

III, FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 2, 1965

The Friday afternoon, July 2, session of the Fifth General Synod was called to order at 2:00 P.M. by the Moderator.

1. Preliminary Budget Committee Report

After an introductory statement by Rev. Harry W. Bredeweg, Chairman of the Budget Committee, the preliminary report of the Budget Committee was presented by Mr. E. Ray Siler. The report is found on pages 137 to 155 of the Advance Reports. The report was received by common consent with the understanding that time had been allocated later in the deliberations for action.

2. Report of and on Commission on Christian Unity

The Moderator introduced the Rev. David G. Colwell, Chairman of the Commission on Christian Unity and Ecumenical Study and Service, at 2:20 P.M. Mr. Colwell made an oral report concerning developments to date in the work of the Consultation on Church Union.

Mr. Colwell introduced Rev. Richard T. Andrews, Scribe of the Subcommittee of the General Synod Report Committee, who presented the report. This report as finally adopted follows:

Local Ecumenicity

The Fifth General Synod desires to encourage, sustain, and facilitate the significant efforts of denominational Instrumentalities, local councils of churches, and congregations to pursue the mission of the church in local communities through ecumenical action. Where the witness of the church can be strengthened by working together, we believe that the institutional self-interest of the United Church of Christ and its member congregations is expendable. Where new forms of ministry are being shaped, we believe that the United Church of Christ and its congregations ought first to explore the possibilities of ecumenical action.

In places where denominational competitiveness obstructs the effective ministry of the church, we believe action is necessary to eliminate this barrier. Thus, we commend and encourage the efforts of the Board for Homeland Ministries through its Town and Country Department, of Conference executives, and others to find ways to provide a more adequate Christian witness in small communities by reducing the number of competing local churches. We commend and encourage the work of our denominational Instrumentalities through comity agreements and other ways to avoid the overchurching of new communities which cripples effective ministry in such areas. We encourage the leaders of the United Church of Christ to assess our own policies and to confront other denominations as persistently as possible with the challenge to abolish denominational aggrandizement in local communities. We commend the work of those councils of churches that are providing for cooperative planning of ministry and witness in both rural and metropolitan areas and urge the extension of these practices. We also heartily commend the strong efforts towards ecumenicity at all levels which are being carried forward by the Board for World Ministries.

We commend and encourage the continued financial support and leadership that members of our churches have given to the activities of local councils of churches. We desire that these councils continue to be strong agencies

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of Christian witness and ecumenical service through their provision of hospital chaplaincies, migrant ministries, religious education programs, leadership training courses, radio and television.

We believe that our congregations should bear in mind that what Christians can better do together they ought not to do separately. Thus, in the development of new ministries to vocational groups, to changing urban centers, to students, and others, we ought first to seek approaches that cross denominational lines. In training the ministries of the laity through lay academies, lay theological study, in corporate social action, and in every other way, we ought to work toward ecumenical action. We commend the many significant efforts in these regards that our congregations and other groups in the United Church of Christ have already initiated, or in which they are participating. We are particularly gratified by the formation of the United Campus Christian Fellowship.

We encourage the growth toward unity that will come from common Bible study and prayer across confessional lines; from education leading to an understanding of diverse Christian traditions, including those of Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism; from ecumenical worship services and rallies; from participation in the liturgical services of other denominations; from inter-racial services; and from all efforts that maximize the awareness of the unity in Christ that already exists.

WORLD CONFSSIONAL BODIES

The Fifth General Synod commends the ongoing work of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the International Congregational Council. Over the years these bodies have performed particularly valuable service in:

- (1) providing a first step toward wider Christian relationship to churches which are too small for membership in the World Council of Churches,
- (2) putting valuable theological studies from the Reformation context into the stream of ecumenical thought,
- (3) furnishing opportunity for searching self-examination within these families of Reformation churches and accomplishing tasks which cannot as yet be carried on elsewhere, and
- (4) fostering a tradition of religious liberty in the total ecumenical scene.

Beyond these interim tasks we are especially grateful for fresh signs of the responsiveness of these bodies to the concerns of the whole people of God. They show themselves to be sensitive to the need to play changing roles in coming years.

The General Synod finds encouragement in the fact that the World Alliance and the International Congregational Council have resolved to investigate all possible ways of coming together. The Fifth General Synod hereby resolves that the United Church of Christ continue to participate in both bodies with delegations. To that end, the General Synod expresses its hope that future gatherings of these bodies will be modest in size. It views the world-wide assemblies as important, not so much as opportunities for international experience on the part of large numbers of delegates, but as working sessions important to the ecumenical task of the churches.

Conversation with the International Convention of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) and Others

Whereas the Commission on Christian Unity and Ecumenical Study and Service under the direction of the Third and Fourth General Synods

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has held four joint sessions with a similar group of the International Convention of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) looking toward possible union of these two bodies,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fifth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, meeting in Chicago, Illinois, in July, 1965, authorizes the Executive Council to appoint a committee, composed of members from the Commission on Christian Unity and Ecumenical Study and Service, and such other delegates as the Executive Council sees fit, to participate in the formulation of a Plan of Union. This formulation is to begin at such time as the commission together with the Unity Commission of the Disciples of Christ determines that the necessary theological and ecclesiological consensus has been developed to make the effort useful. This decision shall be taken with proper consideration being given to our participation in and commitment to the Consultation on Church Union.

Such participation in the formulation of a plan of union in no way commits the United Church of Christ to union under this or any other plan. The United Church of Christ's commission does not have the authority to commit the Church to partnership in union.

The commission shall keep the United Church of Christ informed of such progress as may be achieved through regular reports to the General Synod, to the Executive Council, and through such other media as seem useful.

The Fifth General Synod continues the authorization given for conversations with the Council of Community Churches as long as they are mutually desired.

