

79-GS—53 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the Resolution: The Church and Persons with Handicaps:

**THE CHURCH AND PERSONS WITH HANDICAPS**

WHEREAS, all persons at some time suffer from physical, emotional, mental and/or spiritual infirmities; we realize and affirm the truth inherent in Paul's statement that we "are the body of Christ and individually members of it" and "if one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together;" and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ acknowledges with gratitude the many gifts of ministry from persons with handicaps; and

WHEREAS, attitudinal and physical barriers against persons with disabilities still exist in the church as well as in the general society; and

WHEREAS, national statistics reveal that a significant number (estimated at more than 10% by the U.S. Dept. of H.E.W.) of the general population experience some form of physical and mental impairment, and since most congregations do not see these people in their churches, it is obvious that persons with handicaps are hindered from full participation in the life of the church and community at large; and

WHEREAS, the Eleventh General Synod made the issue of people with disabilities one of its highest national priorities; and

WHEREAS, it is evident that more substantial national funds and staff time need to be made available to make the impact of this concern consistent with its high priority status, and

WHEREAS, the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries recommends mobilizing the denomination for a full effort to work with and for persons with disabilities within both the church and society;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Twelfth General Synod:

- A. reaffirms the pronouncement of the Eleventh General Synod entitled "The Church and Persons with Handicaps" (77-GS-52),
- B. commends the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries for coordinating and providing fiscal support for the program; and also the United Church Board for World Ministries and the Office of Communication for their cooperation;
- C. directs the Executive Council to ensure substantial funding and sufficient staffing in the current biennium for an aggressive and effective approach to the needs of persons with disabilities within the United Church of Christ;
- D. directs that persons with handicaps be included in all affirmative action programs within the United Church of Christ;
- E. directs the Executive Council to allocate funds from Neighbors In Need and/or Family Thank Offerings for ministries to and with persons with handicaps as soon as possible;
- F. urges Conferences, Associations, and local churches to assess their responsibilities to persons with handicaps and seek ways to eliminate physical and attitudinal barriers which exclude and alienate them.

**10. ELECTION PROCESS REVIEW**

The Moderator recognized President Post who stated that following General Synod Twelve he will give leadership in a review of the policy, procedures, and management of the entire nominating and election procedures of the Church, and that while we are here at Synod and following, he intends to be a sensitive minister to persons who may have been hurt by mistakes and errors in the present process.

**11. REPORT OF SECTION B—RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CONCERN FOR REFUGEES**

The Moderator recognized the Rev. John McFadden (CAC), Chairperson, for the report of Section B. Mr. McFadden referred the delegates to the original resolution in Advance Materials, Section V, page 18. He moved the adoption of a substitute resolution on Expressing Concern for Refugees, and called on the Rev. Martin E. Gibbs (CT) to speak to the Resolution. Mr. Gibbs said that the resolution speaks to the condition of refugees in general though the opening statement speaks specifically to a Southeast Asia situation and was the factor that led to the formation of the resolution. This resolution is an extension of the Synod action on Human Rights. There was discussion.

Mrs. Enid C. Johnson (FL) was recognized and moved to amend the resolution by the addition of a Whereas section to read: "Whereas the United Church of Christ has been concerned about refugees from many countries for many decades and many are also fleeing from nearby Haiti seeking asylum in our land." There was discussion and it was agreed to include this as part of the resolution. There were additional editorial changes, and it was:

79-GS-54 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the Resolution Expressing Concern for Refugees as amended:

**RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CONCERN FOR REFUGEES**

WHEREAS, thousands of refugees are fleeing Southeast Asia, many by boat, and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ has been concerned about refugees from many different countries for many decades and many are also fleeing from nearby Haiti seeking asylum in our land, and

WHEREAS, the responsibility for saving them is too large a burden for a few countries to bear alone, but is an obligation to be shared by the whole human family, and

WHEREAS, we are all sojourners and would be strangers no longer, and would welcome strangers into our midst, caring for and with them in the name of Jesus Christ;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the United States Department of State to initiate and support an international effort, through the United Nations to enable refugees to find homes and opportunity for life, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Twelfth General Synod supports legislation in the Congress of the United States to reform our immigration laws so as to make it possible for more refugees to immigrate, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge our churches to take advantage of all legal opportunities to sponsor

refugees for resettlement in our country, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Twelfth General Synod commends the United Church Board of World Ministries for expanding its concern and programs for the above mentioned world refugees.

