



## Community of Christ

# A-3 Amendment to Community of Christ Bylaws—Electronic Meetings

*From the First Presidency*

| Insert a new section in Article IV after Section 5. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CURRENT WORDING                                     | PROPOSED AMENDMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | IF ADOPTED WILL READ                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                     | <p><b>Section 6. Electronic Conferences and Meetings.</b> All organized units of Community of Christ may hold conferences and meetings electronically if such is determined to be the most suitable method within a given context. Electronic conferences and meetings must be approved by appropriate next level supervisory administrators and must be in harmony with requirements unique to each body (i.e. World Conference, Mission Center Conference, Congregation Conference, etc.) detailed elsewhere in these bylaws.</p> | <p><b>Section 6. Electronic Conferences and Meetings.</b> All organized units of Community of Christ may hold conferences and meetings electronically if such is determined to be the most suitable method within a given context. Electronic conferences and meetings must be approved by appropriate next-level supervisory administrators and must be in harmony with requirements unique to each body (i.e., World Conference, Mission Center Conference, Congregation Conference, etc.) detailed elsewhere in these bylaws.</p> |

**Rationale:** While such meetings were allowable previously if emergency circumstances prohibited in-person meetings, a variety of developments have made electronic meetings more available and advisable in many contexts. These developments include expanded forms of electronic communication, the geographical size of many jurisdictional units which make travel to in-person gatherings difficult, governmental travel restrictions in some jurisdictions, difficulty for some individuals to travel even short distances to attend, and consideration of the impact of travel on the environment.



## Community of Christ

# A-3a Resolution to Amend the Bylaws to Authorize Conducting Conferences by Electronic Means

*From the Michigan USA Mission Center*

Whereas, Community of Christ Bylaws Article VIII—Parliamentary Authority states “the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern all conferences of the church in all cases where they are culturally appropriate and where they are not in conflict with these rules of order or any special rules of order adopted by the appropriate conference;” and

Whereas, *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition* states, “Except as authorized in the bylaws, the business of an organization or board can be validly transacted only at a regular or properly called meeting—that is, as defined in 8:2(1), a single official gathering in one room or area—of the assembly of its members at which a quorum is present;” [RONR (12th ed.) 9:30]; and

Whereas, The First Presidency provided guidance on July 15, 2020, during the COVID-19 global pandemic for conducting online mission center and congregational conferences referencing bylaw provisions that allow apostles and mission center presidents to recommend procedures for conducting church business in emergency situations; and

Whereas, Authorizing electronic meetings for all conferences would provide options for conducting church business in ways that could increase participation, decrease costs, limit negative impacts on the environment, and provide other benefits; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Community of Christ Bylaws be amended by adding the sentence “Conferences may be conducted with some or all members communicating through electronic means.” to Article IV—Conferences, Section 1. Conferences.

**Proviso:** To avoid duplication of efforts, printing of additional materials, and confusion for World Conference delegates, the mission center president is empowered to withdraw submission of this resolution for the next World Conference if a proposal for Community of Christ bylaw amendment similar to this resolution to allow for electronic participation in church conferences is submitted by the First Presidency or other World Church team or quorum.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### Community of Christ Bylaws—Article IV—Conferences

Section 1. Conferences. Conferences are the legislative bodies of the church. They may be regular or special. Generally, regular conferences shall be held annually or otherwise as agreed upon by those who constitute their membership. They may represent the church at large, a mission center, or a congregation. They are subject to the jurisdiction of the First Presidency, members of the Council of Twelve Apostles, and appropriate mission center presidents or congregational pastors. Conferences may be conducted with some or all members communicating through electronic means.



Community of Christ

A-4 Amendment to Community of Christ  
Bylaws—Organization of Additional  
Jurisdictional Units

From the First Presidency

| Insert after Article VII a new Article VIII. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CURRENT WORDING                              | PROPOSED AMENDMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | IF ADOPTED WILL READ                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                                              | <b>Article VIII. Organization of additional jurisdictional units.</b><br>As “the leading interpreters and teachers of the laws” (WCR 386), the First Presidency has the authority to organize additional forms of organizational units not currently foreseen. Such units may be based on national, other physical boundaries, or on no such geographical designations. | <b>Article VIII. Organization of additional jurisdictional units.</b><br>As “the leading interpreters and teachers of the laws” (WCR 386), the First Presidency has the authority to organize additional forms of organizational units not currently foreseen. Such units may be based on national, other physical boundaries, or on no such geographical designations. |

**Rationale:** Conditions, circumstances, and opportunities in the world are developing at a rapid rate. Amending the bylaws is a lengthy process that does not allow for timely response to such developments. This additional article would provide for the First Presidency to have the authority, in the best interest of the church, to organize units, jurisdictions, etc., not presently foreseen or anticipated in a timely fashion.



