

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 26

Church and Society; 73-GS-63: Statement on Theological Education; 75-GS-46: Proposal on Women in Church and Society; 77-GS-79; Pronouncement on Racism and Sexism; Training Women for Ministry Project: particularly designed for Andover Newton Theological Seminary between the years of 1974-78, sponsored by the Office for Church Life and Leadership.

Rationale: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28 R.S.V.). Paul asserts with this passage that in Christ, all people are one. Yet Paul's writings concerning women have often been interpreted without critical examination of the historical context nor the particular situation which he was addressing. This has led to interpretations of these Biblical texts, which often have been used to support the patriarchal hierarchy in the church. These interpretations are explicitly oppressive to women as well as demeaning. Yet in the risen Christ, a new age of relationship is inaugurated. The resurrection has abolished the age-old patriarchal laws, ushering in a new order of oneness in Christ. Sexism does not belong to this new age, nor does it belong in the theological seminaries which train ministers of Christ's church.

Three pressing situations face our United Church of Christ and seminaries today: 1) There is an unprecedented number of U.C.C. women enrolled in the 14 U.C.C. related seminaries with intentions of ordination. Thirty five percent of U.C.C. seminarians are women.* The U.C.C. and the seminaries cannot remain unaffected by this development; 2) There is only a small percentage of women attaining the rank of full professor in these 14 seminaries. Please see the Report of the Advisory Commission on Women, pages 19-24 for statistics; 3) There is a need to continue to improve strategies for the placement of women clergy. These facts reflect the need for a sincere examination of the traditional seminary education, which in the past has been designed for a homogeneous male population. It is important for seminaries to faithfully enable women seminarians to fully respond to their call to the Christian ministry by aiding the development of their potentials, skills, and perspectives. Men and women faculty who are sensitive to the issues involving women seminarians are key to enabling our seminaries to respond to this increasing need in theological education. In particular, women faculty members will provide models which will enhance the positive self-concept of women seminarians and their role as women in the professional ministry. Presently, women seminarians are being taught by male-dominated faculties. Men and women faculty members can provide the resources and insights which will enable the restructuring of the theological perspectives, faculty attitudes, curriculum approaches, and language usage as the seminaries move toward the elimination of their institutional sexism.

We are not advocating token representation, but qualified, competent women faculty who are concerned with the dynamics of women's issues. These women faculty members will serve as models for all students, clarify the merging roles of women in the ministry, and engage in advocating attitudinal and curriculum alterations, which are theologically sound as well as responsive to the needs of training women for the ministry.

This concern is raised for the whole body of theological students and their preparation for the ministry. The U.C.C. related theological seminaries need to be educating the upcoming leaders of our Church to be sensitive to the cultural and theological reality which is openly confronting the traditional roles and mind set of both men and women. The women in the faculties and the attitudes toward curriculum development need to reflect this serious pastoral concern. Institutional sexism cannot be altered or eliminated by increased representation of women faculties and/or policy alterations; however, these are vital steps in moving seminaries and churches toward meeting the emerging issues related to women, especially women in ministry.

The General Synod requests: (not necessarily in order of priority)

1. An updated, in depth analysis by the Affirmative Action Officer of the implementation and effectiveness of the Affirmative Action strategy of vote 75-GS-46 in the employment of women with full faculty privileges in the 14 U.C.C. related seminaries to be reviewed by the Executive Council;
2. A critical review of the above analysis with each seminary and work to improve the effectiveness of their Affirmative Action strategies in the employment of women on faculties;
3. Inclusive language guidelines be implemented in all 14 U.C.C. related seminaries in keeping with the intent of General Synod vote 73-GS-41
4. A review of the total curricula of the U.C.C. seminaries as they reflect or plan to reflect the rapidly emerging issues surrounding women, sexism, and their implications for the Church;
5. The national agencies, seminaries, Conferences, Associations, and local churches to develop strategies to assist in the placement of women in ministry, and to call for the elimination of negative attitudes in local churches, search committees, and Conference and Association placement staff which inhibit the placement of women;
6. The General Synod delegates and the Executive Council and its members to be sensitive to the situation facing women seminarians and women in ministry, and to become advocates for the elimination of the culturally blatant and the more subtle forms of institutional sexism presently exhibited in U.C.C. seminaries.

*Statistics are from the Office of Church Life and Leadership

4. OVERTURE: HEALING MINISTRY

Mr. Whitaker referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section II, pages 131-133, and to the recommendation of the Section. He moved the adoption of the Overture: Healing Ministry as revised and called on Mrs. Frances Stiles (NY) to speak to the Overture. Mrs. Stiles indicated that the resolves section emphasis and the action is on education and resources, so that within our Church there can be an emphasis on responsible healing ministry.

