

1 Ministry to address the concerns raised in this reso-  
2 lution.

3  
4 Funding for this action will be made in accordance  
5 with the overall mandates of the affected agencies  
6 and the funds available.

7  
8 **8. PRONOUNCEMENT: A UNITED CHURCH**  
9 **OF CHRIST MINISTRY AND WITNESS WITH**  
10 **MICRONESIANS**

11 Ms. Jaramillo called on Mr. Angel Toro (FLA),  
12 Chair of Committee Eleven, who introduced the  
13 pronouncement and noted the additional paragraph  
14 added to the Statement of Christian Conviction,  
15 which was printed in the “yellow packet” distrib-  
16 uted to delegates. Mr. Toro also noted the Proposal  
17 for Action, also included in the “yellow packet,”  
18 which includes three changes:

19  
20  
21 page 8, column 2, line 23: add the word “else-  
22 where” between “and” and “the United States,”

23  
24 a new paragraph following the one cited above to  
25 read: “Request that Justice and Witness Ministries,  
26 in cooperation with partner churches, work together  
27 to advocate for health care for survivors,”

28  
29 page 9, line 23: change “the Assistant to the Gen-  
30 eral Minister and President for Pacific Islander and  
31 Asian American Ministry” to “the Minister for Pa-  
32 cific Islander and Asian American Relations.”

33  
34 Mr. Toro moved adoption of the pronouncement.  
35 There was considerable discussion. Two persons  
36 from the Marshall Island, Ms. Ella Ben and Ms.  
37 Elma Coleman, the latter translating for Ms. Ben,  
38 shared their experiences of having lived in the area  
39 being addressed. The Rev. Saitumua Tafaioalii  
40 (RM), a Samoan, shared insights he gained as a  
41 missionary to the Marshall Islands. The Asian Area  
42 Secretary of the Common Global Ministries re-  
43 ported on responses received from partner  
44 churches, the Korean Christian Church in Japan  
45 and Kyodan, after they had reviewed a draft of the  
46 pronouncement.

47  
48 Mr. Jason White (OH) moved to amend the reso-  
49 lution by inserting in the final paragraph after “we  
50 confess our silent complicity,” the words “and our  
51 unfortunate ignorance of.” Following discussion  
52 the amendment was defeated. The vote on the pro-  
53 nouncement was then called.

54  
55 01-GS-37 VOTED with abstentions: The Twenty-  
56 third General Synod adopts the pronouncement “A  
57 United Church of Christ Ministry and Witness with  
58 Micronesians” and the proposal for action.

**A PRONOUNCEMENT ON A UNITED CHURCH**  
**OF CHRIST MINISTRY AND WITNESS WITH**  
**MICRONESIANS**

**I. SUMMARY**

For the last fifteen years, the United States of America’s relationship to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) has been defined by Compacts of Free Association (CFA). The Compacts for the FSM and the RMI are up for renewal in the year 2001. Although Guam, Belau, and the Northern Marianas are considered part of Micronesia, this pronouncement will deal only with the FSM and the RMI because of the urgent nature of the present, ongoing Compact renegotiations.

When the Compact was signed in 1986, Micronesians were not aware of the dire consequences that serving forty years as U.S. colonies and another fifteen years as neocolonies would have for the long term self-sufficiency and true independence goals of the FSM and the RMI. Furthermore, because of “dependency” systems and inequities—in the areas of health, education, and jobs—exacerbated and enlarged by U.S. trusteeship of the FSM and the RMI, many Micronesians are in exile in Hawaii and on the continental U.S. by economic necessity. For example, many Micronesians have moved to North Carolina and other places in the south to work on corporate chicken farms and in low-wage fast food service jobs.

Since the United Church of Christ Marshall Islands is the major denomination in the RMI, and the Congregational Church in Kosrae, United Church of Christ in Chuuk, United Church of Christ Pohnpei, and the Namoneas Congregational Churches Association all have partner relationships with the United Church of Christ (U.S.A.), the majority of Micronesians living in the United States consider themselves members of the United Church of Christ. Accordingly, this Pronouncement calls upon the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to welcome the Micronesians in our midst and to minister with our Micronesian sisters and brothers within our churches and our communities. The Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM) has seen the significant participation and growth of Micronesians in the activities of PAAM in the last four years.

This Pronouncement also calls upon our UCC local churches and regional and national bodies to commit themselves to work towards full and just compensation for Micronesian peoples and the overturning of unfair provisions in the agreements during this crucial period of Compact renegotiations in the year 2001.

