

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 25

existing congregations which are in the process of redefining their institutional form or addressing new opportunities for ministry.

- 2) to increase the diversity of churches in the United Church of Christ, including (a) metropolitan and rural churches; (b) churches in the Southern and Western parts of the United States as well as other locations experiencing population shifts; (c) churches with ministries appropriate for the particular situations of immigrants from the Caribbean, Latin America, the Pacific Basin and Asia; and (d) churches for the growing population of Blacks, Native Americans and Hispanics, especially within our cities. This diversity will reflect the continuing commitment of the United Church of Christ to racial and ethnic ministries, and to leadership appropriate to the social and spiritual needs of these people.
- 3) to promote a special fund raising effort throughout the United Church of Christ during the next two biennia to increase the amount of funds available for leadership and program subsidy to achieve the preceding goals. The funds raised in each Conference will be divided with $\frac{1}{3}$ retained by the Conference and $\frac{2}{3}$ remitted to the Treasurer of the United Church of Christ.

The Twelfth General Synod requests that the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries develop and implement New Initiatives in Church Development according to the above goals.

The Twelfth General Synod recommends that every effort be made by the staff members of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, Conferences, and Associations working with new churches being started with financial and/or staff help from this campaign to have all such new churches organized with the principle name of United Church of Christ and that this recommendation be included in any future guidelines developed for New Initiatives in Church Development.

The Twelfth General Synod asks the Stewardship Council, in cooperation with the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Conferences, to take the leadership in raising the necessary funds.

As the first steps in that fund-raising process the General Synod directs the Stewardship Council to:

- 1) hold consultations about the proposal with conference leaders in each Conference prior to November 1, 1979, and
- 2) Propose to the November meeting of the Executive Council, on the basis of information secured in these consultations, a dollar goal for this New Initiatives in Church Development effort.

(Based on a studied need for 15 new churches a year for the next 10 years, an estimated $7\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars will be required).

- 3) Prepare and present to Executive Council a promotional budget, not to exceed 10% of the total proposed goal, to be funded from the $\frac{2}{3}$ National portion.

In addition, the General Synod asks the Director of Finance and Treasurer to administer and distribute the funds according to a plan developed by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Executive Council, in consultation with the Conference.

9. SUNDAY OFFERING FOR NEW INITIATIVES IN CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

Moderator Hurst announced that the offering received at the service of worship, Sunday, June 24, 1979, totalled \$4,818.60 for New Initiatives in Church Development.

10. RESOLUTION ON FUEL SHORTAGES AND VIOLENCE

The Moderator recognized the Rev. Robert McNamara (MO) on a point of personal privilege who moved to suspend the Standing Rules to allow the introduction of a resolution on Fuel Shortages and Violence. The Moderator declared that when the motion was put to a vote it lost. A division of the house was called for and the Moderator declared the vote lost on a count of 273 Yes and 330 No votes.

11. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST/CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) CONVERSATIONS

The Moderator recognized Mr. Anthony Sawtell, (SW), Chairperson of the Committee on United Church of Christ/Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Conversations for the report. Mr. Sawtell referred the delegates to advance Materials, section II, noted the differences between the report of the Committee and the recommendations of the Executive Council, and moved the adoption of the report. Mr. Sawtell called on the Rev. Keith A. Karau (IL) to speak to the report on behalf of the Committee. Mr. Karau emphasized that the report is not a proposal for union. It believes with the Joint Working Group that by the two Churches living in covenant relationship and working on significant issues together new forms of Christian community will be experienced that will teach us about the nature and shape of the unity we seek.

There was discussion with delegates speaking in support of and against the report.

The Rev. S. William Tyson (PSE) was recognized and moved to amend the report by changing paragraph C of the report to read: "The General Assembly and the General Synod authorize the General Assembly and the General Synod to elect a steering group of ten persons from each denomination to lead and direct this six year period of work. The steering group will be accountable to succeeding General Synods and the Council on Christian Unity and the Council for Ecumenism." The Moderator declared that upon being put to a vote the motion was lost.

