

1 **9. RESOLUTION: STATEMENT ON**  
2 **CONVERGENCE WITH THE ALLIANCE**  
3 **OF BAPTISTS**

4 Moderator Taylor called on the chair of Com-  
5 mittee One, the Rev. Dennis L. Frische-Mouri,  
6 to present the recommended action of the com-  
7 mittee. Mr. Frische-Mouri thanked members of  
8 the committee for their work, briefly described  
9 the work of the committee and moved the adop-  
10 tion of the resolution, "A Statement on Conver-  
11 gence in Matters of Theology and Practice be-  
12 tween the Alliance of Baptists and the United  
13 Church of Christ." Mr. Frische-Mouri spoke  
14 briefly to the resolution.  
15

16 Ms. Taylor called for further discussion. Follow-  
17 ing discussion, John Gage (CONN) offered an  
18 amendment: "Be it further resolved that the  
19 Twenty-third General Synod of the United  
20 Church of Christ requests that the persons on the  
21 dialogue team representing the United Church of  
22 Christ engage in conversation with persons from  
23 the Alliance of Baptist to explore how an inten-  
24 tional ecumenical relationship will allow both  
25 bodies to grow in their shared commitments to  
26 becoming multicultural, multiracial, open and af-  
27 firming, accessible to all, just peace communi-  
28 ties of faith and. . ."

29  
30 After further discussion on the amendment, Ms.  
31 Taylor called for the vote and the amendment was  
32 defeated. There being no further discussion, Mod-  
33 erator Taylor called for the vote on the main  
34 motion.  
35

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37 01-GS-17 VOTED: The Twenty-third General  
38 Synod adopts the resolution, "A Statement on  
39 Convergence in Matters of Theology and Prac-  
40 tice between the Alliance of Baptists and the  
41 United Church of Christ."  
42

43 **A STATEMENT ON CONVERGENCE IN**  
44 **MATTERS OF THEOLOGY AND PRAC-**  
45 **TICE BETWEEN THE ALLIANCE OF**  
46 **BAPTISTS AND THE UNITED CHURCH**  
47 **OF CHRIST**  
48

49  
50 WHEREAS the Alliance of Baptists has been a  
51 faithful witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ;  
52 and  
53

54 WHEREAS nearly six years of informal and for-  
55 mal dialogue between leaders of the Alliance and  
56 the United Church of Christ continues to reveal  
57 significant shared theological convictions, poten-  
58 tial opportunities for mutual support in common  
59 mission, and a shared conviction of God's lead-  
ing into a closer walk together;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-  
third General Synod of the United Church of Christ  
affirms the desire to develop an intentional ecumenical  
relationship with the Alliance of Baptists which ex-  
presses our common vocation, mutual friendship, and  
developing collaboration through a covenant to be pre-  
pared for formal affirmation in 2003;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Min-  
ister and President be requested to name members of  
the United Church of Christ to the dialogue team;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Min-  
ister and President be requested to invite the Christian  
Church (Disciples of Christ) to name up to two observ-  
ers to this dialogue team; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the United Church  
of Christ expresses its profound gratitude to God and  
to the Alliance of Baptists for the promise of such a  
rich relationship, to the end that together we may con-  
tinue to seek the realization of Jesus' prayer, "that they  
may all be one."

Funding for this action will be made in accordance with  
the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the  
funds available.

Ms. Taylor granted the Rev. Stanley Haste, Co-con-  
vener of the Alliance of Baptist—United Church of  
Christ Dialogue Team, voice to speak on the resolution  
which had just been passed. Mr. Haste expressed  
thanks to Paul Sherry, John Thomas, and Lydia Veliko  
for their work on the relationship. He also thanked  
Richard Hamm and Robert Welch, who represented  
the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the dia-  
logue. Finally, he offered assurance that the concern of  
the proposed amendment would be given attention.  
There was a standing ovation.

Mr. Rivera and Ms. Smith moderated discussion  
and voting on the next business item of the General  
Assembly, "Farm Workers, Social Justice, and the  
Church," which was adopted.

**10. RESOLUTION: CALLING UPON THE**  
**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TO INITIATE**  
**JUBILEE FOR JUSTICE FOR THE RURAL**  
**UNITED STATES**

Ms. Taylor called on Mr. Sol Codillo (MOMS), Chair  
of Committee Ten, to present the resolution "Calling  
Upon the United Church of Christ to Initiate a Jubilee  
for Justice for the Rural United States." Mr. Codillo  
briefly described the work of the Committee and noted  
minor changes in the resolution for the purpose of clar-  
ity on lines 11, 18, 25 and 32 and also added the final  
paragraph, which he read to the delegates. Then, on  
behalf of Committee Ten, he moved adoption of the  
resolution as amended in Committee. There being no  
discussion, Moderator Taylor called for the vote.

