

## MONDAY EVENING, JUNE 30

previous action the General Synod deferred further nominations for the Council for Christian Social Action and the Office for Church in Society. Earlier this evening the General Synod had taken action establishing the Office for Church in Society. It is now necessary to have the additional nominations for the Council for Christian Social Action and the Office for Church in Society so the ballot can be prepared. The General Synod had also approved a constitutional amendment which would eliminate the Council for Christian Social Action. However, such an amendment requires ratification by two-thirds of the Conferences. Therefore, the requirement for nominees for the Council for Christian Social Action remains even though this General Synod has voted to create a new agency.

Assistant Moderator Elicker declared the nominations reopened for the Council for Christian Social Action. There being no further nominations from the floor, Assistant Moderator Elicker declared the nominations closed for the Council for Christian Social Action.

Assistant Moderator Elicker declared the nominations reopened for the Office for Church in Society.

Mrs. Clarence Field (RM) was nominated for the Class, 1977; Ms. Evangeline Mosick (FL), Mrs. Jean Lyles (OH), Mrs. Martha Pinello (VT), and Mrs. Janet C. Schaefer (PSE), Class, 1979; and the Rev. William Schroeder (CAC), the Rev. Eugene Sill (CAL.N), Dr. William W. Plummer (MI), Mr. Manuel de La Rosa (SW), the Rev. John Olson (CT), and Mr. John F. Ludwig (PC) for the Class, 1981. There being no further nominations from the floor, Assistant Moderator Elicker declared the nominations closed for the Office for Church in Society.

Assistant Moderator Elicker recognized William A. Main (NB) who moved that the persons nominated by the Nominating Committee for the Council for Christian Social Action be elected. The motion was seconded. It was

75-GS-63 VOTED: The General Synod elected the Rev. Joseph C. Hough, Jr. (CAL.S), the Rev. Robert P. Noble, Jr. (MA), Mrs. Betty Ann Stahlheber (IS), Mr. Kenneth P. Stewart (KO), Ms. Aileen Jayne Walker (CAL.S), and Mr. Isaiah Whitfield (SE) to the Council for Christian Social Action, Class of 1981.

The General Synod was declared to be in recess at 12:10 a.m.

## TUESDAY MORNING, JULY 1

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The Tenth General Synod was called to order on Tuesday, July 1, 1975, at 8:30 a.m. by Moderator Margaret A. Haywood.

### 2. REPORT OF DIVISION C, "SPECIAL MINISTRIES AND THE CHURCH"

Moderator Haywood recognized the Rev. Don Covill Skinner, chairperson of Division C, who began his report by sharing with the General Synod the Covenant adopted by the Division as it dealt with highly controversial matters:

"As befits children of God, and brothers and sisters in Christ, we covenant together:

1. To speak honestly our opinions concerning the issues placed in our charge;
2. To share openly our feelings and concerns about those issues;
3. To focus our discussion on the substance of the issues, avoiding personal insult or inuendo;
4. To bear constantly in mind that we are responsible for, and are to be responsive to, the whole United Church of Christ, not our personal interests; and
5. Finally, to try, with God's help, to become an embodiment of the Biblical admonition that we are to "let love be genuine . . . outdoing one another in showing honor."

Mr. Skinner commended the Covenant to the General Synod as setting the tone appropriate for dealing with its report. He indicated the order of items to be made in the Division's report: 1) Report of the Task Force on Ministries to Military Personnel, 2) Response to the Overture Concerning the Special Needs of Gay and Bisexual Persons in the Professional Leadership of the Church, 3) Report of the Office for Church Life and Leadership on Ministries to Military Personnel and the Overture from the Central Atlantic Conference, 4) A Pronouncement on Civil Liberties without Discrimination related to Affectional or Sexual Preference, 5) Resolution on General Amnesty.

### 3. REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON MINISTRIES TO MILITARY PERSONNEL

The Moderator recognized the Rev. Harry W. Bredeweg, chairperson of the business committee. On behalf of the business committee Mr. Bredeweg referred the delegates to the report of the Task Force on Ministries to Military Personnel in Advance Materials, Section II, pp. 162-203, entitled "In Order to Establish Justice," and moved the adoption of the recommendations on page 194. The motion was seconded. Mr. Skinner was recognized and moved to amend the recommendations for action to the Task Force on Ministries to Military Personnel. The motion was seconded. It was

75-GS-64 VOTED: The General Synod adopts as amended the recommendations from the Task Force on Ministries to Military Personnel, entitled "In Order to Establish Justice":

#### The Tenth General Synod:

1. Receives the report of the United Church of Christ Task Force on Ministries to Military Personnel, entitled "In Order to Establish Justice," approves the Report in principle, and takes the following action:

2. Believes that the constitutional principle which places the military under civilian authority and administration is a wise provision for the governance of the armed forces. To that end it petitions Congress to enact legislation which basically reforms the military justice system for the purpose of fulfilling the highest principles of the civilian constitutional law tradition.

3. Adopts the long range goal advocated in the report following the abolition of a separate military law code and judicial system; and directs that copies of the Task Force report be sent to each member of the Congress, and to the Military Law Committee of the American Bar Association.