## 1 II. BACKGROUND

### 3 A. The Federated States of Micronesia

4 The Federated States of Micronesia is comprised  
5 of four island groups: Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, and  
6 Yap. In 1983, citizens of the FSM were asked to  
7 vote in a plebiscite on the Compact of Free Asso-  
8 ciation with the United States. Pohnpei and Chuuk  
9 voted against the Compact, but Yap and Kosrae  
10 voted in favor of the Compact. While the Compact  
11 promises independence, its subtext reveals other-  
12 wise. As researched by British scholar Jane Dibblin  
13 in a book entitled *Day of Two Suns*, the Compacts  
14 of Free Association for both the RMI and the FSM  
15 were in fact a virtual U.S. annexation of the FSM  
16 and the RMI for military purposes, a denial of self-  
17 determination, and a shrugging-off of responsibil-  
18 ity for past actions.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. has full authority  
19 and responsibility for security and defense matters,  
20 which includes the option of establishing military  
21 bases and facilities on the islands. Nuclear-armed  
22 ships, planes, and submarines have the right to pass  
23 through and stop over. Since U.S. security inter-  
24 ests overshadow every consideration, self-determi-  
25 nation is not a reality in the Compact. Pohnpei and  
26 Chuuk voted against the Compact because the  
27 people were desirous of a truly nuclear-free Pac-  
28 ific, free from any form of nuclear weaponry.<sup>2</sup>

29  
30 On May 24, 1984, then Ambassador to Micronesia,  
31 Fred Zeder, testified to the U.S. Senate Committee  
32 on Energy and Natural Resources that U.S. grants  
33 and services, which cannot be matched from other  
34 sources, would ensure that Micronesia would not  
35 be able to break free until the U.S. chooses to cut  
36 the knot of dependency.<sup>3</sup> A paper was developed  
37 by Glenn Alcalay of Rutgers University in 1986  
38 entitled "From Subsistence to USDA: Strategic  
39 Economic Dependence in Micronesia."<sup>4</sup>

40  
41 The military thinking behind keeping the FSM and  
42 the RMI economically dependent on the U.S. is  
43 clearly seen to benefit U.S. security interests. The  
44 U.S. is separated from Russia and China by the  
45 Pacific Ocean and the islands of Micronesia. The  
46 forward bases of Micronesia were also intended to  
47 draw fire away from the U.S. mainland, protecting  
48 it like "pawns in front of the king on a chessboard"<sup>5</sup>  
49 in the event of war.

50  
51 Since the FSM does not have a key base like  
52 Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands, it has fewer bar-  
53 gaining chips in Compact renegotiations. Under the  
54 present Compact, citizens of the FSM and the RMI  
55 can enter the U.S. readily without going through  
56 the usual immigration and naturalization processes.  
57 However, because the word "nonimmigrant" is  
58 used to describe the presence of FSM and RMI  
59 citizens in the U.S., the U.S. Attorney General's  
office has chosen to interpret the word nonimmigrant as meaning not eligible for federal housing

and food stamp subsidies. Therefore, FSM and RMI citizens are forced to pay market rents in public housing so that many families are forced to pay approximately 50-60 percent of their gross income to live in public housing units. Furthermore, Micronesians are not eligible for Section 8 housing subsidies. Just recently, FSM residents in Hawaii were sent letters by the Hawaii Dept. of Human Services stating that effective November 1, 2000, food stamps would be eliminated for Micronesian children who were not born in the U.S. This action was taken despite the fact that FSM citizens are not deemed to be illegal residents in the U.S. And because the FSM has fewer bargaining chips than the Marshall Islands, U.S. negotiators are putting pressure on FSM negotiators to accept smaller compensation packages and to put the issue of unrestricted entry into the U.S. on the bargaining table, despite the fact that the access issue is not on the formal Compact negotiations agenda (i.e., not legally on the table). If unrestricted access to the U.S. is terminated for FSM citizens, the effects would be disastrous in the FSM. Everything from remittances to education to commercial ties could be hurt.<sup>6</sup>

### B. Justice for Federated States of Micronesia

On April 18, 1962, President Kennedy signed a National Security Action Memorandum which set forth as U.S. Policy the movement of Micronesia into a permanent relationship with the U.S. within our political framework.<sup>7</sup> In order to implement the plan, Kennedy turned to Harvard economist Anthony Solomon, asking him to write a survey of Micronesia and to recommend how best to proceed. Solomon's commission visited the islands of Micronesia during the summer of 1963, and the Solomon Report, as it is known, was issued in October of the same year. The Solomon Report was immediately classified and has remained so ever since with only a sanitized version being made available to the public. The Report called for achieving minimum but satisfactory social standards. Solomon recommended a quick injection of cash and then a plebiscite before the results of the aid faded, in effect, aid was to be used to buy votes—and once success was ensured, aid would be abruptly terminated. At the same time, "Washington should facilitate the general development of . . . loyalties to the U.S."<sup>8</sup> That was to be done by bringing leaders to the U.S., introducing a U.S.-oriented curriculum and patriotic rituals into the school system, and increasing college scholarships for Micronesians to study in the U.S. He also urged the launching of a massive Peace Corps program in Micronesia. At one point, there was almost one Peace Corps volunteer for every one hundred Micronesians.<sup>9</sup> Justice for the FSM, therefore, calls for overturning the U.S. imperialism inherent in the Solomon Report.