The Rev. David W. Emmons (CT) was recognized and moved to amend the Overture by deleting in the second sentence of the second paragraph the words "one may have faith in Jesus Christ or" and substituting the words "faith

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may be placed merely." There was discussion and it was agreed to make this change in the Overture. It was

79-GS-63 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the Overture: Healing Ministry as amended.

Overture: Healing Ministry

BECAUSE people are hungering for deeper experience of the power of God which is at work bringing healing and new life, we believe the United Church of Christ is called to obedience to God through the ministry of healing, as well as through such ministries as providing food for the hungry, clothes for the naked and justice for the oppressed.

The healing referred to is "spiritual healing," a phrase which is used to describe the process of being made whole through opening ourselves to the power and love of God through Jesus Christ. This is different from the broader term "faith healing" because in faith healing faith may be placed merely in the human "healer."

Spiritual healing should never be equated with judgement (i.e. "if you had enough faith, you would be healed"); but as a means of bringing a person into the presence of Jesus Christ. The function of the healing ministry is to bring the suffering of mind, body and spirit into the presence of Jesus Christ so that His love and healing power may be experienced. We need to understand and believe that God's will for us is good will and that Jesus meant it when he said, "I come that they might have life and have it more abundantly" and when he invited us repeatedly to share His joy! (John 10:10 KJV)

Matthew says of Jesus, "And He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. So His fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought Him all the sick . . . and He healed them." (Matt. 4:23-24 RSV)

Paul himself refers to healing as a sign of his authenticity as an apostle (II Corinthians 12:12), and the pastoral epistles do not fail to mention the importance of healing. "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." (James 5:14 RSV)

All healing is of God, regardless of the means. Healing through prayer, touch, and the sacraments complements medicine and counselling, but is *not* a replacement for them. As Paul Tillich remarks in his *Systematic Theology* (Vol. III) in speaking of the relationship between medicine and psychiatry and faith, "the other ways of healing cannot replace the healing power of the Spirit."

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms the healing power of God through the ministry of the Church.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

1. encourages seminaries to provide instruction and resources in the ministry of God's healing, which includes such methods as prayer, touch and the sacraments;
2. requests the Office for Church Life and Leadership to

include in the forthcoming United Church of Christ Book of Worship, prayers for the sick and other appropriate resources;

3. requests the Office for Church Life and Leadership to provide annotated bibliography on the healing ministry of the Church.

5. OVERTURE CONCERNING FAIR IDENTIFICATION STANDARDS TO DISTINGUISH THE BIBLE FROM REWRITTEN MATERIALS

Mr. Whitaker referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section II, pages 133-134, and to the recommendation of the Section. He moved the adoption of the Overture Concerning Fair Identification Standards to Distinguish the Bible from Rewritten Materials as revised and called on Ms. Katherine Shinn (NY) to speak to the Overture. Ms. Shinn said that in some of our churches there is confusion as to what is a faithful translation of the Bible. Bible translations and paraphrases have been used and accepted but there have been problems. In an effort to clear up the confusion and still be sensitive to our times the Overture speaks to this situation.

The Rev. Arthur Perkins (ME) was recognized and moved to amend the Overture by adding the phrase "both written and spoken" following the word "quotations" in the first line of the resolved section. There was discussion and it was agreed to make this change in the Overture, and it was:

79-GS-64 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the Overture Concerning Fair Identification Standards to Distinguish the Bible from Rewritten Materials as amended:

Overture Concerning Fair Identification Standards to Distinguish the Bible from Rewritten Materials

WHEREAS, there is a proliferation and popularity of Bible translations as well as paraphrases and other modifications of the Bible;

WHEREAS, there is confusion among people in our churches in distinguishing the translations of the Bible from rewritten materials;

AND WHEREAS, it is our concern that the United Church of Christ preserve the tradition in our heritage which encourages openness, scholarship, and sensitivity to the times; and, at the same time, maintain a responsible, canonical approach to the use of Scripture;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Twelfth General Synod recommends that quotations, both written and spoken, from Bible translations and materials rewritten from the Bible used in the United Church of Christ, be differentiated and identified as to source in order to avoid confusion and to build understanding.

6. RESOLUTION ON BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

Mr. Whitaker referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section II, pages 144-145, and to the recommendation of the section. He moved the adoption of the Resolution on Biblical Authority as revised and called on the Rev. Jimmie Sawyer (NY) to speak to the Resolution. Mr. Sawyer stated that the question of authority in the area of Christian faith is one that raises many questions. The Section is of the opinion that the question of authority of faith in the United Church of Christ, is adequately stated in paragraph 2 of the Constitution and Bylaws, and the