

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 5

Discussion was brought to a close and it was

77-GS-92 VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod adopts the "Overture on Inclusive Language."

Because of the intensity of the discussion, voting was perceived to be extremely close, thus a Division of the House was called. The Tellers were called to count the votes of the House.

Moderator Nace indicated the voting results: Total number of votes counted was 643. There were 353 Yes votes and 290 No votes. The motion carried.

Tom Evans, (WI), made a motion which was seconded and it was

77-GS-92a VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod notes that the Division of the House focused on items #3 of the Overture regarding the creation of a new hymnal.

Overture on Inclusive Language

1. The Eleventh General Synod directs the Advisory Commission on Women in Church and Society, in consultation with the Executive Council and with ethnic constituency groups in the United Church of Christ, to develop guidelines for intentionally inclusive language when referring to people and for utilizing a multiplicity of ways of referring to our relationship with God and that which we experience as God.
2. The Eleventh General Synod directs the Executive Council to establish a means of reviewing (before publication and/or use) all materials published by the United Church of Christ and used officially by United Church of Christ agencies to insure that the guidelines regarding intentionally inclusive language are implemented.
3. The Eleventh General Synod directs the Executive Council to begin the process which will result in the creation of a new official hymnal which would follow the guidelines for intentionally inclusive language. A progress report shall be made to the Twelfth General Synod.

This brought the Report of Division E to a close. Ms. Clough thanked the delegates for their work involved with these issues.

18. RESOLUTION FROM THE FLOOR ON THE STATEMENT OF FAITH

Malcolm C. Bertram, Jr., (NY), moved the following motion from the floor of General Synod. The motion was seconded and there was discussion.

Upon being brought to a vote, it was

77-GS-93 VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod adopts the "Resolution on the Statement of Faith and Inclusive Language."

WHEREAS, human beings attempting to share the Word of God inevitably must struggle with the inadequacy of language to convey the fullness of their understandings; and

WHEREAS, language changes as those who use it find new meanings for old words and old meanings in new words; and

WHEREAS, the Word of God is changeless but our attempts to communicate it in our words can and should change when we become aware that they do not carry our meaning to those with whom we speak and worship; and

WHEREAS, failure to use words which communicate the Word of God may create barriers between people, though they can never create barriers because those relationships between people and God transcend our language,

Therefore be it:

RESOLVED, that the Eleventh General Synod in loving gratitude for being led to greater faithfulness to an inclusive Gospel, accepts one of the last gifts to the United Church of Christ made by our late President Robert V. Moss, Jr. and recommends his rewording of the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith to the local churches, Associations, and Conferences for their study, use, and response through the Office for Church Life and Leadership, which will report to the Twelfth General Synod.

Walter Brueggemann, (MO), indicated that he was not concerned about the statement which Robert V. Moss, Jr. drafted, but was concerned about the language he used. He made a motion which was seconded and discussed

Scott Libbey, Iowa Conference Executive, indicated that the Executive Council had committed itself to a similar mission and also committed themselves to bringing that information to the Twelfth General Synod.

The discussion was brought to a close and it was

77-GS-94 VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod requests that the Office for Church Life and Leadership, in addition to receiving feedback from local congregations, designate a group of competent persons to scrutinize the Statement of Faith as revised by Robert V. Moss, Jr. from a theological perspective, assess the feedback, and make appropriate recommendations to the Executive Council.

The Tuesday afternoon session of the Eleventh General Synod was adjourned by Moderator Nace at 6:00 p.m. He noted that the evening session would reconvene at 8:00 p.m.

TUESDAY EVENING, JULY 5

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Eleventh General Synod of the United Church of Christ was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by Moderator Nace. Mr. Nace reminded the delegates that there was much work to do in a short period of time. Mr. Nace then introduced Tom Eckert, Chairperson of Division F.

2. EVANGELISM—SEARCH FOR FAITH ISSUE

Mr. Eckert spoke briefly on the importance of this issue. After brief discussion, a motion was made and it was

77-GS-95 VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod adopts the Report on Evangelism and the Search for Faith" as amended.

**Report on Evangelism and the Search for Faith
for the Eleventh General Synod**

Evangelism must be the church's priority, for it is the church's heartbeat. We live because Christ lives. We love because God loves us. We are a people of promise because God is present in the agony and ecstasy of our human existence.

