncement on Immigration calling upon all settings of the church to:

- a. advocate for the rights of immigrants;
- b. aid undocumented immigrants in attaining legal status;
- c. aid immigrants in reunification with their families and in placement in areas of the country most favorable for their productive participation in society
- d. assist in meeting the social welfare needs of immigrants; and
- e. be inclusive of immigrants in existing and new churches and

WHEREAS, General Synod XXIV of the United Church of Christ adopted a resolution supporting Humane Borders, a faith-based group that offers assistance to those in need by maintaining water stations on and near the border and recognizing that there is more that can be done within and by the United Church of Christ regarding border issues; and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ proudly declares an extravagant welcome to all who seek to be in relationship with Jesus Christ;

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ declares that the Militarized Border Enforcement Strategy of the United States government has been ineffective and inhumane.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Southwest conference Minister be urged to participate in delegations and immersion programs and that Southwest Conference congregations seek out opportunities for face to face dialogue with immigrant communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the congregations and pastors of the Southwest Conference study the immigration issue through discussion and reflection of films such as “El Norte” and “Babel” and books such as The Devil’s Highway by Luis Alberto Urrea.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that congregations and pastors form grass roots organizations working in conjunction with but not limited to established groups such as:

- Border Links
- Samaritan Patrols
- The New Sanctuary Movement
- Center for Education and Social Transformation
- No More Deaths
- Humane Borders

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we reaffirm the action of General Synod XIII on the resolution JUSTICE IN IMMIGRATION and General Synod XXIV resolution supporting HUMANE BORDERS.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference calls upon leaders of the Conference and congregations to extend an extravagant welcome and radical hospitality to and continue to minister and care for all who come to our doors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in keeping with the aforementioned we give voice to our conference minister of the Southwest Conference to speak for justice regarding issues of immigration reform on behalf of the Southwest Conference.

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

Our Conference Minister and Members of the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ are requested to be the primary implementers of this resolution.

Sponsor's Name

Susan Martin
 Clint Reynolds
 James B. Nelson
 Kenneth Heintzelman
 Carl Schroer
 Liana Rowe
 Sandra Britton
 Barbara Doerrer-Peacock
 Kevin Brown
 Emery Boepple
 Lee Milligan
 Elaine Jordan
 Fletch Wideman
 Jane Cheek
 Robert Koth
 Karen Ballou
 Rev. Pamela Gilchrist
 Leona Stucky-Abbot
 Randy Mayer
 Stacy Richards

Church

Casas Adobes Congregational UCC, Tucson
 Church of the Palms, UCC, Sun City
 Southside Presbyterian
 Shadow Rock UCC, Phoenix
 First Congregational UCC, Tucson
 Shadow Rock UCC, Phoenix
 First Congregational UCC, Phoenix
 South Mountain Community Church, Phoenix

 United Churches Fellowship-UCC, Nogales
 Church of the Painted Hills, UCC, Tucson
 Faith United, UCC, Dewey
 Shadow Rock UCC, Phoenix
 First Congregational UCC, Prescott
 First Congregational UCC, Phoenix
 First Congregational UCC, Albuquerque
 United Church of Santa Fe, Santa Fe
 St. Paul's UCC, Rio Rancho
 Good Shepherd UCC, Sahuarita
 Yuma UCC, Yuma

David Buss
John Herman

Church of the Painted Hills, UCC, Tucson
Desert Palm UCC, Tempe

Amendment I

The Southwest conference authorizes our Conference Minister to meet with Governor Brewer and other public officials to personally present this resolution on behalf of our Conference.

Amendment II

Our Southwest Conference approves the letter dated April 24, 2010, offered by our Justice Witness Team and directs that this letter accompany our Immigration Resolution.

Appendix C

An Open Letter to President Obama, Attorney General Eric Holder, Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano and Governor Jan Brewer

On April 24, 2010, the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ gathered at our Annual Meeting in Sedona, Az. Our meeting was disrupted with the announcement that Gov. Jan Brewer had signed SB1070. We immediately went into a time of prayer for the soul of Arizona and all people who reside here.

As people of faith we affirm and live by the biblical imperative, “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.” (Leviticus 19: 33-34)

We are profoundly disturbed by the passage of the harshest anti-immigrant legislation in the country by the Arizona Legislature. It is legislation such as this that codifies racial profiling and creates an atmosphere of suspicion, hatred, and scapegoating of immigrants and U.S. Citizens.

We celebrate the diversity of our nation and the contribution of immigrants and call for the end of the criminalization of individuals and the destabilization of our communities.

We cal for Comprehensive Immigration Reform that will provide a path for legalization for people who are contributing to our society, an adequate system for future legal economic immigration and family reunification, and policies that prevent deaths in the desert. We find it morally reprehensible that 5,500 men, women and children have lost their lives in the last 16 years trying to provide a life of dignity for their families. Policies such as SB 1070 and 287(G) diminish the ability of local law enforcement to keep our communities safe.

We are dedicated to the following actions to demonstrate our solidarity and commitment to our immigrant brothers and sisters who are created equally in the image of God regardless of race or nationality. We are committed to:

- Encouraging individuals to pledge non-compliance with the unjust and racist law SB 1070
- Canceling plans to hold 2011 annual meeting in Arizona
- Relocating our next annual meeting to another southwestern state
- Encouraging our business and professional members to influence board decisions
- Direct action of prayer, study, protests, and fasting
- Mobilizing our congregations to advocate for the Dream Act, a just and fair Comprehensive Immigration Reform and the abolishment of SB 1070 and 287(G)

As people of faith and conscience rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ, we hold to our UCC Statement of Faith, in declaring, “You call us into your church...to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil.”

In Solidarity and Service,