## Community of Christ

# B-3 Process for Election of Graceland University Board of Trustees

### *From The First Presidency*

Whereas, The World Conference, under provisions of the Articles of Incorporation of Graceland University, currently elects seven members of the Graceland University Board of Trustees; and

Whereas, The function of the Board of Trustees has evolved such that each trustee has a significant functional responsibility rather than only being supportive and, hence, the selection of trustees should be based on an awareness of the particular areas of expertise and skills needed on the board as well as a thorough understanding of the qualifications and the personal commitment of prospective trustees; and

Whereas, The Corporate Body (First Presidency, Presiding Bishopric, and president of the Council of Twelve Apostles) is in ongoing conversation with the Graceland University Board of Trustees regarding the aforementioned needs; and

Whereas, The World Conference normally meets only once every three years; and

Whereas, The World Conference dates are subject to change for a variety of reasons; and

Whereas, The representatives on various boards and bodies of all other church affiliates where applicable are elected by the Corporate Body on behalf of the church; and

Whereas, The Corporate Body has the authority to recommend possible changes to the Graceland University Articles of Incorporation, but believes the support of the World Conference of any such recommendations is important because of the long-standing involvement of the Conference in the process of electing some of the Graceland University trustees; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the World Conference gives its support to submitting a recommendation to the Corporate Body (First Presidency, Presiding Bishopric, and president of the Council of Twelve Apostles) and Board of Trustees that the Graceland University Articles of Incorporation be amended to specify that the trustees currently elected by the World Conference be elected by the Corporate Body; and be it further

*Resolved*, That if and when the Graceland University Articles of Incorporation regarding the election of the Board of Trustees are amended, WCR 1278 will be rescinded, and the provisions of the amended articles shall be followed.



## Community of Christ

# D-2 World Church Budgeting and Audit Process

*From The First Presidency*

Whereas, World Conference Resolution (WCR) 1315 establishes the World Church Audit and Budget-development Policy, and

Whereas, The policy establishes how vacancies which occur on the Finance Board between elections may be filled, and

Whereas, This procedure may technically be applied if and when elections cannot be held at normally scheduled intervals, it is intended to provide for filling individual vacancies which may occur for a variety of reasons, and

Whereas, The parliamentary authority (Article VIII) suggests including a phrase in sections which relate to terms of office to accommodate situations such as the inability to hold elections at normally scheduled dates; and

Whereas, Reporting the annual audit and budget on the church website would be the most efficient and timely method; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That WCR 1315 be amended to read as follows (proposed deletions are indicated using the strike-out feature and insertions are shown in bold):

### WORLD CHURCH AUDIT AND BUDGET-DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. The World Conference shall establish a World Church Finance Board responsible for annually reviewing and approving the World Church audit, approving the annual Worldwide Mission Budget, **and special appropriations.** ~~and making recommendations to the World Conference concerning special appropriations. The board shall present projections to each World Conference for annual budgets for the next inter-Conference~~ period. These projections shall be based on the best estimates of potential church income and expenses, but they shall not bind the World Church Finance Board in developing and approving annual Worldwide Mission Budgets should circumstances change or income vary. The World Conference shall discuss these projections, and the input gained shall be considered by the World Church Finance Board in forming and approving these annual budgets.
2. The World Conference may establish parameters for the World Church Finance Board in developing and approving annual Worldwide Mission Budgets.
3. The World Church Finance Board shall be presided over by the First Presidency and shall be composed of up to fifty-five (55) members as follows:
  - First Presidency (3)
  - Council of Twelve Apostles (12)
  - Presiding Bishopric (3)
  - President, High Priest Quorum (1)
  - Senior president of seventy (1)
  - Presiding evangelist (1)
  - Four (4) bishops elected by the Order of Bishops at World Conference to represent the order, with each elected **for to serve** a six-year term **or until their successor is elected.** Terms would be staggered so two (2) will be elected at each World Conference.
  - Thirty (30) members elected by the World Conference to represent the church at-large, with each elected **for to serve** a six-year term **or until their successor is elected.** Terms would be staggered so fifteen (15) would be elected at each World Conference.
4. The First Presidency is authorized to appoint board members when vacancies occur between World Conferences. These appointments must follow the same criteria for the vacancy being filled.