It is clear to see that the negotiations presently going on between the FSM and the U.S. are not on a level playing field. Because of forty years of official colonization and fifteen years of unofficial colonization

1 through strategic economic dependency, citizens  
2 of the FSM are being told not to rock the boat,  
3 especially during this sensitive period when the  
4 Compact is being renegotiated. FSM citizens re-  
5 siding in Hawaii have expressed frustration that  
6 their own government will not support them in their  
7 struggle to be considered qualified legal residents  
8 in the U.S. and thereby eligible for the federal food  
9 stamp program and for federal housing subsidies.  
10 FSM residents in the U.S. feel that they are being  
11 sold down the river because the U.S. negotiators  
12 have an unfair advantage at the Compact table over  
13 FSM negotiators. To further strengthen the U.S.  
14 position at the bargaining table, the U.S. has re-  
15 cently audited FSM expenditures of Compact mon-  
16 ies and raised questions about corruption by FSM  
17 government officials in Pohnpei and Chuuk.

18  
19 Victims of U.S. colonization need to be supported  
20 by people of good will in the U.S. who understand  
21 the long-term psychological and economic effects  
22 of colonization.  
23

### 24 C. Republic of the Marshall Islands

25 During numerous hearings before the U.S. House  
26 Resources Committee (previously known as the  
27 Department of Interior), the RMI has brought  
28 Marshallese citizens to testify about the horrors,  
29 the pains, and the sufferings the people endured as  
30 a result of their exposure to radiation from U.S.  
31 weapons-testing. Marshall Islanders also have tes-  
32 tified to the continuing suffering and near-geno-  
33 cide of the people through their exposure to radi-  
34 ation and subsequent dislocation from their home-  
35 lands. Public Law 99-239 in the Compact of  
36 Free Association was the first attempt by the U.S.  
37 government to accept responsibility for “. . .  
38 compensation owing to citizens of the Marshall  
39 Islands . . . for loss or damage to property and per-  
40 son . . . resulting from the nuclear testing program  
41 which the Government of the United States con-  
42 ducted . . .” (Section 177[a] of the Compact). The  
43 U.S. Government also accepted responsibility and  
44 liability for the consequences of all of the tests—  
45 sixty-seven (67) in all—conducted from June 30,  
46 1946 to August 18, 1958.<sup>10</sup>

47  
48 The United States took over the Marshall Islands  
49 from Japan in one of the bloodiest Pacific cam-  
50 paigns of World War II and then governed the re-  
51 gion until 1986 as part of a U.N. trusteeship agree-  
52 ment. In 1946, the people of Bikini and Enewetak  
53 atolls were evacuated to make way for a series of  
54 nuclear tests. The people of the two atolls were  
55 told they could return within a few years, once the  
56 testing was completed. The people of Bikini were  
57 told by a U.S. military officer in 1946 that their  
58 atoll was needed for a project “for the benefit of  
59 all mankind.”<sup>11</sup> The Marshallese people would  
never have consented to the testing if the truth had  
been known or told to them. After the tests on Bi-

kini and Enewetak, the bombs grew larger and more  
destructive, culminating in the 1954 hydrogen bomb  
test that rained fallout on the people of Rongelap and  
other neighboring atolls. The bomb, known as Bravo,  
was 750 times more powerful than the atomic bomb  
dropped on Hiroshima. The 15 megaton blast vapor-  
ized the test island, eradicated parts of two adjacent  
islets, and created a mile wide crater. Recently declass-  
ified documents show that U.S. officials were aware  
72 hours before the Bravo test that the winds in the  
area were shifting and that if the test was carried out,  
radiation would fall on Rongelap and other atolls down-  
wind from the test site.<sup>12</sup> The military went ahead with  
the test, knowing that human beings in the downwind  
atolls would suffer radiation poisoning. In addition, the  
food source for the people would be irradiated—no  
one knew for how long and to what extent. Thus, the  
declassified documents indicate the willingness of U.S.  
officials to knowingly put at risk the lives of thousands  
of men, women, and children—not just in 1954 when  
Bravo was detonated, but for many generations to  
come. This callous disregard for human life and for all  
habitat in the region is a U.S. legacy which all Chris-  
tians are called to address.