"Evangelism," D. T. Niles used to say, "is the beggar telling another beggar where to get bread." We experience the evangel — the good news of God's love and presence — as gift. We are those without claim who are claimed by seeking God. We share the good news of where bread may be found. As the Christian life adds up for us, we are compelled to share that story. Our hunger for meaning is fed, we share in the community of faith's calling to feed the hungry, defeat the structures of injustice and work for a world of peace.

The United Church of Christ approach to evangelism is often called *Word-in-Deed*, signifying both the hearing and the doing of the Word. We must be careful that this label not suggest that the word of faith can be cut off from life or the deed done without faith's empowerment. Evangelism's task today has 3 elements: finding vibrant faith for ourselves; proclaiming and embodying the liberating Word in society, freeing people to create new relationships of love and concern; and building the organization of the church as an institution of enduring witness.

Finding Vibrant Faith

We in the United Church of Christ need to be much more in touch with each other's faith pilgrimage. As people of faith, we understand our lives in a different way. Having received grace, we expect to find God in the midst of our daily existence. Our lives have a wholeness which overcomes compartmentalization and trivialization. We sense ourselves to be participants in God's drama of redemption of persons and society.

The search for faith is part of each Christian's continuing story. That search has two dimensions — *recovery and new gift*. We remember that God has spoken in creation, in exodus, in creating a people. God has become incarnate in Jesus and in our history. God has made covenant. The sinews of faith have been embodied through the generations in the faith community. Part of the faith search is recovery of what has been. We are a community of *memory*.

Yet, faith and the faith search are always new. Faith is the product of our hope and God's gift. God reaches us in unexpected ways as "our hearts are strangely warmed." The forms and language of faith change over time. The search for faith is the map-making activity of a pilgrim people empowered by the Gospel's hope. We are a community of *hope*.

Proclaiming and Embodying the Living Word

The personal and social dimensions of the gospel are part of the same whole. If we're serious about God's gift of life, we have to be serious about addressing needs of people around us: whether their search for meaning or the struggle for daily bread. This faith has its own dynamic—

it cries out to be shared. More adequate ways need to be found through which the action ministries of the United Church of Christ explicitly express our faith. Concerns with the word — in Bible study, preaching and liturgy, private devotions, day-to-day life—need to link up with efforts to work for a more just society and to meet the needs of persons.

Building an Institution of Enduring Witness

Ways need to be found through which evangelism can be a central part of United Church of Christ organizational development. Studies of our present membership suggest the importance of the United Church of Christ reaching (or of reaching more deeply) specific population groups. The life and witness of the UCC can interact in mutuality with such groups.

1. *Children* — The United Church of Christ approach to children has sought to relate both nurture and advocacy. How can we receive the gifts of children — their insights into the nature of the gospel, their awareness of the nuances of culture, their trust? How can the children in our parishes experience more fully the membership which their baptism grants? How can we be their advocates in society?
2. *Youth* — Youth face major new challenges in growing up in the America of the 1970's and 1980's. Age-old questions of identity and meaning take on new form. The gifts and energies of youth are often expressed in unusual ways and in alternate religious forms. Can the United Church of Christ find ways to meet youth's search for transcendence and meaning?
3. *Young Adults* — The 20-35 year olds in the United Church of Christ represent only one-half of the percentage of the same age group in the general population. Yet this is the generation experimenting with new life-styles and vocations, forming sustained patterns of commitment, settling on patterns of meaning, capable of great energy and passion. Experimental ministries to, with and by young adults are emerging throughout the denomination. We need to learn from them and from their constituencies about the ethos, life-styles, passions, and gifts of young adults today.
4. *Women and Men* — The Women's Movement has brought into being a nucleus of women and men who are seeking to understand the meaning both of self-determination and mutuality. This movement of persons into new partnership holds high potential for human community, shared leadership styles, celebration and community action. The gifts of persons nurtured by these liberating forces can enrich the life of the United Church of Christ.
5. *Minority Constituencies* — Asian-American and Pacific, Black, Hispanic and Indian constituencies bring unique perspectives to understanding the meaning of the gospel, the nature of church life, the experience of evangelism and mission. Minority churches are centers of meaning and life in their communities. Evangelism is a gift-sharing ministry

and an important priority with these minority constituencies in the United Church of Christ.

