

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the U. S. Congress and state legislatures to pass legislation that would address social determinants of health, such as The Anti-Racism in Public Health Act, which would create a “Center on Anti-Racism in Health” at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and to establish a “Law Enforcement Violence Prevention Program” at the CDC.

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

22. A RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT (2015-2024)

Moderator Lowes indicated the next item of business is a resolution coming directly to the floor, submitted by the New Hampshire Conference and the Southwest Conference, entitled A Resolution to Recognize the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024). It is a Resolution of Witness and requires a 2/3 vote for adoption. Yvette Wynn moved that the Thirty-third General Synod adopt the resolution recommended its approval. Yvette yielded her time to speak to the motion to Harriet Ward and Andrew Ponder Williams, proponents of the resolution.

21-GS-13 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice to Harriet Ward and Andrew Ponder Williams to speak to the motion by consensus.

Discussion:

Haley Hudler (Southern New England Conference) offered a friendly amendment to correct grammar which Moderator Lowes accepted.

21-GS-14 VOTED: The Thirty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution to Recognize the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024).

MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 483 Yes; 13 No; 16 Abstain)

A RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT (2015-2024)

A Resolution of Witness

TEXT OF THE MOTION

WHEREAS the human rights of African descendant people globally and in the United States continue to be challenged by the presence of racism and the legacy of whiteness, and

WHEREAS a myriad of social issues are byproducts of the racial inequities stemming from prejudice, bigotry, White privilege, White fragility, and White supremacy, and

WHEREAS the numbers of incarcerated people of African descent in the Americas continues to grow, and

WHEREAS disparities in healthcare, housing, education, the plight of women and girls, and a myriad of interconnected issues point to the need for addressing racism and calling attention to the need to protect the human rights of African descendant people.

WHEREAS in many countries, while African descendant people attained civil rights, the human rights guaranteed under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly continue to be elusive, and

WHEREAS data show that police have continued killing Black men and women at disproportionate rates, even after the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor sparked international protests against racism and police brutality, with a total of 164 Black men and women who were killed by police from January 1 to August 31, 2020, and

WHEREAS in June of 2020 four black men, Malcolm Harsch, Robert Fuller, Dominique Alexander, and an unidentified Black teenager were found hanged to death, all reported by authorities to have committed suicide, a claim disputed by their family members and many other people, and

WHEREAS the Bible and Christian theology affirm *imago dei* – that all people are created in the image of God; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has consistently shown leadership in advocacy and for the rights of African descendant people in the United States and globally; and

WHEREAS the United Nations declaration of the Decade calls for the promotion and protection of the rights of people of African descent; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ passed several resolutions that address the unfair treatment of people of African descent, that call for legislation and action to address injustices perpetuated against African descendant people and continues to decry the systems that support and perpetuate white privilege and white supremacy as tools that produce racism and racial inequality;

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ continues to advocate for the dismantling of racism and racist institutions through education and policy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015 - 2024);

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to increase awareness of the United Nations Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) and work ecumenically to promote the Decade;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to utilize this Decade to intentionally address the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to adopt the Decade themes of recognition, justice and development as frameworks for its advocacy, commitments and engagement in the fight for the rights of People of African Descent.

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

23. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Moderator Lowes called on Yvette Wynn, John Dorhauer and Cameron Barr to share an update on Strategic Priorities.

Yvette Wynn, John Dorhauer and Cameron Barr presented the priorities in a pre-recorded video.

24. NOMINATION AND SPEECH OF AGM CANDIDATE

Moderator Lowes invited Davida Foy Crabtree, retired Conference Minister, to introduce Traci Blackmon.

Davida Foy Crabtree gave the nominating speech for Traci Blackmon indicating support for Traci's candidacy in continued leadership as Associate General Minister for Local Church Ministries and for Justice and Witness Ministries. Davida indicated that Traci embodies the following virtues: closeness to God, which is authentic and real; the integrity of life; and the courage to lead.

Traci Blackmon accepted the nomination and indicated her desire is to continue to serve God and the church through her role as Associate General Minister in the United Church of Christ, giving her best to whatever task is placed before her. Traci promised to ask what is God up to in every place the UCC is found...and doing all to make certain WE show up to be involved in whatever God is up to...wherever WE are found.

Moderator Lowes declared that the nomination of Traci Blackmon was now before the Thirty-third General Synod and that the election would be held at the plenary on July 18.

25. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moderator Lowes invited Karen Georgia Thompson to offer some closing remarks and announcements and introduce our Theological Reflection.