5. The bishops elected by the Order of Bishops as members of the World Church Finance Board shall be church members in good standing, may be current employees of Community of Christ in local or World Church jurisdictions, and may not serve more than two (2) consecutive full (six-year) terms without a three-year break in service. A term completed by a person appointed to fill an inter-Conference vacancy is not a full term.
6. Individuals elected by World Conference as members of the World Church Finance Board shall be church members in good standing, shall not be current employees of Community of Christ in local or World Church jurisdictions, and may not serve more than two (2) consecutive full terms (~~six years~~) without a three-year break in service. A term completed by a person appointed to fill an inter-Conference vacancy is not a full term.
7. The Worldwide Mission Budget shall provide funds to cover travel expenses as requested by World Church Finance Board members.
8. The First Presidency, in consultation with the Presiding Bishopric, shall make nominations to the World Church Finance Board for election by the World Conference. In addition, each World Conference shall allow nominations from the floor. These nominations shall occur early enough to allow biographical sketches of the nominees to be available to the World Conference before the election. In the nomination process, attention shall be given to balanced representation, including factors such as vocation, geographic residence, age, gender, church leadership experience, and church jurisdiction. The First Presidency shall form the specific procedures to conduct voting, including use of prevailing technology as appropriate. The 15 individuals receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. The First Presidency shall provide the specific procedure in the event of ties.
9. The First Presidency shall appoint a team to handle preliminary preparation of the budget. This committee shall be composed of World Church personnel responsible for church programming, finance, and field ministries.
10. The annual audit and budget shall be made available on the church website. ~~The Herald shall publish an annual report on the audit and budget, and a~~ A summary report shall be made to each World Conference.



## Community of Christ

# G-1 The Climate Emergency

*From the British Isles Mission Centre, United Kingdom*

Whereas, Scientists have made it clear that humanity is facing a global climate emergency; and

Whereas, 1,873 jurisdictions in 33 countries have made climate emergency declarations (as of 4th February 2021); and

Whereas, The United Nations has called for governments, companies, and individuals to take action to prevent global warming reaching 1.5 degrees centigrade (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels; and

Whereas, People are showing increased concern over climate change through demonstrations, actions, and strikes; and

Whereas, The Earth Stewardship Team was established as a standing committee by World Conference action in 1992 to focus on issues of environment and development and to give guidance to the church; and

Whereas, Doctrine and Covenants Section 163:4b states “The earth, lovingly created as an environment for life to

flourish, shudders in distress because creation’s natural and living systems are becoming exhausted from carrying the burden of human greed and conflict. Humankind must awaken from its illusion of independence and unrestrained consumption without lasting consequences.”; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That Community of Christ join with others in declaring a climate emergency; and be it further

*Resolved*, That administrative representatives at every jurisdictional level (world, mission centre, and congregation) are encouraged to take responsibility for reducing carbon emissions resulting from church activities and encourage individuals to do the same; consider the impact of climate change on the environment when reviewing policies and strategies; and support those organisations and community groups that peaceably raise awareness of climate change and/or peaceably take action to limit global warming; and be it further

*Resolved*, That resources be developed by the Earth Stewardship Team to assist leaders and individuals in identifying ways to reduce carbon emissions.



Community of Christ

# G-2 Recommendation to move Doctrine and Covenants Section 116 to Historical Records

*From the Coastal Bend USA Mission Center*

Whereas, Section 116 of the Doctrine and Covenants, first given in 1865, has caused some concern and misunderstanding of our beliefs relating to the worth of all people and the inclusion of people of all races in the work of the church; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the First Presidency consider removing Section 116 from the Doctrine and Covenants and placing it in our historical records with other sections that have been removed.



