

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

1 your olive trees, do not strip what is left; it shall be  
2 for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. When you  
3 gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean  
4 what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan,  
5 and the widow. Remember that you were a slave  
6 in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding  
7 you to do this” (Deuteronomy 24:19–22 NRSV);  
8

9 WHEREAS the Scriptures record Jesus’ teaching  
10 of the righteous feeding the hungry, giving the  
11 thirsty a drink, clothing the naked, caring for the  
12 sick and visiting the imprisoned: “‘For I was hun-  
13 gry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you  
14 gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and  
15 you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me  
16 clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was  
17 in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous  
18 will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw  
19 you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave  
20 you something to drink? And when was it that we  
21 saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked  
22 and gave you clothing? And when was it that we  
23 saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the  
24 king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as  
25 you did it to one of the least of these who are mem-  
26 bers of my family, you did it to me’” (Matthew  
27 25:35–40 NRSV);  
28

29 WHEREAS the delegates to the Twenty-third Gen-  
30 eral Synod of the United Church of Christ are con-  
31 cerned about the forthcoming distribution of \$300  
32 and \$600 tax rebate checks to relatively wealthy  
33 individuals and families, while up to 30 million of  
34 the poorest working Americans less endowed with  
35 material benefits than we will receive nothing;  
36

37 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the  
38 Twenty-third General Synod, reaffirms its commit-  
39 ment to the poor by taking urgent action in this  
40 timely situation, acknowledging that the ever wid-  
41 ening gap between rich and poor must be lessened  
42 in ways great and small that allow justice to help  
43 build peace;  
44

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-  
46 third General Synod affirms the June 2001 letter  
47 from the Collegium of Officers (attached) inviting  
48 all who can live without the tax rebate to share all  
49 or a portion of it with others;  
50

51 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-  
52 third General Synod invites the membership of the  
53 United Church of Christ and others who are able  
54 to join the Collegium of Officers in encouraging  
55 those who can live without this tax rebate to share  
56 all or a portion of it with others in one of the fol-  
57 lowing ways:

- 58 • Neighbors in Need—meeting the needs of the  
59 poor in the United States,
- One Great Hour of Sharing—meeting the  
needs of the poor overseas,

- The Christmas Fund—meeting the financial  
needs of retired clergy and their spouses,
- A local or Conference mission program of your  
choosing, or
- Increased weekly or monthly giving to the church  
to support the United Church of Christ’s year-  
round, ongoing work on behalf of the poor through  
Our Church’s Wider Mission; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we as delegates to  
the Twenty-third General Synod commit to return to  
our homes and churches sharing this call.

ATTACHMENT to Resolution:

Because of the tax cut recently adopted by Congress,  
each of us in the collegium will receive a tax rebate  
check within the next few months. As each of us con-  
sidered how we might use that rebate, we were moved  
and challenged by a letter from Rev. Allen Myrick, a  
retired UCC missionary to Africa. In his letter, Allen  
says:

*I hope that you will call to mind the growing gap be-  
tween the rich and the poor; between those who are  
financially secure and those who are not—a gap which  
exists in this country and around the world. Recall that  
the number of homeless people in America is growing;  
and that the supply of affordable housing falls far short  
of the demand. Remember that many children are hun-  
gry and many families lack health insurance.*

*Think, too, beyond the borders of the U.S., of the  
millions of refugees from oppression, wars and natu-  
ral disasters. Consider that in many Third World coun-  
tries the unemployment rate exceeds 50%, and that  
AIDS and malaria are killing multitudes in Africa.  
Recall how our partner churches overseas struggle with  
very limited resources to be faithful.*

*Some of us need that tax rebate. But in a world of such  
need; how many of us truly need it? How many of us  
can justify keeping it for ourselves?*

The members of the collegium have decided that we  
will give all or a portion of our tax-cut refunds to spe-  
cial offerings or programs that support poor and work-  
ing class people. After conversations with leaders  
across the church, we ask you to join us by encourag-  
ing UCC members who can live without this tax re-  
bate to share it with others by giving through their lo-  
cal churches in one of the following ways:

- Neighbors in Need—meeting the needs of the  
poor in the United States,
- One Great Hour of Sharing—meeting the needs  
of the poor overseas,
- The Christmas Fund—meeting the financial needs  
of retired clergy and their spouses,
- A local or Conference mission program of your  
choosing,
- Increased weekly or monthly giving to the church  
to support the United Church of Christ’s year-

1 round, ongoing work on behalf of the poor  
2 through Our Church's Wider Mission.

3  
4 We have created a bulletin or newsletter insert that  
5 you can copy to help you communicate this to your  
6 members. If you have questions concerning this  
7 initiative, please contact the Rev. Kathryn  
8 Matthews Huey, Minister for Public Life, Stew-  
9 ardship and Church Finances at <hueyk@ucc.org>  
10 or by phone at 216.736.3855.