The Fifth General Synod continues authorization of exploratory conversations with the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

National Council of Churches

Mindful of the attacks being made upon the National Council of Churches in the United States of America, the Fifth General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirms the full support given to this great ecumenical instrument by the United Church of Christ—a history of support and concern begun by the churches which formed the United Church. While not attempting to assess every pronouncement, every finding, or every program of the NCCUSA, the General Synod does pledge the continuing support of the United Church of Christ to the National Council of Churches. Recognizing that the Council plays, in our generation, an indispensable role in the life of the Church of Jesus Christ in our nation and beyond our borders, the General Synod urges the members, congregations, Conferences, and Instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ to maintain and increase their support of and participation in the National Council of Churches. The General Synod further confesses its faith that the National Council of Churches is a faithful and useful instrument of the Lord Christ in the mission shared by all who carry His Name.

The Consultation on Church Union

The Fifth General Synod:

(1) encourages the promotion of the widespread use of the Reflection Book, *Where We Are in Church Union*, edited by the consultation part-time secretaries, George L. Hunt and Paul A. Crow, Jr. (copies of this book have been distributed to all U.C.C. pastors), and the widespread use of the *Digest* of the Consultation on Church Union. (The *Digest* is now available as fol-

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lows: Volumes I and II, combined, cover the Washington and Oberlin meetings. Volume III covers the Princeton meeting. Volume IV, which will be available by late summer, will cover the Lexington meeting. All background papers and findings are included in these volumes. The price is \$2 each, prepaid from Box 69, Fanwood, N.J.);

(2) urges the Division of Christian Education of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to continue its interest in the Consultation and to consider curriculum and program units jointly planned and executed with the hope that such materials may be used simultaneously in the six churches at the earliest possible time;

(3) urges *United Church Herald* and other UCC publications to prepare jointly and to publish a series of interpretative articles about church union;

(4) urges all the Instrumentalities of the UCC to consider seriously how they may interpret church union through their channels to the membership of the Church;

(5) urges the theological seminaries and colleges related to UCC to include the concerns of church union in their curricula and programs; and

(6) urges Conferences, Associations and local churches to observe Sunday, April 24, 1966, as the occasion for joint study groups, prayer for church union, and the widespread invitation to pulpit guests and/or pulpit exchanges from other participants in the Consultation.

The General Synod approves the appointment of the Rev. Paul S. Minear, the Rev. William Rest, the Rev. Edward Manthei, and the Rev. Alford Carleton as alternates to the United Church of Christ delegation on the Consultation on Church Union.

Fifth General Synod commends the UCC delegates and alternates for the leadership they have given to the Consultation on Church Union and directs them to continue their efforts to set forward the union of the Church. General Synod, while not approving or disapproving any of the specific findings of the COCU, affirms the often stated desire of the United Church of Christ for a fuller realization of the unity that is given to His Church in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Other Reports

General Synod receives the reports of:

(1) The World Council of Churches, (2) The National Council of Churches, (3) The International Congregational Council, (4) The World Alliance of Reformed Churches, with genuine appreciation of their achievements.

3. Actions on the Report on The Commission on Christian Unity

65-GS-38 VOTED: To adopt the section on World Confessional Bodies.

65-GS-39 VOTED: To adopt the section on Conversation with the International Convention of Christian Churches.

An amendment to the resolution on the National Council of Churches was submitted but defeated.

65-GS-40 VOTED: To adopt the section on the National Council of Churches.

65-GS-41 VOTED: To adopt the section on The Consultation on Church Union.

By common consent an editorial change was made in the section Other

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Reports changing the word "accepts" to "receives" so that the sentence reads, "General Synod receives the reports of."

On request of a General Synod delegate, it was

65-GS-42 VOTED: To adopt the section on "Local Ecumenicity."

4. Further Report on The Executive Council

The following items as finally adopted at this session are as follows:

1. Headquarters

The General Synod adopts the following resolution:

"WHEREAS the Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ authorized the Executive Council to establish the National Headquarters of the United Church of Christ in New York City; and

"WHEREAS the Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ urged all the Instrumentalities to locate their major executive offices at or near the National Headquarters in New York City; and

"WHEREAS the Fourth General Synod authorized the Executive Council to arrange for the signing of leases for the rental of necessary office space for a period of not more than five years; and

"WHEREAS leases of greater duration can be entered into at substantially lower annual cost; now therefore

"BE IT RESOLVED that the General Synod expresses its belief that a greater degree of coordination and an improvement in overall efficiency in the prosecution of the mission would be achieved by bringing together in one place the staffs of the various Instrumentalities; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all Instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ are expected, and that all established Instrumentalities are hereby instructed, to move, at the earliest possible date, all their offices, other than those assigned to work within a specific geographical area (i.e., regional and field offices), to New York City in such space as is most advantageous for efficient and economical operations, in the opinion of the Executive Council; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that General Synod now authorizes the Executive Council to enter into the most advantageous leases to serve the intent of this resolution."

5. Denominational Emphases

The General Synod adopts the plan for denominational emphases recommended by the special committee on denominational emphases as follows:

A. The Program and Correlation Committee of the Executive Council should be responsible for initiating the necessary steps looking toward the adoption of a denominational emphasis.

B. In the process of selecting an emphasis, the Program and Correlation Committee should consult with the several Instrumentalities and Councils and with such other groups (including Conference Ministers) as time and circumstance might indicate.

C. When the Program and Correlation Committee has agreed upon a suitable emphasis, it shall ask the Instrumentality (or Instrumentalities) most immediately concerned to prepare an outline as to how such an emphasis might be effectively implemented, what competent personnel might be available for such an undertaking, and what funds it might be willing to allocate to such a project.