## Community of Christ

# G-3 Resolution on Racial Justice

*From the Greater Pacific Northwest USA Mission Center*

Whereas, Racism is a system of inequality based on racial prejudice and the belief that one race is innately superior to all other races; and

Whereas, In the nations of the world, systemic race-based prejudice and misuse of power have justified the conquest, enslavement, abuse, disenfranchisement of and discrimination against those with more vulnerable cultures; and

Whereas, For many years, European empires used racism to justify subjugation, enslavement, dehumanization and/or appropriation of the lands and belongings of indigenous people in the Americas, Asia and Africa; and

Whereas, The myth of European superiority, also known as White Supremacy, persists in much of American life and culture and in the life and cultures of many Western nations today; and

Whereas, Non-Europeans who came, and those who are still coming, to the Western nations—either by choice or by force—encountered and continue to encounter racism; and

Whereas, Western nations have outlawed racial discrimination, yet social, economic, and government institutions still discriminate, intentionally and unintentionally, and restrict opportunities for many people of color to be affirmed for their human worth and God's gifts within them; and

Whereas, A system designed to prefer one segment of the population over another cannot lead to a sustainable, peaceful, and just society for all; and

Whereas, The undesirable fruits of racism are prejudice, bigotry, fear, discrimination, humiliation, alienation and division among all people, and reduced opportunities and generational poverty for many Africans, African-Americans, Hispanics, Latinos, Asians, Native peoples, and Pacific Islanders, whose hopes are deferred and rights are denied; and

Whereas, Christian teaching affirms that Christ's peace has broken down the dividing wall and hostility between us, so that Christ may create one humanity; and scripture exhorts us to lead a life with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, while speaking the truth in love and promoting the body's growth in building itself up in love [Ephesians 2:14–15, 4:1–3, 15–16]; and

Whereas, Racism is a 400-year-old invention so deeply ingrained in contemporary life that it may take lifetimes for us to learn how to see it; repent and repair hurt and harm caused by it; and seek to do better; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, Because Jesus has declared God's love for all the world and all creation, Community of Christ acknowledges that racism is a sin. We further acknowledge that not only our ancestors, but we, ourselves, have sinned by prejudiced thoughts or acts of silence, omission, or commission in the continued evil of racial injustice in our communities and nations. We express sorrow that “we have sinned as our ancestors did; we have been wicked and evil” (Psalm 106:6 GNT); and be it further

*Resolved*, That Community of Christ now calls for a renewed commitment both in the church and in national cultures to eliminate institutional racism and to affirm unequivocally that by biblical and theological precept, by the law of the church, by our mission and Enduring Principles, by World Conference pronouncement, and by leadership expressions, the aim of Community of Christ is nothing less than an inclusive church in an inclusive society; and be it further

*Resolved*, That Community of Christ calls upon all its members, congregations, and jurisdictions to perform and share those faithful deeds of prayer, study, discernment, worship, love, justice, and non-violent advocacy—by group and individual actions in both the church, community and nations—which will bring into reality a just, equitable and peaceful world for all people.



## Community of Christ

# G-4 Baptism and Membership

*From the Headwaters USA Mission Center*

Whereas, Community of Christ's *Sharing in Community of Christ*, 4th Edition, 2018 states that "Christ's Mission is our Mission" and calls the church to "Invite People to Christ"; and

Whereas, Growth in discipleship is a lifelong journey in response to God's grace, which has led "...some people already committed to Jesus Christ through Christian baptism to further focus their response through church membership" (Doctrine and Covenants 164:2b); and

Whereas, Many of these committed Christians embrace their previous baptism as the first step on their journey as a disciple of Christ; and

Whereas, While policy changes from 2011 affirm some previous baptisms, the majority of the world's Christians, having been baptized before the age of eight, continue to be excluded from Community of Christ membership without rebaptism, (Baptism, Confirmation, and Church Membership Policy, effective 1 October, 2011 and revised 14 February, 2012); and

Whereas, As expressed by the Theology Formation Team in its report to the 2016 World Conference on WCR 1301, Doctrine and Covenants 164 expanded the church's understanding of baptism by reminding us that

"the redemptive action of God in Christ—while uniquely and authoritatively expressed through the church—is not confined solely to the church" (164:2a); and

Whereas, We invite all to participate in the Lord's Supper "in the love and peace of Jesus Christ" regardless of "different or added understandings within their faith traditions" (Invitation to Communion, 2019); and

Whereas, Our current practice of welcoming all Christians to the Lord's Table (Communion) while denying the validity of baptisms prior to the age of eight is theologically incongruent and diminishes our affirmation of the Spirit of God present in other Christian faith traditions; and

Whereas, Our Enduring Principle of Continuing Revelation calls us to "assess past instruction in the light of new knowledge" and to "see sacraments not as rigid forms but as vehicles of the Spirit" (Theology Formation Team report to the 2016 World Conference on WCR 1301); therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the World Conference request the president of the church to give additional prayer and study seeking divine guidance on the issue of the acceptability of persons who were baptized before the age of eight becoming members of Community of Christ via confirmation.



