

**A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A NEW STUDY BY OUR CHURCH ON OUR
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS AND THE BOARDING
SCHOOLS IN HAWAII**

A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

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3 **WHEREAS**, an estimated 15 million Native American Indians have been exterminated in what
4 is known today as the United States of America through policies defined as genocide¹, and
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6 **WHEREAS**, among the policies of genocide Native American Indians became victims of
7 identity altering education programs, and
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9 **WHEREAS**, the Civilization Fund Act of 1819’s intention was to introduce to Native
10 Americans “the habits and arts of civilization”² (to force native American Indians to assimilate
11 to White American culture), and
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13 **WHEREAS**, in the decade following 1869 the Christian denominations began to establish
14 boarding schools with the underlying policy to “kill the Indian and save the man,”³ and
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16 **WHEREAS**, one such boarding school was the Hampton Institute, founded by General Samuel
17 Chapman Armstrong, son of A.B.C.F.M. missionaries to Hawai`i Rev. Richard and Clarissa
18 Chapman Armstrong, which opened its doors to Indian students in 1878; and
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20 **WHEREAS**, boarding schools were of paramount significance in the attempted cultural
21 genocide of an entire people, and
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23 **WHEREAS**, the mandatory placement of Indian children in the boarding schools resulted in
24 the loss of hundreds of languages, spiritual beliefs, traditional practices, and the destruction of
25 healthy family life;⁴ and
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27 **WHEREAS**, in 2003 the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM), the American Indian
28 organization that is part of the United Church of Christ, submitted a resolution “American
29 Indian Boarding Schools” that was passed by the General Synod⁵ but did not result in
30 reparations, and
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32 **WHEREAS**, on September 30, 2021, a “Statement Supporting the Establishment of a Truth
33 and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies” was signed by the following
34 church groups⁶: The Episcopal Church; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Franciscan
35 Action Network; Friends Committee on National Legislation; Jesuit Conference Office of
36 Justice and Ecology; Office of Race Relations, Christian Reformed Church of North America;
37 The United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society,
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39 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-fourth General Synod of the United Church
40 of Christ directs the UCC to ~~thoroughly conduct a thorough survey of~~ investigate -and disclose its
41 history beginning with the ~~American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission~~ American
42 Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (A-B-C-F-M-) ²on its work done both with Native
43 American nations and the Hawaiian Kingdom and evaluate ~~the results of this survey in terms of~~
44 ~~whether-what~~ actions ~~need-will to~~ be taken by the United Church of Christ to make amends of
45 moral; and legal (both under U.S. laws and under international humanitarian laws) violations that
46 have occurred, and requests that the UCC Board ask for the cooperation of the Association of
47 Hawaiian Evangelical Churches (AHEC) and the Council for American Indian Ministries
48 (CAIM) in so doing.

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50 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that if the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign
51 Mission -(A-B-C-F-M-) did receive funds from the Indian Civilization Fund Act of 1819, an act of
52 the U.S. government, the survey-investigation shall reveal what effects this had upon the mission
53 of the church, and

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55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, if the survey-investigation reveals ~~clear-moral and legal~~
56 violations, that the United Church of Christ begin its reparation process by formally apologizing
57 for the harm done to the Native Hawaiians and to the Native American nations connected to the
58 American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (A-B-C-F-M-) ~~and to the Native~~
59 Hawaiians; and

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61 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, if the survey-investigation reveals moral and legal violations,
62 that the United Church of Christ Board propose specific steps in the reparation process, and
63 begin the reparation process by formally apologizing for the harm done to the Native Hawaiians
64 and to the Native American nations connected to the American Board of Commissioners for
65 Foreign Mission (A-B-C-F-M-) ~~and to the Native Hawaiians~~.

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67 **FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance
68 with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

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70 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries
71 of other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementation body.

¹ Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014), 10.

See also, David Michael Smith, "Counting the Dead: Estimating the Loss of Life in the Indigenous Holocaust, 1492-Present, 2017.

² Act of March 3, 1819, Ch. 85, 3 Stat. 516, codified at 25 U.S.C. at 271 (2020).

³ <https://new.uccfiles.com/pdf/gs24minutes.pdf>, p. 41.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 41.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 41f.

⁶ <https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Statement%20Supporting%20the%20Establishment%20of%20a%20Truth%20and%20Healing%20Commission.pdf>.

⁷ American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions merged with United Church Board for World Missions in 1961 evolving into Wider Church Ministries of the UCC in 2000.