1 01-GS-18 VOTED with abstentions: The Twenty-  
2 third General Synod adopts the resolution, "Call-  
3 ing Upon the Church of Christ to Initiate a Jubilee  
4 for Justice for the Rural United States," as amended  
5 in Committee.  
6

7 **CALLING UPON THE UNITED CHURCH**  
8 **OF CHRIST TO INITIATE A JUBILEE FOR**  
9 **JUSTICE FOR THE RURAL UNITED**  
10 **STATES**

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12  
13 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Twenty-third General  
14 Synod of the United Church of Christ requests the  
15 Justice and Witness Ministries to develop a coord-  
16 inated program of education and action to initiate  
17 a Jubilee of Justice for the Rural United States,  
18 implementing and updating past General Synod  
19 pronouncements concerning the rural United States  
20 and agriculture, and focusing attention on the im-  
21 mediacy of action required to prevent the further  
22 collapse of family farm agriculture and the com-  
23 munities which serve agriculture; and  
24

25 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that such a Jubilee  
26 for Rural Justice should give priority and empha-  
27 sis to enable the United Church of Christ, its  
28 churches, and its members, to engage in ministries  
29 of advocacy for social and economic justice on  
30 behalf of family farmers and rural communities,  
31 to oppose industrialized and corporatized structures  
32 of agriculture, and to work toward a vision of re-  
33 newed prosperity and opportunity for a sustainable  
34 and stabilized system of family farm agriculture  
35 and rural society.  
36

37 This should not only assist churches and commu-  
38 nities to help the victims of these injustices to pick  
39 up the pieces of their lives, but it also must address  
40 the root causes by helping to create a just agricul-  
41 tural system that appropriately compensates fam-  
42 ily farm producers of our daily food, while ensur-  
43 ing proper distribution of food resources to meet  
44 basic human need and enhancing the long-term  
45 stewardship of our land, water, and natural re-  
46 sources for the future.  
47

48 It should seek replacement of the 1996 farm law  
49 with legislation that provides a meaningful eco-  
50 nomic safety net based on the cost of production  
51 returns targeted to benefit small and mid-size fam-  
52 ily farmers, reestablishes viable systems of domes-  
53 tic and international food reserves, assures com-  
54 pliance with civil rights and effectively addresses  
55 past discrimination, and establishes a 21st-century  
56 homesteading program that will enable new, young  
57 farm families to enter into the profession of family  
58 farming and ranching.  
59

It should seek the development of farm price-sup-  
port structures that not only encourage and pro-

vide meaningful assistance to family farmers and ranch-  
ers to establish and carry out sound conservation prac-  
tices, but also it should reward these operators for im-  
proved stewardship of land, water, and other natural  
resources. At the same time, it should discourage the  
speculative development or conversion of land re-  
sources that cannot environmentally sustain such de-  
velopment.

It should seek to address the historical dislocation of  
Native American farmers from their lands and the pub-  
lic discrimination that resulted in the dramatic loss in  
the number of African American family farmers and  
the acreage that they operated. Priority should be given  
by the U. S. Department of Agriculture to create new  
avenues of opportunity to help these and other minori-  
ties to regain their agricultural legacy as family farm-  
ers.

It should seek further discussion and rapid implemen-  
tation of the recommendations developed by the Na-  
tional Commission on Small Farms. These recommen-  
dations, which are consistent with past pronouncements  
and resolutions of the General Synod, should serve as  
a central base upon which to rebuild the family farm  
structure and a sustainable agricultural production and  
rural development system.

It should provide resources by which consumers can  
participate with producers in rebuilding local and re-  
gional food systems both at home and abroad. It should  
seek to build commonality between the struggles of  
American family farmers and food producers in de-  
veloping nations. It should enlighten consumers and  
help clarify the injustices of existing food systems that  
encourage industrialized food production systems de-  
signed primarily for export to nations and societies that  
currently struggle to produce adequate nutrition for  
their populations. It should help both producers and  
consumers to understand the forces of globalization  
and how those forces can best be governed through  
democratic processes.

The Justice and Witness Ministries shall be respon-  
sible to develop the strategy and program for this reso-  
lution, which may include mobilizing the existing Ru-  
ral Task Force. They shall submit ongoing reports to  
Twenty-fourth General Synod and thereafter as appro-  
priate.

Funding for this action will be made in accordance with  
the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the  
funds available.

**11. RESOLUTION: REDISTRIBUTING TAX**  
**REBATES TO THE POOR**

Ms. Taylor called on Mr. Timothy Clark (RM), Chair  
of Committee Fourteen, to present the resolution: "Re-  
distributing Tax Rebates to the Poor." Mr. Clark noted  
one typographical error in the revised version contained  
in the red packet and then moved that the resolution be

1 adopted as presented. He then spoke briefly to the  
2 resolution. After brief discussion, Ms. Taylor called  
3 for the vote.