## Community of Christ

# G-4a Baptism and Membership

*From the Canada East Mission Centre*

Whereas, Community of Christ's *Sharing in Community of Christ*, 4th Edition, 2018 states that "Christ's Mission is our Mission" and calls the church to "Invite People to Christ"; and

Whereas, Our Enduring Principles of Grace and Generosity, Worth of All Persons, All Are Called, Unity in Diversity, Pursuit of Peace, and Blessings of Community speak to the role model of Jesus and his relationship with all of God's people; and

Whereas, Growth in discipleship is a lifelong journey in response to God's grace, which has led "...some people already committed to Jesus Christ through Christian baptism to further focus their response through church membership" (Doctrine and Covenants 164:2b); and

Whereas, Many of these committed Christians embrace their previous baptism as the first step on their journey as a disciple of Christ; and

Whereas, While policy changes from 2011 affirm some previous baptisms, the majority of the world's Christians, having been baptized before the age of eight, are still excluded from Community of Christ membership without rebaptism, (Baptism, Confirmation, and Church Membership Policy, effective 1 October, 2011 and revised 14 February, 2012); and

Whereas, Community of Christ's formal participation in the ecumenical movement, as embodied, for example, in its membership in the National Council of Churches, attests an institutional commitment to valuing the faith and shared witness of our ecumenical partners; and

Whereas, Claiming our "unique and sacred place within the circle of those who call upon the name of Jesus Christ" (Doctrine and Covenants 161:1b) is not in any way endangered by accepting the variety of baptismal forms expressed in the universal Body of Christ; and

Whereas, As expressed by the Theology Formation Team in its report to the 2016 World Conference on WCR 1301, Doctrine and Covenants 164 expanded the church's understanding of baptism by reminding us that "the redemptive action of God in Christ—while uniquely and authoritatively expressed through the church—is not confined solely to the church" (164:2a); and

Whereas, Our Enduring Principle of Continuing Revelation calls us to "assess past instruction in the light of new knowledge" and to "see sacraments not as rigid forms but as vehicles of the Spirit" (Theology Formation Team report to the 2016 World Conference on WCR 1301); and

Whereas, We invite all to participate in the Lord's Supper "in the love and peace of Jesus Christ" regardless of "different or added understandings within their faith traditions" (Invitation to Communion, 2019); and

Whereas, Our current practice of welcoming all Christians to the Lord's Table (Communion) while denying the validity of some baptisms is theologically incongruent and diminishes our affirmation of the Spirit of God present in other Christian faith traditions; and

Whereas, "The One who created all humankind grieves at the shameful divisions within the human family. A prophetic people must work tirelessly to tear down walls of separation and to build bridges of understanding" (Doctrine and Covenants 162:6b); and

Whereas, President Stephen M. Veazey states that "given the massive changes in culture and people's perceptions of church, spirituality, faith, and their own participation in such endeavors, we are in a new time that includes unprecedented change" ("Metamorphosis," *Herald*, January/February 2020); now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the World Conference request the president of the church to give additional prayer and study seeking divine guidance on the issue of the acceptability of persons who were baptized before the age of eight becoming members of Community of Christ via confirmation.



## Community of Christ

# G-5 Universal Scripture Access

*From the Canada East Mission Centre*

Whereas, World Conference Resolution 1216 declares that “A primary purpose of the church is to fulfill Christ’s mission of preaching good news to the poor”; and

Whereas, The Mission Initiative “Abolish Poverty, End Suffering” specifies that we are to be “reaching out through compassionate ministries that serve the poor”; and

Whereas, Doctrine and Covenants Section 1:6a teaches: “And again, verily I say unto you, O inhabitants of the Earth, I, the Lord, am willing to make [the scriptures] known unto all flesh, for I am no respecter of persons”; and

Whereas, Doctrine and Covenants 42:15b teaches: “And I give unto a commandment, that then ye shall teach [the scriptures] unto all men; for they shall be taught unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people”; and

Whereas, Community of Christ currently only makes the Inspired Version of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants available for purchase through Herald House or Amazon; and

Whereas, Community of Christ fosters the concept of the Worth and Equality of All Persons and it is important to understand that there are many people whose financial situations bar them from being able to expend the resources to purchase a copy of scriptures; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the First Presidency, or a committee it so designates, be directed to explore ways that digital editions of the scriptures be made available for no charge and be easy-to-access through the church’s website (or similar platform) in Community of Christ’s current three core languages of English, Spanish, and French, and other language translations as they become available.