4. Requests the Office for Church Life and Leadership, in its responsibility for the recruitment, training, and endorsement of United Church of Christ military chaplains, continue to encourage, enable, and support chaplains in their exercise of a pastoral and prophetic ministry

within the military, serving as advocates of justice and the cause of those who need special ministries, such as young enlisted personnel, minorities, offenders, and those imprisoned.

5. Requests the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries in its responsibility for youth and young adults, to enable ministries of the Church which advocate the welfare and rights of the young who face military service, now serve, or have become veterans, to the end that their full civil and religious rights are protected and their right to justice is honored by the government.

6. Petitions the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches to commission an ecumenical study project which will follow-up their report on violence, by considering the issues of war and particularly the international law of war, in the light of the imperatives of the Gospel, which commit the Church to seek the establishment of justice and peace.

7. Gratefully acknowledges the work of the Task Force and discharges it with thanks.

**4. CALIFORNIA NORTHERN CONFERENCE OVERTURE CONCERNING THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF GAY AND BISEXUAL PERSONS IN THE PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

The Moderator recognized Mr. Bredeweg. On behalf of the business committee Mr. Bredeweg referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section II, p. 228, and moved the adoption of the California Northern Overture concerning the Special Needs of Gay and Bisexual Persons. The motion was seconded. Mr. Skinner was recognized and moved an alternative proposal to the Overture in two parts. Both parts of the statement, upon being put to a vote, were adopted. It was

75-GS-65 VOTED: The General Synods adopts the statement on a Response to the Overture of the California, Northern Conference Concerning the Special Needs of Gay and Bisexual Persons in the Professional Leadership of the Church:

- A. The United Church of Christ has a priority commitment to strengthening the local church. Wherever personal suffering must be silently endured without benefit of pastoral care of empathic support, especially when the suffering occurs in the lives of the professional leadership of the church, the local church, and the church at every level, is weakened.

Insofar as social, legal and religious condemnation of homosexuality has inflicted immeasurable emotional, psychological and at times physical suffering upon the lives of homosexual and bisexual persons and their families, the church has a responsibility to respond to the special needs of such persons. Of immediate concern are the needs of homosexual and bisexual ministers, directors of religious education, and others in the professional leadership of the United Church of Christ.

Therefore, the Tenth General Synod responds to the special needs of homosexual and bisexual Ministers, directors of religious education and others in the professional leadership of the United Church of Christ by requesting the Office for Church Life and Leadership to:

1. Compile and distribute a nation-wide listing of both church and non-church related counseling resources that offer non-judgmental counseling for homosexual and bisexual persons and their families.

2. Compile and distribute an annually updated listing of vocational guidance and counseling agencies with experience in counseling homosexual and bisexual professionals.

3. Distribute a comprehensive bibliography of books, articles and audio-visual aids concerning human sexuality.

- B. The United Church of Christ has not faced in depth the issue of human sexuality. Changing morality and ethics within American society present both problems and challenges to the church.

Therefore, the Tenth General Synod requests the Executive Council to commission a study concerning the dynamics of human sexuality and the theological basis for a Christian ethic concerning human sexuality, and to recommend postures for the church, to be presented to the Eleventh General Synod.

**5. REPORT OF THE OFFICE FOR CHURCH LIFE AND LEADERSHIP ON MINISTRIES TO MILITARY PERSONNEL**

The Moderator recognized Mr. Bredeweg. On behalf of the business committee Mr. Bredeweg referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section II, pp. 204-206, and moved the adoption of the recommendations of the report of the Office for Church Life and Leadership on Ministries to Military Personnel. The motion was seconded. Mr. Skinner was recognized and moved to amend the recommendations for action of the Office for Church Life and Leadership on Ministries to Military Personnel and explained that consideration was also given to the Overture from the Central Atlantic Conference on Support to United Church of Christ Chaplains. The motion was seconded.

It was

75-GS-66 VOTED: The General Synod adopts as amended the recommendations from the Office for Church Life and Leadership on Military Personnel:

1. The Tenth General Synod receives the report by the Chaplains on Ministries to Military Personnel.
2. The Tenth General Synod seeking a stronger procedure for ecclesiastical endorsement (certification) of our military chaplains, approves in principle the Common Covenant, as outlined in the Chaplains' revised report as descriptive of the covenantal relationship between the United Church of Christ and its ministers representing the denomination in the military services.
3. The Tenth General Synod reaffirms these ministries of the United Church of Christ to military personnel, and urges the exploration and implementation of alternate models of the Church's ministry to those in the military service.
4. The Tenth General Synod reaffirms the military chaplaincy as a principal model of ministry to military personnel.
5. The Tenth General Synod refers the reports and these actions to the Office for Church Life and Leadership for opportune development, proper consultation with advisory committees, adequate funding, and appropriate implementation, in collaboration with other instrumen-

talities and agencies of the United Church of Christ, and requests the Office for Church Life and Leadership to submit a progress report to the Eleventh General Synod.