Were the Marshallese people being used as guinea pigs  
to study the long-term effects of radiation poisoning?  
The declassified documents point in that direction. In  
1956, Dr. G. Failla, chair of the Atomic Energy Com-  
mission (AEC) Advisory Committee on Biology and  
Medicine, wrote to AEC head Lewis Strauss: “The  
Advisory Committee hopes that conditions will per-  
mit an early accomplishment of the plan to return the  
Rongelap people. The Committee is also of the opin-  
ion that here is the opportunity for a useful genetic study  
of the effects on these people.” Three years later, Dr.  
C. L. Dunham, head of the AEC’s Division of Biology  
and Medicine, reiterated the AEC’s interest. Studying  
the Rongelap victims of the Bravo blast will, he wrote,  
“. . . contribute to estimates of long-term hazards to  
human beings and to an evaluation of the recovery pe-  
riod following a single nuclear detonation.”<sup>13</sup> Having  
established the near-perfect long-term human radiation  
experiment in 1954, the Department of Energy still  
continues to compile data from their Marshallese sub-  
jects. On February 24, 1994, Rep. George Miller (D-  
Calif.), chair of the House Committee on Natural Re-  
sources, convened a hearing on Bravo. Recalling  
weather data that demonstrated prior knowledge that  
islanders would receive substantial fallout, Rep. Miller  
declared that “We have deliberately kept that informa-  
tion from the Marshallese. That clearly constitutes a  
cover-up.”<sup>14</sup>

Christians and peace activists throughout the world  
have long acknowledged the devastation of the atomic  
bomb dropped on Hiroshima during World War II.  
However, most U.S. citizens have not been told the  
story of the 67 atomic bombs detonated in the Marshall  
Islands and the devastation still continuing to the more  
than 60,000 people living on its 29 islands in the year

1 2001. According to Dr. Neal Palafox, who heads a  
2 team of doctors who monitor the health of resi-  
3 dents in the Marshall Islands on an annual basis,  
4 “the radiation from the testing equaled about 7,000  
5 atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima.”<sup>15</sup> Dr.  
6 Palafox goes on to state that the cancer originated  
7 from the testing has reached alarming levels. He  
8 concluded that the cancer rates—alarming as they  
9 are—at the same time are probably underestimates  
10 of the true cancer incidence rates.<sup>16</sup> Dr. Palafox’s  
11 study provides the first comprehensive data analy-  
12 sis on the incidence rates for certain cancers in the  
13 RMI.

14  
15 How did radiation affect women’s reproductive sys-  
16 tems? Some women who became pregnant in the  
17 years following Bravo found they suffered an un-  
18 expectedly high number of miscarriages and se-  
19 verely deformed babies, often referred to as “jel-  
20 lyfish babies.” Katherine Jilej, a midwife and a  
21 grandmother, stated: “We are very angry at the U.S.  
22 and I’ll tell you why. Have you ever seen a jelly-  
23 fish baby born looking like a bunch of grapes, so  
24 the only reason we knew it was a baby was be-  
25 cause we could see the brain? We’ve had these  
26 babies—they died soon after they were born. Our  
27 first baby was born in October 1960, after the bomb,  
28 when we’d returned to Rongelap. He was born with  
29 a big lump on his head and died very, very young.  
30 All the food we were eating was irradiated but we  
31 didn’t know. I wasn’t even on Rongelap the day  
32 the test happened but I went back there in 1957  
33 and I was irradiated from eating the food. I think  
34 that’s why my son died.”<sup>17</sup>

35  
36 For many years, the U.S. Department of Energy  
37 contracted with Brookhaven National Laboratory  
38 to be the sole agency to study the health of Marshall  
39 Islanders following exposure to radiation. More re-  
40 cently, there has been a request by the Marshallese  
41 people for independent studies conducted by health  
42 experts from countries outside of the United States.  
43 Studies conducted by Brookhaven have been seen  
44 by the people as suspect and inadequate. When  
45 people were moved back to Rongelap prematurely  
46 in July 1957, Brookhaven National Laboratory sci-  
47 entists reported: “Even though the radioactive con-  
48 tamination of Rongelap Island is considered per-  
49 fectly safe for human habitation, the levels of ac-  
50 tivity are higher than those found in other inhab-  
51 ited locations in the world. The habitation of these  
52 people on the island will afford most valuable eco-  
53 logical radiation data on human beings.”<sup>18</sup>

