

# FWC Response<sup>1</sup> to the Resolution of Witness

“STEWARDSHIP OF EXHIBIT SPACE AS A RESOURCE FOR A MISSION OF JUSTICE”  
2019 UCC General Synod

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of Faithful & Welcoming Churches is to encourage UCC churches, pastors, and members who consider themselves ECOT (evangelical, conservative, orthodox, or traditional) to remain in the UCC rather than separating. We believe in the UCC’s founding vision and motto, “That they all may be one (John 17:21),” and grieve when ECOTs separate or pull back from active participation and support of the UCC. We hope our presence at General Synod encourages some of the members and pastors of the 2/3 of UCC churches who are not ONA to remain in active covenant.
2. **Inclusion.** We have no objection to “historically under-represented” groups being represented in all settings of the UCC. We believe that ECOTs are today’s under-represented voices within the denomination. ECOTs in the UCC often feel undervalued, unwanted, and silenced. As expressed in the 2007 GS resolution, “Reaffirming Our Commitment to Covenantal Relationships,” we believe General Synod should “welcome speakers, displays and educational opportunities that exemplify an openness to the wide range of ministries and theological diversity in our churches.” We believe the UCC’s extravagant welcome should include ECOTs who often represent biblical and theological viewpoints widely and deeply held in the historical streams that produced the UCC.
3. **Civil rights.** We deplore and denounce all forms of hatred, violence, separation, discrimination, and exclusion. We affirm the civil rights of and believe in an extravagant welcome for LGBTQ persons in the life of the church. We also embrace the UCC’s historic polity of “inherent” autonomy for its local churches on matters such as the call of a pastor and standards of church beliefs, government, and discipline, as expressed in Article V, Paragraph 18, of the UCC Constitution.
4. **Clarification.** The quotations on lines 182ff. of the “STEWARDSHIP OF EXHIBIT SPACE” resolution do, indeed, come from earlier FWC materials and web site, but we have removed or revised this language because it can be misunderstood or used out of context. We acknowledge a range of differences with GS resolutions and actions, but we encourage congregations and their leaders to remain in active covenant, including OCWM support.
5. **Grief.** We acknowledge with deep regret past and present pain inflicted on LGBTQ persons by self-identified ECOTs within and beyond the UCC. We believe that ECOTs should be encouraged to participate in General Synods and other wider church meetings so they can hear first-hand the stories of LGBTQ persons. We also believe the stories of UCC ECOTs should be heard.
6. **Mutual Respect.** Especially where there are deep differences of conviction, we advocate for respect, compassion, and dignity in our conversations, reflecting the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. General Synod should be a place where constructive conversation takes place about all the issues that unite and potentially divide our beloved church.
7. **Lunch.** We welcome those who have questions about FWC to stop by Exhibit Hall booth #312. At the booth we will have a limited number of tickets available for our Optional Dining Event luncheon Sunday, June 23, 2019, where we will be glad to listen and respond to questions in greater depth.

---

<sup>1</sup> (The notes above were written by FWC President Bob Thompson and approved in May 2019 by the Board of Directors of FWC. For further clarification, email [faithfulandwelcoming@gmail.com](mailto:faithfulandwelcoming@gmail.com).)