

GENERAL SYNOD OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

GENERAL SYNOD 34

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

RESOLUTION REPORT

Resolution 19-GS-11 Basic Unit of Life

Discerning, Articulating, and Resourcing the Nature, Purpose, Composition, Covenantal Autonomy and Definition of ‘the basic unit of life and organization of the United Church of Christ’ for the Twenty-first Century: A Prudential Resolution

Report Submitted By: Rev. Tracy Howe, Team Leader and Minister for FaithINFO

The Manual on Church working group is in the writing and testing stage with several sections able to be released at General Synod 34, including the “Definition of Local Church,” “New and Renewing Churches Joining the UCC,” and “Marks for Faithful and Vital Local Churches.” These sections will be shared through a workshop and the release of the “Grow Your Church” game, an engaging way to interact with people in your local church and learn the Marks for Faithful and Vital Local Churches developed for the Manual on Church.

Bringing the Manual on Church to this point has included research across the denomination in the form of surveys, interviews, case studies and presentations and feedback at the 2022 AM21 gathering. As a completed draft of the Manual on Church is expected by the end of 2023, the working group is shifting towards working with Conferences, Associations and Local Churches to further “test” and receive feedback and data. This will likely come in the form of some regional and virtual events in 2024.

At this time, the Manual on Church Working Group is not recommending amendments to the United Church of Christ Constitution; the need for amendments will be assessed in connection with feedback and data received on the Manual on Church.