The Rev. Arthur Christofersen (IL) was recognized and moved to amend the report by referring it back to the Committee because in his judgement it was an illegal motion, and cannot be passed in its present form. The Moderator declared that upon being put to a vote the motion was lost. There was a discussion, and it was:

79-GS-36 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the report of the Committee on United Church of Christ/Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Conversations:

REPORT OF UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST/CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) CONVERSATIONS

- I. Historical Review of Conversations Between the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 25

Union conversations between the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, or their predecessor church bodies, have taken place since 1912, though the major activity has occurred during the past thirty years. During the time of the formation of the United Church of Christ (1949-1957), the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) participated as observer-consultants on the commissions which prepared the UCC Constitution and Statement of Faith. In the same year that the UCC Constitution and by-laws were adopted (1961), the General Synod voted to begin union conversations with Disciples at the "earliest mutually convenient time."

Official conversations between Disciples and the UCC took place between 1961-1966. After that time it was jointly decided to devote full energies to the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) and to delay bilateral conversations. Participation in COCU enabled our churches, along with the other member denominations in the Consultation, to identify basic principles of union and to develop an emerging theological consensus in the quest of a uniting church.

By 1975 our two churches concluded that COCU would involve a longer range process than originally anticipated. It, therefore, seemed appropriate to renew our bilateral conversation, while maintaining our commitment to COCU and the wider union envisaged by the Consultation. In 1977, the General Synod and General Assembly adopted a joint resolution authorizing a two-year period of exploration regarding union to be undertaken at all levels in the life of our two churches.

II. Review of the Exploratory Conversations, 1977-1979

Soon after the adoption of the resolution "Authorizing Conversations Towards Possible Union," a joint national team, composed of several members from each church, was established to give direction to the overall process of exploration and study. This Joint Working Group (JWG) invited the participation of all elements in the life of both churches—congregations, regions and conferences, general administrative units and instrumentalities—to share in this period of acquaintance, exploration, and response. Materials were prepared specifically for use by congregations and local study groups; over 4,000 of these "Study Packets" were sold between May-September, 1978. Regions, conferences, and national organizations shared in counterpart meetings of staffs and boards. Many regions and conferences highlighted the conversations at their annual meetings, and joint study teams were established in most areas of the country.

The responses received by the Joint Working Group indicated some modest efforts at formal study. The interest of congregations, regions/conferences, and national organizations, based upon their response forms, was mixed. Some were apathetic or indifferent; others expressed strong enthusiasm for continuing the conversations.

Throughout this period of exploration, acquaintance, study and response, the Joint Working Group sought to design and implement a responsible process, allowing for all persons and structures within our two churches to express their judgments on the appropriateness of further conversations regarding union between our two denominations. At its meeting on January 14-15, 1979, the Joint Working

Group reviewed all responses it had received; and from the review, it came to five conclusions regarding this initial period of exploration:

1. There is a growing interest throughout the life of both churches in the possibility of experiencing a shared, common life. However, there is no mandate for launching formal union negotiations at this time.
2. Two major issues require further study and work:
 - (a) Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and
 - (b) the different understandings about the ordering of the institutional life of the church for mission in society and the world.
3. The two-year period of time set forth in the resolution was unrealistic. The two years (which only began officially in November 1977 after the vote of the Disciples General Assembly, and a first report on implications to the governing bodies of our churches due in January 1979) actually represented a little more than one year for the total process of establishing a joint committee, designing the study, preparing materials, inviting participation, receiving responses, and making a recommendation on the future. Any future proposal must allow a longer time frame so that the whole life of both churches might be genuinely engaged and share in the process of work and study.
4. Continued conversations will require an active leadership roll by a joint national committee. Such leadership would involve giving clear direction to the conversation process, identifying resources for further study, and articulating and interpreting the vision of union and its meaning for mission and for the gathered life of our churches.
5. Such conversations, aimed at involving the full memberships of our two churches, require additional funds and personnel beyond our present ecumenical budgets and staffs. In serious conversations, adequate support must be found for the tasks involved, including the training of local leadership, education, and development of resource materials for congregational use and study.

III. Convictions and Rationale for Next Steps

The Joint Working Group struggled in developing this report to set forth implications for our churches from the two-year exploratory conversations. In addition to the conclusions reported in the previous section, several theological convictions were identified by the Joint Working Group which provide the basis for the proposals on the future. These convictions are:

- that the biblical mandate calls for the unity and union of all Christians in the one Church of Jesus Christ. Any future work and study involving our two churches is, therefore, set within the context of seeking to be faithful and obedient in discerning God's will for Christ's Church in these times.
- that church union is an expression of God's mission in the world. Union and mission are not alternative concerns. Rather, they are two central and interrelated elements in the Church's life and witness.
- that the church's life arises out of God's covenant. **In**

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 25

acknowledgment of our responsibility under God's wider covenant, the Joint Working Group proposes that our churches covenant to work and study together.