#### 54 55 **D. Justice for Marshall Islanders**

56 The U.S. government has not played fair in the  
57 compensation paid to the Marshallese peoples, nor  
58 in the information given to the affected communi-  
59 ties. This came to light when people of Bikini were  
told that it was safe to return to Bikini. Experts

demonstrated how radiation levels could be lowered  
to scientifically-acceptable levels—an annual exposure  
of 100 millirems per person—as long as people avoided  
eating large amounts of local food. While Bikinians  
were told that 100 millirems per person was safe, the  
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had quietly  
adopted a 15 millirem standard for the resettlement  
of radiologically contaminated sites in the United States.<sup>19</sup>  
This 15 millirem standard has recently been adopted  
for the Marshall Islands, but only after the attorney for  
Enewetak Atoll, Davor Pevec, found out about the EPA  
standard for U.S. residents. This double standard is also  
seen in the compensation levels. While Congress has  
spent \$12 billion in Hanford, California, without even  
putting a shovel in the ground for environmental  
cleanup there, the island of Bikini has only received  
\$90 million thus far from the United States for  
cleanup.<sup>20</sup>

Recently declassified U.S. nuclear test studies show  
that 22 atolls (no longer just the four atolls mentioned  
for compensation in the Compact: Rongelap, Enewetak,  
Utrik, and Bikini) received nuclear test fallout above  
maximum permissible safety levels.<sup>21</sup> This information  
was not provided to Marshall Islands negotiators when  
the Compact of Free Association, with its \$150 mil-  
lion nuclear compensation to survivors, was agreed  
upon in 1983. While greater compensation was given  
to American citizens living downwind of the Nevada  
Test Site as a one-time lump sum, amounting to a bil-  
lion dollars, the \$150 million was not adequate to cover  
the claims filed by the victims of radiation poisoning  
in the RMI—approximately \$7 billion dollars of com-  
pensation claims are still languishing in the U.S. courts  
today<sup>22</sup> and most victims who have been compensated  
have been compensated only partially and in small  
monthly payments. Fully one third of the 1,574  
Marshall Islands recipients of nuclear test awards have  
died without receiving full compensation.<sup>23</sup>

The Marshall Island government is asking, in the re-  
negotiation of the Compact of Free Association, an  
additional \$2.7 billion for damage caused by Ameri-  
can nuclear testing. When seen in the light of \$12 bil-  
lion for Hanford (just for environmental cleanup), the  
amount being requested by RMI is very modest. No  
amount of money will ever compensate for the suffer-  
ing of the Marshallese people; however, an amount  
equivalent to or more than the \$12 billion spent on  
cleanup at Hanford would be more just.

The U.S. is now trying to stop lawsuits arising out of  
the irradiation of the Marshallese from being heard in  
court. The Compact of Free Association contains an  
espousal clause, stipulating that the U.S. has paid a  
lump sum of \$150 million for damages and from now  
on all responsibility falls on the shoulders of RMI. This  
unjust clause in the Compact must be overturned in  
the light of classified information that was not made  
available to RMI negotiators at the time the Compact  
was being negotiated and which now reveals the real

1 extent of the testing and the fact that Marshall Is-  
2 landers were knowingly put at risk during the Bravo  
3 test.

#### 5 **E. The Church and the Pacific Islanders of** 6 **Micronesia**

7 The United Church of Christ has a historic minist-  
8 rity to Pacific Islanders and the people of  
9 Micronesia. It began in 1852 when missionaries  
10 from the American Board of Commissioners for  
11 Foreign Mission (ABCFM) headquartered in Ho-  
12 nolulu and Hawaiian missionaries were sent to  
13 Micronesia to spread the Gospel to the inhabitants  
14 of these remote islands and convert them to Chris-  
15 tianity.

16  
17 The Missionaries first landed on the island of  
18 Kosrae where they established a station. As the  
19 Kosraens became more God-fearing people, the  
20 missionaries began reaching out to the other  
21 Micronesian islands of Kiribati, Phonpei, Chuuk,  
22 and the Marshall Islands. However, Kosrae re-  
23 mained the home-base of operation.

24  
25 A mission training school was established on Mwot,  
26 Kosrae, to train men and women in church minist-  
27 rity. Pupils were recruited from different islands and  
28 sent to this school to study and prepare for minist-  
29 terial duties. At the completion of a four-year train-  
30 ing session, they returned home full-fledged, or-  
31 dained ministers and, if so selected, were assigned  
32 to nurture new churches in villages, districts, and  
33 different atolls.

34  
35 During the period prior to the breakout of World  
36 War II in the Pacific, the Congregational Church  
37 in Micronesia, as it was then known, was one of  
38 the only two major denominations in Micronesia,  
39 and it garnered a larger membership. That was a  
40 time when the church was very productive and quite  
41 influential in the islands. The church was the cen-  
42 ter of every community daily activity. The  
43 Micronesians were always dedicated and faithful  
44 members of the church. They were taught to be  
45 good Christians by practicing the Golden Rule.

