RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A STUDY DOCUMENT ON
UNDERSTANDING STEWARDSHIP AS A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE
AND ITS PRACTICAL APPLICATION IN THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY

Preface: In a time when issues related to stewardship face the human family in ways ranging from the care of our planet in the face of the growing evidence of climate change to the economic impact of 50% of the global population now owning less than 1% of the earth’s resources\(^1\), we believe a critical moment is before us. How will the church speak to stewardship and faithfulness in the 21st Century? The Special Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly provides for the creation of Study Documents (2.3.1) which serve as a means of analysis for subjects that involve ethical, moral or religious elements and on which it is deemed important that members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be more thoroughly informed as an aid to the formation of Christian opinions and judgments, or on which the judgment of individuals or groups is desired.

WHEREAS, the Biblical stories about creation speak to our unique existence, purpose, identity and relationship with God\(^2\); and

WHEREAS, these stories infer a distinctive human role as caretakers of the created order and likewise reveal characteristics of the Divine that include generosity; and

WHEREAS, the biblical witness addresses the nature of possessions\(^3\) and money as possible barriers to faithfulness\(^4\); and

WHEREAS, the faithful management (stewardship) of our resources (financial and otherwise), can lower anxiety, personal insecurity, and produce the capacity for greater generosity; and

WHEREAS, the financial resources necessary for the effective mission and witness of the Church in all of its expressions is dependent on the generosity of God’s people\(^5\); and,

WHEREAS, the church understands and accepts both the obligation and necessity to teach the faith and encourage the marks of faithful discipleship, and in particular that of stewardship;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 18-22, 2015; calls upon the Center for Faith and Giving to create a study document for use across the life of the whole church that; 1) broadly defines a biblical, theological, and holistic perspective for understanding stewardship as a spiritual discipline, and that; 2) provides for a means of engaging members of (and recognized organizations within) the Christian Church (Disciples of
Christ) in thoughtful discussion about, and the practical application of, methods for living as a faithful steward in the early 21st century; and

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that the document will be completed during the next biennium and presented for report and consideration at the 2017 General Assembly.

General Board of the Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

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1 Credit Suiess Report, October 14, 2014
2 (Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Genesis 2:4b-25)
3 (Mark 10:17-27; Matthew 6:19-21)
4 (Matthew 6:24; 1 Timothy 6:10)
5 In one metastudy on Christian giving in North America, it was estimated that from those Christians living in North America, who are defined as “committed” (by virtue of attending worship services an average of more than twice per month) there exists the capacity to generate over 133 billion additional dollars annually in charitable giving. Imagine the impact this could have on the ministry and mission of the church if generosity and stewardship were embraced within our own membership. See chapter one (pp 11-27) of *Passing the Plate: Why American Christians Don’t Give Away More Money*; (Smith, Emerson and Snell; Oxford Press, New York; 2008) for more information. It should be noted that figure (133 billion) this does not address the impact of legacy giving or other types of religious philanthropy. The potential is staggering.

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The General Board recommends the General Assembly
ADOPT GA-1536. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)