**6. PRONOUNCEMENT ON CIVIL LIBERTIES WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION RELATED TO AFFECTIONAL OR SEXUAL PREFERENCE**

The Moderator recognized Mr. Bredeweg. On behalf of the business committee Mr. Bredeweg referred the delegates to the proposed pronouncement on Civil Liberties without Discrimination Related to Affectional or Sexual Preference as submitted by Christine Keff, delegate, Southern California Conference, together with an Overture from the Philadelphia Association of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, a petition from the Penn Central Conference, and a resolution from the Central Atlantic Conference, and moved their adoption. The motion was seconded. Mr. Skinner was recognized and moved an amended pronouncement on Civil Liberties without Discrimination Related to Affectional or Sexual Preference. The motion was seconded.

Mr. Wesley Burwell (NH) was recognized and moved to amend the amended pronouncement by deleting in line 111 the phrase "usually as a matter of emotional, psychological, and often physical survival"; beginning in line 112 the phrase "are denied the joy and fulfillment of sharing the meaning in their lives with their families, employers, associates, and many of their friends in society and in the Church. They"; beginning in line 140 the phrase "we are concerned with each other's mental, emotional, and physical health, degree of self-acceptance—the essential first step toward acceptance of others, freedom from ignorance and fear and prejudice, spiritual and personal growth. We revere the inherent right of the individual to exercise free will in the making of moral and ethical decisions as well as the freedom of conscience in the living of life which respects the rights of others"; the beginning in line 161 the phrase "they said with Peter and the apostles, 'we ought to obey God rather than men' (ACTS 5: 29b)." The four deletions were proposed in subsequent motions and when put to a vote were adopted.

The Moderator recognized Robert Bayler (IL) who moved to amend the motion to strike all the language in the amended pronouncement from lines 79-174 and to insert the following:

"WHEREAS the United Church of Christ affirms the equality of all persons before God and under the Constitution of the United States, and

"WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has historically been a stronger affirmer of equal justice and protection for all under the law."

The motion was seconded and there was extended discussion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion was lost.

The Moderator recognized Robert Meier (MA) who moved to amend the motion to delete the lines 94-98 and substitute "most directly affected are those whose affectional or sexual preference is predominantly toward persons of the same gender. Also affected are those found to have had at one time or another an adult-same-gender sexual experience." The motion was seconded. Upon being put to a vote the motion was lost.

The Moderator recognized William Schroeder (CAC) who moved to amend the motion to insert a phrase in line 82 "neither to condemn nor condone, but," so the sentence would read: "The purpose of this pronouncement is neither

to condemn nor condone, but is to make a statement on civil liberties." The motion was seconded. Upon being put to a vote, the motion was lost.

The Moderator recognized Alberta Bertelson (IL) who moved to postpone indefinitely the pronouncement on Civil Liberties without Discrimination Related to Affectional or Sexual Preference as amended. The motion was seconded. Upon being put to a vote, the motion was lost.

It was

75-GS-67 VOTED: The General Synod adopts as amended the Pronouncement on Civil Liberties without Discrimination Related to Affectional or Sexual Preference by a standing vote: 546 - Yes; 135 - No.

**PRONOUNCEMENT ON CIVIL LIBERTIES WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION RELATED TO AFFECTIONAL OR SEXUAL PREFERENCE**

The purpose of this pronouncement is to make a statement on civil liberties. It is not within the province of this pronouncement to make an ethical judgment about same-gender relationships. However, this pronouncement may well serve to further dialogue that will clarify the ethical issues involved in human sexuality.

There is, in the United States, a significant minority of persons whose civil liberties, and whose right to equal protection under the law, are systematically and routinely violated. Discrimination related to affectional or sexual preference in employment, housing, public accommodations, and other civil liberties, has inflicted an incalculable burden of fear into the lives of persons in society and in the church whose affectional or sexual preference is toward persons of the same gender.

Most directly affected are the 10% of the population whose affectional or sexual preference, according to the research of Alfred Kinsey, is predominantly toward persons of the same gender. Also affected is the one-third of the American population which Kinsey found to have had at one time or another an adult same-gender sexual experience. Public revelation of even a single experience often results in the presumption that a person is same-gender-oriented and thus subject to social sanctions including violations of her or his civil liberties. Even the civil liberties of persons whose affectional or sexual preference is a well-guarded secret are vulnerable. Inquiry by private investigatory agencies into the personal life of the individual is often a pre-requisite for employment. Draft records, insurance investigations, arrest records (even when charges have been dismissed or the defendant acquitted), and investigations instigated on the basis of anonymous accusation or rumor, all provide an employer, landlord, and other persons information used to justify discrimination.

**Discrimination Causes Suffering**

A constant fear of losing one's job and home, and the economic and social consequences of such a loss, creates suffering in human life. Living as presumed heterosexuals, same-gender-oriented women and men, are intimidated into silence, forced into lives of duplicity and deception, by the hostility of the majority society. Such duplicity and deception, and their current alienation, sometimes evolving to isolation and depression and culminating in suicide, are necessarily detrimental to the growth of the individual and to the growth of interpersonal relationships. Today, same-gender-oriented persons, our sisters and brothers in human community and in Christian community, are struggling to