46  
47 As the war broke, the American Board of Com-  
48 missioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) re-  
49 called its overseas missionaries. All of them re-  
50 turned to the United States with the exception of  
51 one, the Rev. Carl Heine. The departure of the mis-  
52 sionaries also brought the closure of the mission  
53 training school on Mwot, and it created autonomy  
54 for each of the Micronesian island churches.

55  
56 Presently, there are many other denominations that  
57 were sent to the region of Micronesia and which  
58 have since established strong ties and influence in  
59 the communities. However, the denomination that  
the missionaries first started in the islands, at  
present known as the United Church of Christ, still

has its individual churches in each district on Chuuk,  
Kosrae, and Phonpei of the FSM. The United Church  
of Christ is still the major denomination in the Marshall  
Islands with at least one church on each atoll and two  
or three on the major islands.

After World War II, the administration of these Pacific  
Islands shifted from the regime of the Japanese Impe-  
rial Army to the protection of the U.S. Navy and after-  
wards to the Department of the Interior. Under this pro-  
tection, Bikini and Enewetak atolls in the Marshall Is-  
lands were used as nuclear testing sites of 67 atomic  
bombs.

Fifteen years ago, under separate agreements, these  
Pacific Islands of Micronesia negotiated their Com-  
pacts of Free Association with the U.S., which created  
the independent countries of the FSM and the RMI.  
The compacts allow for free entry (immigration) of  
FSM and RMI people into the United States to live,  
find employment, attend schools, receive better medi-  
cal care, and better themselves.

As one of the newest immigrant groups to Hawaii and  
the rest of U.S., Pacific Islanders daily face numerous  
difficulties socially and economically. Many of these  
difficulties must be addressed by our church and people  
of conscience. The need to establish places of worship  
so Pacific Islanders can worship in their respective lan-  
guages is one priority. The UCC needs to renew and  
strengthen its commitment to the Pacific Islanders in  
its new church starts and assist in providing training in  
the new setting.

Over the years, with assistance from the Hawaii Con-  
ference UCC, some Micronesian ministries on differ-  
ent islands of Hawaii were started. At present there are  
eight Chuukese ministries, two Kosraens, three  
Marshallese, and a new Pohnpeian ministry. This new  
church, with its newly assigned pastor, will begin its  
ministry this November on Maui.

In his June address, the FSM Consul General reported  
that there are 12,000 people from the FSM who reside  
in Hawaii. There are at least 2,000 Marshallese accord-  
ing to another source.

The Micronesian population is greater in the continen-  
tal United States than in Hawaii, yet there are only five  
Marshallese Ministries throughout the continental  
United States. There is one Chuukese ministry in Port-  
land, Oregon, and one called the Micronesian Outreach  
Ministry of the U.S., based in San Diego and started  
by Pacific Islander seminarians to address this lack of  
island churches and ministries. Thus, the national set-  
ting of the UCC needs to make concerted efforts to  
address the needs of Micronesians and other Pacific  
Islander groups in the United States and offer assis-  
tance as they try to establish and supply their own pas-  
tors.

1 As in similar cases with other ethnic minority  
2 groups who have immigrated to the United States,  
3 the Marshallese and the citizens of the Federated  
4 States of Micronesia have come to the United States  
5 to seek better schooling for their children, better  
6 employment opportunities, and currently advanced  
7 medical services. Under a separate Compact of Free  
8 Association treaty with the U.S. Government, the  
9 Micronesians are free to enter, seek employment,  
10 live anywhere, and enlist in the Armed Forces in  
11 the U.S.

### 12 13 **III. BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND** 14 **ETHICAL RATIONALE** 15

16 “I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot.  
17 I wish that you were either cold or hot! So, be-  
18 cause you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot,  
19 I am about to spit you out of my mouth. For you  
20 say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and I need noth-  
21 ing.’ You do not realize that you are wretched, piti-  
22 able, poor, blind, and naked. Therefore I counsel  
23 you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that  
24 you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you  
25 and to keep the shame of your nakedness from be-  
26 ing seen, and salve to anoint your eyes so that you  
27 may see. I reprove and discipline those whom I  
28 love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. Listen! I  
29 am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my  
30 voice and open the door, I will come in to you and  
31 eat with you, and you with me. To the one who  
32 conquers I will give a place with me on my throne,  
33 just as I myself conquered and sat down with my  
34 Father on his throne. Let anyone who has an ear  
35 listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches”  
36 (Rev. 3:15–22, NRSV).  
37

38 The Prophet Amos says, “Let Justice roll down like  
39 waters, and righteousness like an everflowing  
40 stream.” It is just one of the forty pairings of righ-  
41 teousness and justice that are found in the Hebrew  
42 Bible.<sup>24</sup>  
43

