

7. **RESOLUTION OF WITNESS IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING AID IN DYING.**

Moderator Williams called on Elliott Munn (CT) to speak on behalf of Committee 15. Elliott Munn introduced the motion, spoke to the changes the committee made and also to the motion and moved for its adoption.

MOTION FAILED: 62.24% YES; 33.38% NO; 4.37% ABSTAIN

8. **BRING DOWN THE WALL IN THE CARRIBEAN: ENDING THE UNITED STATES EMBARGO ON CUBA**

Moderator Williams called on Daniel Ross-Jones (N Cal NV) to speak on behalf of Committee 4 regarding Bringing Down the Wall in the Caribbean: Ending the United States embargo on Cuba. Daniel Ross-Jones thanked the Committee for its hard work and indicated that substantial changes had been made to the amendment. After reviewing the changes and directing the General Synod to the changes, Daniel Ross-Jones moved the adoption of the Resolution as amended and then spoke to the motion.

Discussion:

Edward Davies (SC) Spoke in Favor

No further discussion

17-GS-23 VOTED: The Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution as Amended entitled Bring Down the Wall in the Caribbean: Ending the United States Embargo on Cuba.
92.87%; 3.80%; 3.27%

**BRING DOWN THE WALL IN THE CARIBBEAN:
ENDING THE UNITED STATES EMBARGO ON CUBA**

A Resolution of Witness

Text of the Motion:

Whereas, United Church of Christ (UCC) General Synods have previously urged this diplomatic renewal with resolutions in the General Synods of 1979 and 1993, and the General Council action of 1983; and

Whereas, on 10 March of this year UCC General Minister and President Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer co-signed a letter to President Barack Obama, with other Christian and Jewish leaders in the U.S., expressing support for the president's historic trip to Cuba in March 2016, for the reopening of the U.S. embassy in Havana, and for President Obama's executive actions easing some of the travel and trade restrictions; and

Whereas, respected international human rights organizations like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have long opposed the U.S. embargo of Cuba;

Whereas, every year since 1992 the United Nations General Assembly has overwhelmingly condemned the U.S. embargo of Cuba; and

Whereas, recent polling indicates that 73 percent of all U.S. citizens (including 59 percent of Republicans) favor ending the embargo; and

Whereas, 53 percent of Cuban Americans, traditionally the Cuban government's most fervent critics, now favor ending the embargo, with only 31 percent wanting it continued; and

Whereas, the governments of the United States and Cuba have resumed formal diplomatic relations; President Obama has become the first sitting U.S. chief executive to visit Cuba in more than 80 years, and has used his constitutionally authorized executive prerogative to ease some trade and travel restrictions; and

Whereas, members of congregations belonging to the United Church of Christ in recent years have initiated people-to-people connections between Christians here and in Cuba, resuming a legacy of border crossings led by Rev. Theodore Braun, a longtime UCC pastor who, beginning in 1979, led 40 delegations of Christians from the U.S. for meetings with their sisters and brothers in Cuba;

Therefore, be it Resolved, that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ give thanks to God for the progress made since 2015 by the governments of Cuba and the United States toward demonstrating love of neighbor through the normalizing of diplomatic and economic relations; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ support the initiatives of United Church of Christ congregations and others in developing friendships across the divide separating our countries, encourage additional delegations from our churches to visit Cuba, and invite and host Cuban clergy and lay leaders as our guests, in order to strengthen our bond as the body of Christ and mutually encourage one another to pursue reconciliation and justice between both countries leading to new policies; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ continue to advocate for further United States administrative actions and congressional legislation in order to secure the full normalization of relations between our two countries, including but not limited to the consideration and passage of legislation that lifts travel and trade restrictions currently in place; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ heartily supports honest and respectful negotiation between our governments to end the embargo, to restore mutual dignity, and to resolve political differences; and

Be it Finally Resolved, that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourage every setting of the United Church of Christ to further educate on the history of Cuba, of United States-Cuba relations, and the life of the church in Cuba, to attend to the testimony of our Cuban neighbors, and to glean wisdom and insight from those who have lived and ministered without access to social privilege for many years. May we be evangelized anew as their story, their determination, and their faithfulness remind us that the authority of the church is not assumed through social privilege, but is granted under the Spirit's direction. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord" (Zechariah 4:6).

Funding

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

Implementation

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

9. RECOGNITION OF NEW AND RETIRING CONFERENCE MINISTERS

Moderator Elect Williams indicated that General Synod would recognize new and retiring Conference Ministers

Recently retired:

Walter John Boris from the Central Pacific Conference

Complete ministries before the next General Synod:

Charles Buck – Hawaii Conference

Alan Miller – Penn NE Conference

Roddy Dunkerson – Nebraska Conference

Rich Pleva – Iowa Conference

Moderator Artt gave particular attention to absence of John Deckenback, Central Atlantic Conference, whose untimely death last year is still keenly felt by the entire CCM.

Assistant Moderator Williams gave recognition to the following newly serving as settled Conference Ministers since Synod last met:

Csaba Krasznai – Calvin Synod

Ginny Brown Daniel – Missouri Mid-South Conference

Edith Guffey – Kansas Oklahoma Conference

Monica Dawkins-Smith – Penn Central Conference

Sue Artt – Rocky Mountain Conference

Don Longbottom – South Central Conference

Bill Lyons – Southwest Conference

And finally, recognition to those individuals whose service in our midst is temporary, but who are esteemed as full colleagues during their time serving in this role:

Marie Bacchiocchi – Southeast Conference

Chad Abbott – Indiana-Kentucky Conference

Denise Mason-Bullitt – Central Atlantic Conference

John Gantt – Ohio Conference

Shana Johnson – Illinois South Conference

Molly Carlson - Central Pacific Conference

Jim Anton – retiring next year

Lese Tu uao – Interim in Hawaii

Bonnie Bates - Interim