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3 **Regarding Measure One**

4 **Submitted by:** Bismarck-Mandan Area United Church of Christ
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7 **Summary Statement of Intent of the Resolution:** The publicized purpose of Measure 1 is to provide
8 constitutional protections to support life and the belief that abortion is morally wrong. As people of faith,
9 we neither oppose nor support this stated purpose of Measure 1, but we have become aware of very
10 significant consequences regarding end-of-life decisions. Our intent is to respectfully raise awareness of
11 these consequences before Measure 1 goes to public vote on November 4, 2014.
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13 **Background and Supporting Statement:**

14 Known as Measure 1 the following amendment to the North Dakota State Constitution will be placed
15 before voters on November 4, 2014: *“The inalienable right to life of every human being at any stage of*
16 *development must be recognized and protected.”* The ambiguous phrasing of this amendment allows
17 interpretations that could make it difficult for physicians to follow individuals’ advance directives. Fear of
18 lawsuits could negatively impact end-of-life care for people of all ages. It could also negatively impact
19 organ donation, and dissuade physicians from practicing in North Dakota. Due to the open-ended wording
20 of Measure 1, no group can ensure that Measure 1, if passed, will not be interpreted in a way that
21 negatively impacts North Dakota residents.
22

23 **Text of the resolution:**

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25 **WHEREAS,** compassion for one another involves learning the needs of others and providing ways to meet
26 them to the best of our ability (Luke 10:25-37);
27

28 **WHEREAS,** God intends for life to be lived to its fullest (John 10:10);
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30 **WHEREAS,** assisting one another in living life to the fullest and preparing for the end-of-life in ways
31 which are theologically and morally in accordance with an individual’s understanding of what it means to
32 live and die with grace is an important calling of the church;
33

34 **WHEREAS,** individual congregation members have experienced end-of-life trauma and are keenly aware
35 of how this proposed constitutional amendment could negatively affect future decisions for themselves and
36 their loved ones;
37

38 **WHEREAS,** the United Church of Christ has historically supported the idea of separating religious beliefs
39 of all kinds from incorporation into state constitutions;
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41 **WHEREAS,** we hold a deep respect for all people and their families at end-of-life, regardless of their
42 religious and moral beliefs;
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44 **WHEREAS,** the open-ended wording of Measure 1 leaves it open to interpretations which could
45 negatively impact the end-of-life decisions of North Dakotans;
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47 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** all local churches are encouraged to educate their congregation
48 members and wider community members regarding the end-of-life implications of Measure 1 before the
49 vote on November 4, 2014;
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51 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** Northern Plains Conference is asked to communicate this resolution
52 opposing the passage of Measure 1 to all local churches;
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54 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** Northern Plains Conference is asked to participate in public discussions
55 opposing the passage of Measure 1 in the weeks and months leading up to the November vote;
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57 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, Northern Plains Conference is asked to communicate the passage of this
58 resolution and its position to the general public via state-wide media.

59

60 **FUNDING**

61 Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be primarily the responsibility of local
62 congregations.

63

64 **IMPLEMENTATION**

65 Implementation for this resolution will occur at the local church and conference levels.