## Community of Christ

# G-6 A Resolution to Enhance Transparency, Openness, and Disclosure Concerning the First Presidency's Statement on Community of Christ's Position on Nonviolence

*From the Heart of Texas USA Mission Center*

Whereas, In April 2019, the World Conference passed World Conference Resolution 1319 providing that the position of Community of Christ on nonviolence be referred to the First Presidency for a report and/or statement (the Nonviolence Statement) to be presented to the next World Conference; and

Whereas, President Stephen M. Veazey informed the church in December 2019 that church leadership is planning, and the church would experience, a significant change in the near future in the magnitude of a caterpillar changing to a butterfly—a metamorphosis<sup>1</sup>; and

Whereas, Because the church is undergoing significant changes at the same time as the Nonviolence Statement is being developed, emphasis on transparency, openness, and disclosure in the formation of the First Presidency's Nonviolence Statement will avoid confusion and allow better understanding of this important statement; and

Whereas, The church identified critical and diverse issues concerning nonviolence in a Common-consent Survey used to obtain perspectives of delegates at the 2019 World Conference<sup>2</sup>; and

Whereas, A description of the church's position on those issues identified at the 2019 World Conference, and other issues that have arisen since that Conference, would be beneficial in understanding the church's position on nonviolence; and

Whereas, The church has made official statements endorsing certain peacemaking actions while not supporting publicly other actions—for example the church issued “A Call to Action on the Mideast Conflict”, May 28, 2021, but did not endorse publicly the recent Abraham Accords—thereby leading to some confusion as to which efforts to promote peace would be consistent with the church's position; and

Whereas, Recently the church, members of the World Church Leadership Council, and other leaders have made, directly or indirectly through support of other groups, statements that endorse or disapprove of a specific political party or a movement<sup>3</sup>; and

Whereas, Individual members of the Peace and Justice Team have proposed that the adoption of a nonviolence position would make the church's repentance of its violent past to be more complete<sup>4</sup>; and

Whereas, Individual members of the Peace and Justice Team have proposed that the Book of Mormon ought to be repurposed to be consistent with the church's position on nonviolence<sup>5</sup>; and

Whereas, The members of the church would benefit if the church's positions were written using with “Plain Language” standards used in modern day communications in order to make the positions concise, understandable, and actionable by all persons worldwide; now, therefore,

*Resolved*, That the position of Community of Christ be referred to the First Presidency for a report and/or statement to be issued by the First Presidency on the issues

identified in the 2019 World Conference's Official Minutes of Business Meeting Thursday, April 11, 2019, which issues are described below:

- "Resistance sometimes requires force"
- "Concern for members in the military"
- "Violence is never the solution"
- "Concerns about taxes and financing war"
- "Is [a church position on nonviolence] unnecessary or unhelpful?"
- "What do these terms mean?"
- "What about self-defense?"
- "Violence is more than terrorism or war"
- "Is this consistent with the church's mission"
- "Nonviolence is the way of Jesus"; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the position of Community of Christ be referred to the First Presidency for a report and/or statement to be issued by the First Presidency on the issues identified below:

- If a member of the church serves, or has served, in law enforcement or the military, would that service cause the person to be excluded from being a member or priesthood member in good standing with the church?
- Will the church support and advocate for persons who choose to serve in law enforcement or the military thereby going in harm's way for others (just as Jesus stepped in harm's way for each of us)?
- Does the position of the church on nonviolence incorporate the church's repentance for its violent history?
- Will the church support all efforts to engage in peacemaking, and if not, what are the standards to be applied in determining which efforts would not be supported?
- Is it appropriate for the church, including members of the World Church Leadership Council and World Church teams, to endorse or disapprove, directly or indirectly through organizations supported by the church, a political party or movement?

