

48 Ministries (CHM) in 1977. On the occasion of its 21st anniversary, CHM published a report
49 describing its rich history and presence in the life of the church. The following excerpt in that
50 report continues to be true today.

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52 *Latinos and Latinas in the United States are not a homogeneous group of people. We*
53 *comprise twenty different cultures bound by a common language that, when spoken,*
54 *sounds different to the ears of the listener...*

55

56 *In spite of the odds against us, the Latinas and Latinos in our beloved United Church*
57 *of Christ grow strong and faithful, with our hearts and minds rooted in Jesus Christ,*
58 *hoping that our tomorrow will be a time of rejoicing and real unity in the midst of*
59 *diversity.ⁱⁱ*

60

61 In September 2015, the CHM Executive Committee voted unanimously to suspend its
62 Bylaws and governing structure and empowered a UCC Latina/o Hispanic Transition Team
63 (The Transition Team) to function in its place. The Transition Team was also asked to lead a
64 two-year churchwide assessment and discernment process

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66 The Transition Team undertook the task of designing and implementing a process for
67 gathering opinions, insights, and wisdom focused on the future of Latinx ministries and
68 leadership in the UCC, which included a large-scale survey and focus groups with UCC
69 Latinx authorized ministers and laypeople around the country. The result was a
70 comprehensive report entitled “*Latinx Ministries: A Living History of the United Church of*
71 *Christ*”ⁱⁱⁱ completed in June 2017 that focused on the demographics and experiences of UCC
72 Latinx individuals within the church. This Report was delivered to Latinx members, the
73 Collegium of Officers and the United Church of Christ Board of Directors in 2017.

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75 Some of the findings of the report highlight the joys and continuing challenges Latinxs
76 persons face within the UCC for increased connection, visibility, and equity. As expected,
77 UCC Latinxs claim origins in numerous countries, ethnicities, and racial identities, with a
78 majority (59%) attending Euro-American or Multiracial churches and nearly half (45%)
79 being fluent in both Spanish and English. In addition, estimates using data from the 2015
80 Faith Communities Today survey of UCC congregations found that 2.1% of all participants in
81 congregational life identified as Latinx.^{iv} In 2015, this translated to roughly 19,200 Latinx out
82 of the UCC’s total membership of 914,871.

83

84 United States Census data figures from 2014 indicate that Hispanics make up 17% of the total
85 U.S. population (53 million people). They further indicate that there has been a growth of
86 over 6 million Hispanic persons between 2010 and 2015. That growth is nearly equivalent to
87 the growth in African American and Asian populations combined in the same time frame.^v
88 Predictions that the Hispanic population would be the largest minority community in the
89 United States by 2050 have already come to pass.

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91 The United Church of Christ is also changing. Statistical data from 2015 indicates that UCC
92 membership was 88.1% white in 2005; that number dropped to 84.9% in 2015. The
93 percentage of congregations identified as Hispanic/Latino also dropped from 1.4% in 2005 to
94 0.4% 2015. The percentage of Bi-Racial/Multi-Racial and Other congregations increased
95 from 1.2% in 2005 to 4.0% in 2015 over this same time period.^{vi}

96 With the results of the comprehensive report and the information gathered from focus groups
97 sessions, the Colectivo identified the following goals for a new organization known as the
98 Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries.
99

- 100 • To form a nationally based collection of groups (regional, issue focused, specific
101 identified) committed to a common mission in ministry with Latinx communities in
102 the UCC;
- 103 • To claim an identity that exhibits radical inclusivity and extravagant welcome in word
104 and deed;
- 105 • To build relationships across our pluralism, recognizing and embracing our
106 theologies, cultural uniqueness and national heritage; and
- 107 • To value the common good and taking collective action for social change, within and
108 outside the church.

109
110 **TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION:**

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112 WHEREAS it has been documented and affirmed that the Latinx community in the United
113 States is not a homogenous group of people, but is comprised of twenty different cultures
114 linked by a common language, bound by a history of oppression and diaspora, and connected
115 by a powerful and undeterred faith in God;^{vii}
116

117 AND WHEREAS racial discrimination against Latinx communities is rampant throughout
118 the United States, yet discussions of White Privilege within the UCC are focused on the racial
119 duality of black and white, without mention of the marginalization of the Latinx
120 community;^{viii}
121

122 AND WHEREAS it has been documented and affirmed that Latinx population in the UCC is
123 disproportionately underrepresented at the association and conference settings within the
124 wider church;^{ix}
125

126 AND WHEREAS in 2015 the Executive Committee of the Council for Hispanic Ministries
127 voted unanimously to suspend its Bylaws and governing structure and replace it with a UCC
128 Latin@/Hispanic Transition Team to study and report on the status and needs of the Latinx
129 community in the UCC;^x
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131 AND WHEREAS the Transition Team recommends that a new nationally based body be
132 formed within the UCC to focus on a covenanted common mission in ministry with Latinx
133 communities;
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135 AND WHEREAS the Latinx community in the UCC is anxious to claim its place within the
136 body of Christ and be mutually accountable for the future, seeking to be members, not a
137 mission of the United Church of Christ.
138

139 THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Thirty-Second General Synod of the United
140 Church of Christ calls for the establishment of the Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries, a
141 leadership body in covenant with the UCC comprised of UCC congregations, associations,
142 and conferences; ecumenical and interfaith partners; and community-based organizations
143 who share and endorse the goals and values of the Colectivo and covenant to strengthen and
144 support the mission and ministry of Latinx people within the UCC.
145

146 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that at the request of the Council for Hispanic Ministries, the
147 Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries takes the place of the Council for Hispanic Ministries in
148 the UCC Bylaws, Article VI Self-Determining Groups.

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150 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries is recognized as
151 a Historically Underrepresented Group and a member of the Council of Racial and Ethnic
152 Ministries (COREM).

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154 FUNDING: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in
155 accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

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157 IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other
158 entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

ⁱ Latinx (Lat-eeen-ex) is a gender-neutral alternative to Latino, Latina, and/or Latin@. It is being used by a growing number of activists, journalists, scholars, and is rapidly gaining popularity among the general public. It is part of a linguistic revolution that aims to move beyond binaries and is inclusive of intersecting identities of Latin American descendants.

ⁱⁱ The United Church of Christ Council for Hispanic Ministries, PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE: The Struggle Continues – La Lucha Continua, 1977-1998.

ⁱⁱⁱ Latinx Ministries: A Living History of the United Church of Christ, June 2017.

^{iv} <http://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/Fall-2016-UCC-Statistical-Profile.pdf>

^v <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

^{vi} <http://uccfiles.com/pdf/UCC-FACT-2015-Webinar.pdf>

^{vii} Latinx Ministries: A Living History of the United Church of Christ, June 2017.

^{viii} <https://www.ucc.org/privilege.uccpages.org>.

^{ix} Latinx Ministries: A Living History of the United Church of Christ, June 2017.

^x Ibid.