6. *The Elderly* — More than one-fourth of the membership of the United Church of Christ is over 60 years of age. How can the energy and wisdom of this constituency best be utilized? How can the gifts and resources of these persons be empowered? How can the United Church of Christ address its concern and ministry in special ways to persons in the older years?

Evangelism and the Search for Faith Recommendations

The Eleventh General Synod Receives the Report on Evangelism and the Search for Faith as Above, and Urges Continuation and Expansion of the Programs Contained Therein.

"The evangelism-faith agenda has several dimensions:

"First, as Christian people we need to increase our capacity to share our own faith experience and answers to the question, 'How is God at work in our time in global events, in community, and in persons' life crises?'

"Second, critical attention must be paid to the nature and meaning of membership in the United Church of Christ and to our identity as a people. Much of this understanding will come out of our day-to-day experience.

"Third, persistent effort needs to be given to improving skills of the United Church of Christ in membership recruitment and assimilation. Many congregations are learning to do this effectively. Others want to learn how. Conferences and instrumentalities can assist congregations in increasing their ability to recruit new members and activate inactive members.

"Fourth, models reflecting the rainbow perspective of the United Church of Christ and sensitivity to covenantal and invitational patterns of cultural relationships need to be developed and/or shared of effective approaches to evangelism and of significant experience with the meaning of faith in our time.

"In a variety of contexts United Church of Christ people are experiencing the presence of the Holy Spirit and finding themselves in touch with emergent forms of spiritual practice. These experiences and forms need wider sharing within the denomination.

"Fifth, concerted effort needs to be made by the instrumentalities, the associations, conferences, congregations, and minority caucuses to extend the capacity of the United Church of Christ to reach new constituencies and to be enriched by their insights and gifts.

"Sixth, churches and church people with whom the United Church of Christ is in partnership in other parts of the world have unique insights into the meaning of faith and the nature of evangelism. Sharing of our diverse experiences can enrich us all.

"Seventh, continue the efforts to develop multi-lingual, multi-cultural resources in evangelism and search for faith."

Further, the 11th General Synod urges the continuation and increase of inter-agency efforts during the next biennium.

3. RESOLUTION ON GREATER U.C.C. USE OF MEDIA

Mr. Eckert introduced Gordon Blough of Division F to speak to this issue. Mr. Blough referred to Advance Materials, Section II, p. 123 for the Overture on this issue. He further stated that this Resolution has no financial implications. John McClelland, (MONT), moved to amend the Resolution and it was

77-GS-96a VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod adopts the amendment to omit the word "Total" in the first resolved section.

The Moderator called for action on the amended motion. It was

77-GS-96 VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod adopts the "Resolution on Greater UCC Use of Media," as amended.

Resolution on Greater U.C.C. Use of Media

WHEREAS, The church has the mission of Jesus Christ to go out to wherever people are to proclaim his gospel of reconciliation and healing; and

WHEREAS, The electronic media of radio and television are now among the most effective means—and in some communities the most effective means—of reaching people; and

WHEREAS, Many analysts are convinced that television has moved ahead of home, church, and school as the principal influence upon morality; and

WHEREAS, There is concern in U.C.C. as expressed by the 10th General Synod Priorities for Local Church Vitality, Evangelism and Search for Faith; and

WHEREAS, There is growing concern for the development and expression of U.C.C. Identity both within the church and with the public; and

WHEREAS, The U.C.C. has not adequately resourced programmatic development in radio and television; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That an identity campaign including all mass media (radio, television and print) be launched in the Office of Communication (in consultation with other agencies); and be it further

RESOLVED, That an appeal be made to the Treasurer of the United Church of Christ to aid the Office of Communication (in consultation with other agencies); and be it further

RESOLVED, That an appeal be made to the Treasurer of the United Church of Christ to aid the Office of Communications to borrow up to \$100,000.00 to produce TV spot announcements on U.C.C. Identity and Evangelism to be recovered within five years from rentals to churches and conferences; be it further

RESOLVED, That the Office of Communications be requested to produce another TV series the quality of "Six American Families."

4. APPRECIATION FOR CLOSED CIRCUIT T.V.

At this time Moderator Nace commended the Office of Communication for its work on the Washington Hilton closed circuit T.V., Channel 6, and noted that the equip-