11  
12 "To believe is to care. To care is to do" remains  
13 one of the defining mottos of the United Church of  
14 Christ. In the words of Allen Myrick, "Our gifts  
15 can make a difference, and be one way in which  
16 we tell the story of Jesus and his love."

17  
18 John H. Thomas, General Minister and President  
19 Edith A. Guffey, Associate General Minister  
20 Dale L. Bishop, Executive Minister, Wider Church  
21 Ministries  
22 José A. Malayang, Executive Minister, Local  
23 Church Ministries  
24 Bernice Powell Jackson, Executive Minister,  
25 Justice and Witness Ministries

### 26 27 **3. ELECTIONS**

28 Assistant Moderator Jaramillo explained that the  
29 elections would be held in three stages, the first of  
30 which was the election for the offices of Executive  
31 Minister for Local Church Ministries and General  
32 Minister and President. She called on Mr. James  
33 Henry (OHIO), a member of the Board of Direc-  
34 tors of Local Church Ministries. Mr. Henry moved  
35 that the Rev. José A. Malayang be called by elec-  
36 tion by the General Synod of the United Church of  
37 Christ to a four-year term as the Executive Minis-  
38 ter of Local Church Ministries and an Officer of  
39 the United Church of Christ.

40  
41 01-GS-20 VOTED: The Twenty-third General  
42 Synod of the United Church of Christ calls by elec-  
43 tion the Rev. José A. Malayang to a four-year term  
44 as Executive Minister of Local Church Ministries  
45 and an Officer of the United Church of Christ.

46  
47 Ms. Jaramillo called upon Mr. Kekapa Lee, Vice  
48 Chairperson of the Executive Council. Mr. Lee  
49 moved that the Rev. John H. Thomas be called by  
50 election by the General Synod of the United Church  
51 of Christ to a four-year term as the General Minis-  
52 ter and President of the United Church of Christ.

53  
54 01-GS-21 VOTED: The Twenty-third General  
55 Synod elects the Rev. John H. Thomas to a four-  
56 year term as the General Minister and President of  
57 the United Church of Christ.

58  
59 The Assistant Moderator then called on Mr. Arthur  
Clyde, who led the delegation in a song of cele-  
bration. Ms. Jaramillo recognized Mr. Anderson

to continue the election process. Mr. Anderson ex-  
plained that the second stage of elections was for un-  
contested positions. He moved that the Twenty-third  
General Synod elect the nominees for the Moderators,  
the nominees for the Executive Council, and the nomi-  
nees for the Boards of Directors for Justice and Wit-  
ness Ministries, Local Church Ministries, and Wider  
Church Ministries.

01-GS-22 VOTED: The Twenty-third General Synod  
elects the nominees for the Moderators, the nominees  
for the Executive Council, and the nominees for the  
Boards of Directors for Justice and Witness Ministries,  
Local Church Ministries, and Wider Church Ministries.

Mr. Anderson asked the Tellers to distribute the ballots  
for the contested positions for the General Synod Nomi-  
nating Committee. He noted that under the category of  
Clergy, Susan Henderson was an African American,  
not a European American as indicated in the materials.  
He explained that there were two sets of names on the  
ballots, those to be elected from Conferences and those  
to be elected from Groups. He clarified for the dele-  
gates the number of people from each group to be  
elected. At the completion of the voting, Ms. Jaramillo  
stated that the results would be announced on Tuesday  
morning during the plenary.

### 4. SPEAK OUT!

Ms. Jaramillo called upon the participants for the Speak  
Out!

Ms. Candi Cain Borgman (PSE) and Ms. Betsy Wood-  
ward (CA NV, N) spoke about the Association of United  
Church Educators.

Mr. J. Matt Deal (PW) and Ms. Megan Hoelle (CPC),  
from the Student Ecumenical Partnership team, who  
identified themselves as advocates for the partnership  
between the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and  
the United Church of Christ, encouraged the leader-  
ship of the churches to be more aware of youth.

Ms. Billie Louise Bentzen (MA), from the United  
Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries honored Ms.  
Virginia Kreyer for her resolution which, twenty-five  
years ago, resulted in the organization now known as  
United Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries.

Mr. Kent Meyer (MI) expressed concern over the dis-  
cussions regarding homosexuality and the lack of love  
and understanding on both sides.

Mr. Bill Nelson (MA) announced that Massachusetts  
would have three Associate Conference Minister posi-  
tions open, and invited all interested clergy to explore  
this career opportunity.

Ms. Tanen McCaw and Ms. Megan Fuller (CONN)  
spoke of their beloved conference center at Silver Lake.