- Based on the church's position on nonviolence, will the Book of Mormon be repurposed in our faith movement as proposed by individual members of the Peace and Justice Team<sup>6</sup>; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the foregoing reports and/or statements may be included as deemed appropriate by the First Presidency in the Nonviolence Statement contemplated in World Conference Resolution 1319 or such other report and/or statement to be presented at the next World Conference and the foregoing reports and/or statements may include such other issues and matters as deemed appropriate by the First Presidency; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the First Presidency is requested to consider making the foregoing reports and/or statements in form and substance consistent with "Plain Language" standards.<sup>7</sup>

#### Footnotes:

1. Stephen M. Veazey, "Metamorphosis", *Herald*, January/February 2020, p32.
2. 2019 World Conference's Official Minutes of Business Meeting Thursday, April 11, 2019, p. 5.
3. For example, see adult study guide "Living Jesus ... Living Peace", 2020, editors: Janné Grover, Susan Naylor, and Elaine Garrison, p.12, referencing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oheb3MplSHE> (approx. 3:18) which specifies "America First" is theological heresy for followers of Christ; see also chart of acceptable movements at [https://youtu.be/sGr4B6D-5\\_g?t=2193](https://youtu.be/sGr4B6D-5_g?t=2193).
4. See [https://youtu.be/sGr4B6D-5\\_g?t=2313](https://youtu.be/sGr4B6D-5_g?t=2313)
5. See statement concerning repurposing the Book of Mormon "as a narrative of redemption from whiteness, from military prowess and from economic systems of oppression" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n15z76ycN-M> (approx. 17:45); see also interview of Andrew Bolton and Pete Gaffney "[T]he Book of Mormon is a 19th century document, a parable, an elaborate parable inspired fiction, a historical novel. And it's created in the fertile mind of Joseph Smith Jr." <https://www.projectzionpodcast.org/375-grounds-for-peace-reframing-and-repurposing-the-book-of-mormon> (approx 19:45).)
6. See statement concerning repurposing the Book of Mormon "as a narrative of redemption from whiteness, from military prowess and from economic systems of oppression" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n15z76ycN-M> (approx. 17:45).
7. See discussions of Plain Language standard in Federal Plain Language Guidelines or Securities and Exchange Commission, Plain English Handbook, or such other published standards deemed appropriate by the First Presidency.



## Community of Christ

# G-7 Resolution on Marriage

*From the Council of Twelve Apostles*

Whereas, Marriage is a sacrament and sacred covenant relationship of love and equality between two people and recognized as a valued institution in the cultures of the world; and

Whereas, Understandings, definitions, practices, traditions, and laws regarding marriage and marriage-like relationships vary throughout the nations and cultures of the world; and

Whereas, The World Conference is counseled through Doctrine and Covenants 164:7b to address “principles of behavior and relationships” but “not decide specific policies for all nations when those decisions likely will cause serious harm in some of them.”; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That WCR 1182 be rescinded; and, be it further

*Resolved*, That apostles have responsibility for establishing and upholding definitions, guidelines, practices, and policies regarding marriage and marriage-like relationships within nations or other geographic

groupings where the laws, cultures, and traditions for marriage are similar; and be it further

*Resolved*, That all definitions, guidelines, practices, and policies developed by apostles be reviewed and approved by the Council of Twelve Apostles and First Presidency prior to implementation; and be it further

*Resolved*, That all definitions, guidelines, practices, and policies are developed in harmony with the principle of monogamy (Doctrine and Covenants 150:10a), our Enduring Principles, and the behavior and relationship principles of Christ-like love, mutual respect, responsibility, justice, covenant, and faithfulness identified in Doctrine and Covenants 164:6 and further explored in the Commentary on Principles; and be it further

*Resolved*, All definitions, guidelines, practices, and policies seek to uphold the Worth of All Persons, foster mutuality and equality, and protect the most vulnerable; and be it further

*Resolved*, That basic resources be recommended to assist in education before and after the sacrament of marriage that support marriage as lived relationship and model the principles identified above.