—that we do not yet know what form a union between our two churches might take. We are not persuaded to embrace existing models. Rather, the Joint Working Group believes that the two churches, by living in covenant relationship and working on significant issues together, will experience new forms of Christian community that could teach us about the nature and shape of the unity we seek.

In its deliberations, the Joint Working Group also identified two characteristics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ which add significance and meaning to our conversations and to the proposal recommended to our churches. The first characteristic centers in the unique role and relationship of these two churches in the North American religious experience. Both have affirmed Christian freedom and responsibility for society. Both have also participated in society's injustice and discrimination in areas, such as race, sex, age, and disability. Both churches have struggled to discover how Christian commitment to social justice within a global society calls for the transformation of their own institutions.

The second characteristic centers in a basic commitment to Christian unity in both churches. It is this commitment which brought the United Church of Christ into being, and which has characterized the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) from its beginning. This commitment led to the exploratory conversations, and compels the Joint Working Group to propose the next steps.

IV. Next Steps

The Joint Working Group proposes that our two churches covenant with each other and commit themselves to a journey of six years, beginning in 1979 and concluding in 1985. This journey will focus on three basic tasks of the Christian life as a context within which to discover the nature of the unity we seek. The three tasks involve work and study on:

- (1) the theology and practice of Baptism and the Lord's Supper;
- (2) the nature, task, and equipping of ministry, both ordained and lay;
- (3) appropriate forms of mission for today.

Pursuing these tasks will help our churches to explore two basic questions about possible union. Does the commitment to work and study together enhance the churches' lives and witness sufficiently to call for a union? If so, what is its shape and form?

The Twelfth General Synod adopts the following resolution with the understanding that at the end of the six-year period a decision will be made whether to enter into negotiations toward formal union, to continue exploration of different forms of co-operation and relationship, or to discontinue discussions:

A. In response to God's covenant with us, we the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the General Synod of the United Church of Christ,

covenant with one another to work together toward embodying God's gift of oneness in Jesus Christ.

- B. The General Assembly and the General Synod call upon the congregations, regions and conferences, general administrative units and instrumentalities, and all other denominational structures, to participate in a six-year period (from 1979 to 1985) of work and study based on three broad tasks of Christian witness and theological reflection:
1. the theology and practice of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, giving particular attention to the meaning of the sacraments in our time and their significance for worship and witness;
 2. the nature, task, and equipping of ministry, both ordained and lay;
 3. the identifying of and responding to the continually emerging new forms and tasks of God's mission, with special attention given to the constant need for the church to reform itself.
- C. The General Assembly and the General Synod authorize the Council on Christian Unity and the Council for Ecumenism to name a steering group of ten persons from each church to lead and direct this six-year period of work. This steering group will be accountable to the Council on Christian Unity and the Council for Ecumenism.
- D. The General Assembly and the General Synod recognize that this work and study shall occur within the framework of our participation in the Consultation on Church Union.
- E. The General Assembly and the General Synod recommend that the two Councils negotiate with the appropriate bodies in the two churches for staff and administrative funds to implement this resolution.
- F. The General Assembly and General Synod request the two Councils to present biennial reports and assessments of all activities, and a thorough evaluation at the conclusion of the six-year period.

12. RECOGNITION OF GENERAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT KENNETH L. TEEGARDEN.

The Moderator recognized President Post who invited Mrs. Margery Weed, Chairperson of the Council for Ecumenism to escort President Teegarden to the platform. President Post presented President Teegarden to the General Synod and received the applause of the delegates. He greeted the General Synod with warm words of appreciation for the excellent reception he and the other representatives of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) had received and for the passage of report of the Committee on the United Church of Christ/Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He indicated that the same report will be acted on at the meeting of the General Assembly in the fall of this year.

13. ELECTION RESULTS

The Moderator recognized Secretary Evans who gave the election results for the following Agencies:

Office for Church Life and Leadership — Class 1985

- Rev. Jack H. Haney (WASH)
Rev. Donald L. Kaufman (IK)
Rev. Lorrain R. MacLeod (MASS)