## 12. RESOLUTION ON RESURGENT RACISM

Mr. McFadden referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section V, pages 5-7. He moved the adoption of the resolution on Neo-Racism, and called on Mr. Dennis Schwab (IA) to speak to the resolution. Mr. Schwab reminded the delegates that the United Church of Christ has long been in the forefront in the struggle for racial justice. This resolution addresses new forms of racism which faces our Church and nation. Adoption of this resolution will keep the United Church of Christ in the forefront in the struggle for racial and ethnic justice.

The Rev. Max Stackhouse (MA), was recognized and moved to amend the resolution by striking the preamble section so that action on the resolution would include only the Be It Resolved section. It was agreed to strike the preamble section and the vote would be only on the Be It Resolved Section.

The Rev. Stephen W. Hoffman (PC) was recognized and moved to amend the resolution by changing the title from Resolution on Neo-Racism to Resolution on Resurgent Racism. It was agreed to change the title to Resurgent Racism. There was discussion, and it was

79-GS-55 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Resurgent Racism as amended:

### RESOLUTION ON RESURGENT RACISM

BE IT RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ meeting in its Twelfth General Synod reaffirms its commitment to racial justice, equal opportunity, and calls upon its constituency at all levels to so commit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission for Racial Justice continue to lead the Church into relevant programs and practices that evidence racial justice commitment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that every local Church, Conference, Association and national agency examine its programs and practices in order to ferret out inequitable and discriminatory patterns and take action to eliminate them.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the social action and issues agencies spearhead the national effort in cooperation with other national religious and secular groups to eliminate racism from all national life.

## 13. RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED FARM WORKERS

Mr. McFadden referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section VI, page 3. He moved the adoption of the substitute resolution In Support of the United Farm Workers, and called on the Rev. Winston Gould (CAL.S) to speak to the resolution. Mr. Gould reminded the delegates that the United Church of Christ has a history of support for people seeking justice and equality in our society. The support of the farm worker has been a significant part of the history of the United Church of Christ. This resolution is in

support of the farm worker at a critical time when the farm worker movement struggles for existence.

Mr. Ernest G. Potter (IL) moved to amend the resolution by striking the phrase "and all non-union iceberg lettuce" in the first Be It Resolved section. There was discussion. Mr. Potter agreed to withdraw his amendment to allow the Rev. Winston Gould (CAL.S) to amend the resolution by deleting the word "all" before "non-union iceberg lettuce" in the first Be It Resolved Section and following the word "lettuce" to add the phrase "not grown on family operated farms." There was discussion, and it was

79-GS-56 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the Resolution In Support of the United Farm Workers as amended:

### RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED FARM WORKERS

WHEREAS, we understand that our decisions should be shaped by our beliefs, and that in the world of commerce our responsibility is to be good stewards, to use our possessions to bear witness to the principles of justice and equality which are basic to our biblical heritage.

WHEREAS, the Ninth General Synod, at the time of an earlier crisis declared its support for farm workers through its courageous action in sending a delegation to stand alongside farm workers on picket lines in the fields of the Coachella Valley in California; and

WHEREAS, the United Farm Workers have been negotiating since early January, 1979, with 28 California and Arizona lettuce growers; and

WHEREAS, migrant and seasonal farm workers, who help sustain each of us through their labors, suffer from the double burden of low wages and the effects of inflation; and

WHEREAS, since January over 4,000 workers have been on strike in the lettuce industry, affecting more than 16,000 men, women, and children; and

WHEREAS, another farm worker has been killed while picketing (Rufino Contreras, on 2/10/79, 28 years old, father of two), the fourth such incident in recent history; and

WHEREAS, the United Farm Workers continue to be committed to non-violent strategies; and

WHEREAS, the United Farm Workers have issued the call for a consumer boycott of Chiquita bananas (major label of the largest lettuce company, Sun Harvest of United Brands; and all non-union iceberg lettuce;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ supports the boycott of Chiquita bananas and non-union iceberg lettuce not grown on family operated farms until equitable contracts are signed and the boycott call is rescinded; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be publicized among our constituents, who are hereby urged to support the boycott in whatever way possible, individually and collectively.

## 14. NEW BUSINESS INTRODUCED BY TITLE ONLY

The Moderator recognized The Rev. David L. Beebe (SE) who offered a new item of business by title only "A Resolution Regarding Klan Activity." The Moderator indicated that