4  
5 The Rev. Kwame Osei Reed (CAC) offered a  
6 Friendly Amendment: "That Sunday, September  
7 9, 2001, be designated as a National Day of Con-  
8 secration in which members are given the oppor-  
9 tunity to contribute their rebate checks to their  
10 churches for distribution to Neighbors in Need,  
11 church agencies, local human services agencies or  
12 their local church crisis funds in order to address  
13 both the cause and effects of poverty." Prior to con-  
14 sideration of the amendment, Ms. Taylor called for  
15 the order of the day.

## 16 17 **12. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

18 Ms. Taylor welcomed back Ms. Nakashima Brock  
19 and Mr. Bishop for theological reflection.

## 20 21 **13. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

22 Ms. Taylor announced that General Synod busi-  
23 ness would be continued at the 2:00 p.m. plenary  
24 and that the work on Committee Fourteen would  
25 continue at that time. Ms. Taylor then called on  
26 Dan Manworren and Edith Guffey for announce-  
27 ments. It was reported that the Sunday evening  
28 offering for AIDS in Africa had amounted to  
29 \$34,976.

30  
31 Following announcements, Ms. Bessler Northcutt  
32 offered the benediction in song.

## 33 34 **MONDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 16, 2001**

### 35 36 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

37 Ms. Taylor called the fifth plenary of the Twenty-  
38 third General Synod to order at 2:10 p.m. She called  
39 on General Minister and President, John Thomas,  
40 to share a concern about the Rev. Nancy Palmer,  
41 an Illinois Conference delegate, who had been un-  
42 able to attend General Synod because she was se-  
43 verely ill. Word had just been received that her fam-  
44 ily had removed life support and she had passed  
45 away in the morning. Also of concern was a nomi-  
46 nee for Assistant Moderator for the next General  
47 Synod, Christine Smith, who was unable to attend  
48 the Twenty-third General Synod due to the illness  
49 of her mother. Word was received that Ms. Smith's  
50 mother had died in the morning. Mr. Thomas led  
51 those assembled in prayer.

52  
53 Ms. Taylor noted that in reporting the resolution,  
54 "Calling Upon the United Church of Christ to Ini-  
55 tiate a Jubilee for Justice for the Rural United  
56 States," one of the changes had not been read to  
57 the delegates before they voted. The change was  
58 on page 162, of the *Program, Worship and Busi-  
59 ness Book*, after line 46 of the right-hand column.  
Moderator Taylor read the change: the final para-  
graph of the Be It Further Resolved should read:

"The Justice and Witness Ministries shall be respon-  
sible to develop the strategy and program for this reso-  
lution, which may include mobilizing the existing  
Rural Task Force. They shall submit ongoing re-  
ports to the Twenty-fourth General Synod and  
thereafter as appropriate."

## **2. RESOLUTION: REDISTRIBUTING TAX REBATES TO THE POOR**

Ms. Taylor called on Kwame Reed (CAC), who had  
proposed an amendment to the resolution on redistri-  
bution of tax rebates. Mr. Reed noted that he was a  
voice-without-vote participant and therefore was not  
eligible to make amendments. He apologized for hav-  
ing done so and asked that Mr. Charles Wildman  
(CAC), be allowed to move the amendment that was  
proposed before the lunch break. Mr. Wildman moved  
the amendment that "Sunday, September 9, 2001, be  
designated as a National Day of Consecration in which  
members are given the opportunity to contribute their  
rebate checks to their churches for distribution to  
Neighbors in Need, Church Agencies, local human ser-  
vices agencies, or their local church crisis funds in or-  
der to address both the cause and effects of poverty,"  
and spoke to the issue.

During the discussion, it was pointed out that some  
people might not have received their rebate checks by  
that time. It was further noted that churches had al-  
ready been notified to work toward this goal and the  
money spent to publicize the new date would be fool-  
ishly spent. Ann Hurd (NY), member of the Commit-  
tee, suggested that funding for advertisement would  
be better spent on the poor. The amendment failed. Ms.  
Taylor then called for a vote on the resolution.

01-GS-19 VOTED: The Twenty-third General Synod  
adopts the resolution "Redistributing Tax Rebates to  
the Poor."

## **REDISTRIBUTING TAX REBATES TO THE POOR**

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has sought to  
bring peace through justice extended to all human be-  
ings;

WHEREAS the Scriptures call people of faith to be  
caring for the poor as God has done: "For the Lord  
your God is God of gods and Lord of Lords, the great  
God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes  
no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the  
widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them  
food and clothing" (Deuteronomy 10:17-18 NRSV);

WHEREAS the Scriptures call people of faith to share  
in one's harvest with the poor: "When you reap your  
harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you  
shall not go back to get it; it shall be left for the alien,  
the orphan, and the widow, so that the Lord your God  
may bless you in all your undertakings. When you beat