## Community of Christ

# G-8 Resolution Opposing Christian Zionism

*From the World Church Peace and Justice Team*

*Whereas*

1. Community of Christ holds to the inestimable Worth of All Persons, the Pursuit of [shalom/salaam] Peace, the value of Unity in Diversity, and the quest for Blessings of Community which include compassion for and solidarity with the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed;
2. Community of Christ proclaims that the future of creation belongs to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, and is aligned with the peaceful kingdom of God and a just “Zion” that will end poverty and oppression for all the Earth’s peoples;
3. Community of Christ has declared its belief in the love of God for Muslims and Jews, denounced Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, and stated its commitment to the promotion of peace with justice in Palestine and Israel (WCR 1311, 2016);
4. Christian Zionism, in interpreting the Bible as saying that some must suffer before the return of Christ, ignores the equal Worth of All Persons, excuses the oppression, occupation, displacement, and colonization of Palestinians, and thereby hinders progress toward a just peace in the region;
5. Christian Zionism, in interpreting the establishment of Israel as a necessary precursor to the return of Jesus Christ, is a misreading of the Bible and conflates the Israel of the Bible with the modern nation state of Israel;
6. Community of Christ has renounced the Doctrine of Discovery and its highly contestable interpretations of colonization (WCR 1309, 2016) but has not formally renounced narratives of Christian Zionism that some members may have held, and others may still hold;
7. Community of Christ recognizes the importance of developing, maintaining, and promoting educational resources that may include conferences, scholarly papers, and dual narrative tours, designed to bring clarity and understanding to these important theological and political questions;

*Therefore, be it resolved, that*

1. Community of Christ formally rejects any historical complicity in narratives of Christian Zionism;
2. The First Presidency be tasked with the development, maintenance, and promotion of educational materials and advocacy tools that will equip church members and associates in their efforts to promote peace in the region.



## Community of Christ

# G-9 Compassion for Refugees/ UN World Refugee Day

*From the World Church Ecumenical and Interfaith Team*

Whereas, Desperate human beings have fled hostilities and sought sanctuary in other lands since ancient times, even as cited in scripture; and

Whereas, Such threatened people are refugees, defined as persons “forced to flee their home country due to persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group” (Sermon Talking Points for HIAS Refugee Shabbat: March 4–5, 2022); and

Whereas, In 2021, 84 million displaced persons worldwide (26.6 million categorized as refugees by the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency), were harbored in neighboring nations, many of these nations with very limited resources to help these refugees resettle and integrate into their countries to start a new future; and

Whereas, The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) in Article 14 upholds the rights of refugees, “Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution”; and

Whereas, Many teachings from the Hebrew Bible and New Testament teach us to serve and protect the most vulnerable, such as, “The strangers who reside with you shall be to you as your citizens; you shall love each one as yourself.” (Leviticus 19:34) and “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in” (Matthew 25:35); and

Whereas, In recent times, the church has received counsel repeatedly to show compassion to those experiencing needless suffering: “God, the Eternal Creator, weeps for the poor, displaced, mistreated and diseased of the world because of their unnecessary suffering. Such conditions are not God’s will. Open your ears to hear

the pleading of mothers and fathers in all nations who desperately seek a future of hope for their children. Do not turn away from them. For in their welfare resides your welfare” (Doctrine and Covenants 163:4a); and

Whereas, The Church has been told, “Even as the One you follow reached out to those who were rejected and marginalized, so must the community that bears his name” (Doctrine and Covenants 162:6c); and

Whereas, World Conference Resolutions such as WCR 1177 “Peace” notes, “God’s concern for caring within the human family throughout the world” and encourages us to participate “with other organizations constructively promoting peaceful existence of humanity;” and WCR 1184 “Human Rights” affirms that among all people’s essential rights are “freedom from fear and threats to personal safety and well-being”; and WCR 1226 “Human Diversity” encourages the use of educational materials, worship resources and leadership training that “reveals the unqualified love of God and the inestimable worth of all people”; and

Whereas, In Community of Christ, our global Mission Initiatives and Enduring Principles inspire us to Abolish Poverty, End [Needless] Suffering and uphold the Worth of All Persons; and

Whereas, Many trustworthy, ecumenical, interfaith, governmental, and non-governmental global organizations are already in the forefront of mobilizing humanitarian solutions to address this desperate need for refugee aid and resettlement; and

Whereas, Our efforts will be best placed alongside the expertise and connections of these worthy partners, using their extensive resource materials, support, and programs so Community of Christ can become well informed and well connected for deeper compassion and practical acts of love to save lives, welcome, integrate, and care for refugees; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That Community of Christ shows solidarity with refugees everywhere by urging church-wide awareness of the scope of refugee needs through the establishment of an annual Refugee Day coordinated with the United Nations World Refugee Day of June 20th; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the World Conference request the Ecumenical and Interfaith Ministries team to collect and prepare multilingual resources (including potential worship resources and calls to action) across the international church for mission centres, congregations, and groups to learn about, plan, collaborate, and implement refugee awareness and support.