

MONDAY MORNING, JULY 4

—and, make effective use of the available resources in pursuit of the church's mission.

The vitality of the church can be diminished by the absence of any or all of these four characteristics.

Most important, the vitality of the local church is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a means to a greater end—that the churches might be faithful servants of God on behalf of God's world and God's creation.

In the interest of the vitality of the local church, the Eleventh General Synod *URGES* all national agencies, Conferences, Associations to give leadership and funding to:

1. Aid local churches to develop a sound theological base for their communal life.
2. Provide aids for creative worship and such unique celebrations as teacher recognition, and other forms of service to the church.
3. Offer leadership training and re-training for clergy and laypersons.
4. Strengthen local church relationship to the United Church of Christ so that it has a perspective of the national, Conference and Association levels as being complementary, parts of the whole church.
5. Make available programs in Christian and mission education, social action, evangelism and stewardship.
6. Help local churches to establish and realistically attain their own goals.
7. Provide models for local churches to follow by studying and understanding the makeup of the vital church.

In the United Church of Christ, there is a rich diversity among our local churches. That diversity relates to their composition, settings, size, resources, heritage or tradition, and leadership. Diversity needs to be honored and affirmed, even as it makes each congregation unique.

The Eleventh General Synod is concerned about the vitality of the *whole* United Church of Christ. Therefore, it *CALLS UPON* the national agencies, Conferences and Associations to implement specialized programs and ministries to enhance the vitality of:

1. Declining large churches
2. Smaller membership churches
3. Churches of the center cities
4. Ethnic churches
5. Emerging churches in new geographical areas
6. Alternate lifestyles and issues of human sexuality within the life of a single congregation.

Furthermore, we, the Eleventh General Synod, *BELIEVE* that active and meaningful work must be accomplished to seek those who, for one reason or another, are not presently reached by our ministries, especially in the area of traditionally bypassed and young adult segments of our society.

8. REPORT ON M POWER AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON STEWARDSHIP

Mr. Eckert presented the "Report on *M Power*" and "proposal on Stewardship" (Advance Materials Section II, pp. 81-85) and moved its adoption.

Doris Rikert, (VT), read her *M Power*, and another delegate read "*M Power Is*" from the floor.

It was then moved, seconded, and

77—GS-33a VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod amends the first recommendation of the Stewardship Proposal by deleting all of the sentence after "church", to read "Identifies stewardship as an issue of vital concern to the whole church."

The Moderator called for action on the Report and the proposal.

77-GS-33 VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod receives the "Report on *M Power*" and recommendations on Stewardship as amended.

Recommendations on Stewardship

In response to God's continuing grace and the needs of the world, and in awareness of the opportunities we have to increase our faithfulness to the Gospel by increasing our support for the total mission of the United Church of Christ, the Eleventh General Synod, looking ahead to the 1978-79 biennium:

- 1) Identifies stewardship as an issue of vital concern to the whole church.
- 2) Continues the *M Power* (Stewards in Support of Mission) program adopted by the Tenth General Synod.
- 3) Encourages conferences and local churches which have not already participated in *M Power* to do so.
- 4) Instructs the Stewardship Council, the United Church Board for World Ministries, the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, and the Office for Church Life and Leadership to continue their collaborative efforts to produce coordinated stewardship resources.

9. WORSHIP SERVICE

The Moderator called the Order of the Day at 10:00 a.m. for the conduct of the Worship Service. The theme was "Telling the Story of Liberation". Richard Eick and A. Knighton Stanley, pastors from the Potomac Association were narrators. Clyde Parker directed a choir from Westmoreland and Peoples Church of Washington, D.C., in choral numbers from the *Amistad Opera* with music by Roger Ames and libretto by Virginia Artist.

The Moderator called for action of the General Synod to suspend the rule and change the Order of the Day to deal with the Overture in Division B.

10. GRATITUDE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The Chairperson of Division B, Franklin Thomas, called attention to the Overture: "Gratitude for Religious Freedom" (Advance Materials, Section II, pp. 123-124), and the Resolution, Exhibit 6, distributed to the delegates on Sunday evening.

Mr. Thomas moved the adoption of the Resolution as distributed to the delegates. He noted that this Resolution is substituted for the Overture in the Advance Materials. It was

77-GS-34 VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod adopts