

come upon me and horror overwhelms me . . . It is not an enemy who taunts me — then I could bear it; it is not an adversary who deals insolently with me — then I could hide from him. But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend. We used to hold sweet converse together, with God's house we walked in fellowship." Psalms 55:4-5 (RSV)

The place where one expects to find sanctuary from the violence on American streets, is in fact for many people, another place of violence.

Rationale

Members of the United Church of Christ, its conferences, associations, local churches and national bodies can have a significant impact on both the cause and effect of violence in relation to women in American society:

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ is deeply concerned about the violence done to women and to children in American society;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ is committed to support the health and well-being of persons who live within families;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ believes that the local church can provide sanctuary from the many forms of physical and sexual violence experienced by women and others in American society through healing actions of support for victims, and public policy education and advocacy;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ recognizes that the climate of violence involving women is an urgent and present reality in our society;

THEREFORE, the Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to draft a major pronouncement and proposals for action on *Violence in Relation to Women* for the consideration of the 14th General Synod, and to be in consultation with the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, the Office for Church In Society, and the Commission for Racial Justice in preparation of the pronouncement and proposals.

The Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon local churches, associations and conferences to study the issue; to raise consciousness about it; to minister with sensitivity to victims of violence through support of existing shelters and agencies; to engage in public policy advocacy for adequate funding of such shelters and agencies.

12. RESOLUTION ON ALTERNATIVES IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Mr. Haertig called on William L. Nagy (ILL), Chairperson of the small group that considered the resolution on Alternatives in Criminal Justice. Mr. Nagy indicated that the resolution as proposed is a consolidation of two resolutions: Resolution on Program of Criminal Indebtedness and a Resolution on Alternatives to the Expansion of Jails and Prisons. He moved the adoption of the resolution.

It was

81-GS-80 VOTED: The Thirteenth General Synod adopts as revised the Resolution on Alternatives in Criminal Justice.

**RESOLUTION ON ALTERNATIVES
IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

WHEREAS, previous General Synods have expressed concern with the failure of the criminal justice systems in the United States declaring their opposition to the death penalty (G.S. 9, 11, and 12) and calling for a moratorium on construction of new prisons and jails; and

WHEREAS, 1981 is the tenth anniversary of the Attica prison rebellion; and whereas General Synod 13 is meeting in New York; and

WHEREAS, as neither New York State nor any other state has constructively addressed the injustices of prison life nor the related issues of inequity and discrimination in criminal justice; and

WHEREAS, alternatives to incarceration (such as restitution) are less costly, more humane, and more effective than imprisonment in helping both victims and offenders; and

WHEREAS, our understanding of the Christian faith takes seriously the call to redemptive love, mercy and the sanctity of life; and

WHEREAS, the resumption of executions in this country has raised legal and moral questions about the ability of the state to administer such punishment justly and consistently; and

WHEREAS, we grieve for the victims of violent crimes and their families and seek means of dealing with criminal offenses, which do not increase the total violence in our society;

THEREFORE, The Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls for legislation to establish programs including restitution, which require perpetrators of crimes to compensate their victims and/or families of their victims, and requests the Commission for Racial Justice to participate in the work of the National Alliance to Reduce Imprisonment.

The Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls for an immediate moratorium on executions and for the development of alternative programs, which include persons convicted of capital crimes.

13. RECOGNITION OF THE REV. RALPH P. LEY

The Moderator indicated that a number of the important leaders of the United Church of Christ are retiring this year. Among them is the Rev. Ralph P. Ley, Conference Minister of the Wisconsin Conference, who not only has served long and well in that Conference but also has given great service to the United Church of Christ with his work as a member of many boards and committees.

**14. REPORT OF SECTION C — RESOLUTION ON
SUPPORT FOR THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR
TO WAR**

The moderator recognized the Rev. John Fortt (NY),