44 God expected rulers to rule righteously and justly.  
45 Those in positions of power were expected to care  
46 for those least able to care for themselves. Wicked  
47 rulers did not care to keep harmony among the  
48 people and exploited the weak. Henry Kissinger is  
49 quoted in 1969 to have said, “There are only 90,000  
50 people out there. Who gives a damn?”<sup>25</sup>  
51

52 Since the Commission for Racial Justice was the  
53 originator of environmental justice and linked the  
54 dumping of toxic waste with people of color, the  
55 United Church of Christ, in all its settings, must  
56 take seriously the issues of justice and righteous-  
57 ness in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and  
58 the Federated States of Micronesia. The United  
59 Church of Christ, in seeking environmental jus-  
60 tice, must advocate for restoring these nations to  
61 justice.

Micah 6:8 says, “What does the Lord require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk  
humbly with your God?” The radiation from nuclear  
and atomic testing still affects Marshallese daughters.  
Like the Canaanite woman in the Gospel according to  
Matthew, these daughters are asking for healing. The  
United Church of Christ, in all its settings, must be  
party to the healing of the brothers and sisters in the  
Marshall Islands.

Jesus says, “Just as you did it to one of the least of  
these who are members of my family, you did it to  
me” (Matt. 25:40 NRSV). For more than 150 years,  
the United Church of Christ, through its antecedent  
bodies, has been in Micronesia. The American Board  
for Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent mission-  
aries, some of them indigenous Hawaiians, to spread  
the Gospel in Micronesia. In more recent history, the  
United Church Board for World Ministries and the  
Common Global Ministries Board have sent mission-  
aries to Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. But the  
people of the United Church of Christ have lost any  
knowledge of the people or the churches that are in the  
Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated  
States of Micronesia. Many of these people are still  
victimized by warheads of spent uranium which landed  
a mere five miles from their homes.

### 62 63 **IV. STATEMENT OF CHRISTIAN CONVIC-** 64 **TION**

The God of the Holy Bible requires of us to do justice,  
and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our  
God. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, was moved by the re-  
sponse of the Canaanite woman who argued for him to  
help her daughter severely possessed by a demon. The  
radiation from nuclear and atomic testing, that even  
today squeezes the life from Marshallese daughters, is  
a demon that needs to be addressed. Christians in  
churches in the U.S. are being asked to help heal their  
brothers and sisters in the Marshall Islands, many of  
whom are Christian and members of the United Church  
of Christ in the Marshall Islands. It is incumbent upon  
the United Church of Christ, in all its settings, to be-  
come aware of the injustice that still prevails, to work  
toward the restoration of justice, and to stand in soli-  
darity with those who suffer in the Marshall Islands  
and in Micronesia.

As the United Church of Christ seeks to live in faithful  
solidarity with our Micronesian sisters and brothers in  
Christ, we confess our silent complicity as United  
States’ citizens in perpetrating nuclear poisoning and  
economic exploitation of the people and environment  
of Micronesia. We extend our heartfelt and formal  
apologies for these sins and ask for forgiveness from  
our Micronesian sisters and brothers and from God.  
By making this confession, we pray that the blinders  
will be removed from our eyes and our silent complicity  
transformed into empowered discipleship through  
this Pronouncement.

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## A PROPOSAL FOR ACTION ON A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST MINISTRY AND WITNESS WITH MICRONESIANS

### I. SUMMARY

This Proposal for Action outlines ways in which all the ministries of the United Church of Christ may assist in restoring justice and righteousness to the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) in developing new Micronesian Ministries and assisting their communities as they make the transition into their new homelands in Hawaii and the United States of America.

### II. BACKGROUND STATEMENT

This Proposal for Action is based upon the Pronouncement on a United Church of Christ Ministry and Witness with Micronesians. The Pronouncement presents a policy statement for the United Church of Christ's work with Micronesians, specifically people of the RMI and FSM. This Proposal for Action provides for the program directions, mechanisms for implementation, and funding.

### III. IMPLEMENTATION: DIRECTIONAL STATEMENTS AND GOALS

The Twenty-third General Synod gives the responsibility for the implementation of the Proposal for Action to the Pacific Islander and Asian American Implementation Committee.

For the purposes of implementing the United Church of Christ Ministry with Micronesians, the Twenty-third General Synod:

Calls on the Wider Church Ministries (WCM) (including the Common Global Ministries with the Disciples of Christ) and the Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to plan joint strategies for restoring justice and righteousness to the people of the RMI and FSM. WCM and JWM will work with the partner United Church of Christ churches in the RMI and FSM, the Hawaii Con-

1   ference UCC, with PAAM, and North American  
2   Pacific and Asian Disciples (NAPAD). Included  
3   in these strategies would be ways to pressure the  
4   U.S. President, the U.S. Congress, and the related  
5   agencies of the U.S. government to provide a more  
6   just compensation for the Marshallese people af-  
7   fected by the nuclear and atomic radiation caused  
8   by 67 tests.

9  
10   Calls on the WCM and the JWM to petition the  
11   U.S. Government to justly compensate the FSM  
12   and the RMI for the cost of strategic economic  
13   dependency over the years.

14  
15   Calls upon the WCM and JWM to collaborate with  
16   the United Methodist Church and other interested  
17   denominations to monitor the progress of the U.S.  
18   formal apology to the Marshall Islanders for per-  
19   sonal injury and property damage from nuclear and  
20   atomic tests. The United Methodist Church, at its  
21   General Conference in April 2000, passed the reso-  
22   lution “Marshall Islands: U.S. Accountability,”  
23   similar to the UCC Resolution which was unani-  
24   mously passed with one abstention at General  
25   Synod 22 in Rhode Island.<sup>1</sup>

26  
27   Requests the Local Church Ministries (LCM) to  
28   monitor the status of people from the RMI and FSM  
29   living in Hawaii and elsewhere in the United States  
30   and to find ways and identify programs to help  
31   Micronesians as they make adjustments in their  
32   new homeland.

33  
34   Requests that JWM in cooperation with partner  
35   churches work together to advocate for health care  
36   for survivors.

37  
38   Requests the LCM and JWM, in cooperation with  
39   the Hawaii Conference UCC, to identify members  
40   who will begin a dialog with appropriate federal  
41   agencies to define citizens of the FSM and RMI as  
42   “qualified nonimmigrants” in order to be eligible  
43   for food stamps and housing subsidies. These ben-  
44   efits are being terminated and denied to them due  
45   to different classification.

46  
47   Calls on the United Church of Christ to plan and  
48   implement a delegation from the United Church  
49   of Christ in the Marshall Islands and radiation sur-  
50   vivors to travel to Washington, D.C., to lobby for  
51   more compensation. As part of this lobbying ac-  
52   tion, the LCM and JWM will jointly attempt to  
53   gather all UCC, Christian Church (Disciples of  
54   Christ), United Methodist, and other Christian  
55   Congress people and/or their senior staff to hear a  
56   presentation from this delegation.<sup>2</sup>

57  
58   Requests that the LCM develop a proactive,  
59   multiyear program for strengthening existing UCC  
Pacific Islander local churches and starting new  
churches among the fast growing Pacific Islander  
American populations.

Requests that the LCM, in consultation with PAAM,  
develop a comprehensive program for strengthening  
the educational ministries for lifelong learning in the  
varied settings of local churches and conferences. This  
program should place special emphasis on Pacific Is-  
lander histories and cultures and focus upon such ar-  
eas as ministerial leadership recruitment and training  
and youth and young adult ministries.

Calls on the LCM to assist in the hiring and placement  
of Micronesian pastors who are bilingual and to de-  
velop support mechanisms for Pacific Islander  
churches.

Calls on the Office of General Minister and President  
to monitor the progress of this Proposal for Action  
through the Minister for Pacific Islander/Asian Ameri-  
can Relations.

Urges all bodies in the United Church of Christ to con-  
sult with members of PAAM to secure Pacific Islander  
perspectives when making decisions which concern Pa-  
cific Islanders as well as the whole Church. Subject to  
the availability of funds.

#### References

1. United Methodist Church resolution, “Marshall Islands: U.S. Accountability,” passed at its General Assembly in April 2000.
2. *In Register Citizen Opinion 2001: A Congressional Directory and Action Guide*, First Session/107th Congress, published by The Episcopal Church, Office of Government Relations, the following religious affiliations are listed: Disciples of Christ—2; Congress people, United Church of Christ—8; Congress people, United Methodist—65; Congress people, Protestant—311; Congress people, total declared Christians—497.

#### **9. RESOLUTION: CALLING FOR MORE JUST, HUMANE DIRECTION FOR ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION**

Mr. Angel Toro (FLA) continued presentation of the work of Committee Eleven, introducing the resolution “Calling for More Just, Humane Direction for Economic Globalization.” He pointed out the changes made in committee:

page 158, line 59: change “South Korea” to “Indonesia”

page 159, line 31, first column: add “and to request and encourage that the learnings, questions and concerns surfaced in the various settings be forwarded to the appropriate bodies, and”

page 159, line 42, first column: replace “a commission of pastors, parishioners, and scholars be convened to study” with “Justice and Witness Ministries and Wider Church Ministries in cooperation with pastors,