

. . . calls upon United Church of Christ congregations throughout the country to become knowledgeable about and supportive of community-based organizations which are providing services to AIDS patients, raising private funds for research, lobbying for federal, state and municipal funds for research and patient services, and undertaking the difficult task of making up-to-date information about this rapidly growing epidemic available to the public; and

. . . recognizes the debilitating effects of this illness and the high cost of treatment, declares its emphatic support for changes in Social Security Administration regulations which will enable AIDS patients to receive disability benefits and calls upon the President of the United States and members of the Congress of the United States to use their good offices to facilitate such changes so that undue suffering may be alleviated; and

. . . commends the United States Center for Disease Control for its responsible and vigorous efforts to meet the research funding needs demanded by this epidemic despite its limited budget as well as its continuous efforts to bring this epidemic to the attention of medical authorities, political leaders and the public at large; and

. . . calls upon the National Institutes of Health to more actively support AIDS research and to alter its policies to facilitate the generous and expeditious allocation of funds for AIDS-specific research; and

. . . calls upon the Congress of the United States to recognize the seriousness of the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome epidemic and to substantially increase the amount of funds available to the Center for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health for AIDS-specific research; and

. . . calls upon the United Church of Christ Office for Church in Society to monitor Congressional action on increased appropriations for AIDS research and to mobilize support for such appropriations throughout the United Church of Christ; and

. . . requests the President of the United Church of Christ to communicate this action to the President of the United States, all members of the Congress of the United States, the Directors of the Center for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health, to the Governors of the fifty United States, to selected municipal officials, and to the public media.

10. RESOLUTION ON MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS INVOLVING ALCOHOL

Ms. Cope continued the report of Section IV, moved the adoption of the Resolution on Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving Alcohol and called on the Rev. Michael Simmons (CAC), Chairperson of the small group that had considered the resolution, who spoke to the resolution.

The Moderator recognized Jonathan Tetherly (MA) who moved to amend the motion by inserting after the word "purview" in the fourth line of the third resolved section the words "other than mandatory incarceration." There was discussion. A motion to terminate debate on the motion to amend was adopted and when put to a vote, the motion to amend the motion was lost. Discussion on the main motion continued. The Moderator called for a vote on the main motion, and it was

83 GS 47 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving Alcohol.

RESOLUTION ON MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS INVOLVING ALCOHOL

Summary

Due to the extremely high number of deaths and disabling injuries on our highways involving alcohol, this resolution proposes action by the Board for Homeland Ministries, the Office for Church in Society, and the Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

Background

Over the past 10 years, the number of highway deaths involving alcohol has averaged a tragic 25,000 persons a year (i.e. 68/day). According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), drunken driving continues to be one of our nation's most serious health and safety problems.

Motor vehicle accidents were the sixth leading cause of death for all Virginians, for example, and the leading cause of death for those between the ages of ten and thirty-four. Some 50 percent of all drivers killed each year have blood alcohol concentrations in excess of the legal limit, 0.10 percent. About 60 percent of all fatal crashes involved a driver who had been drinking. In single vehicle fatal crashes, where it is reasonably certain who is at fault, upwards of 65 percent of those drivers who die are legally drunk.

Drunk driving has a high economic cost to this country as well. A conservative estimate is between five to six billion dollars a year, (i.e. \$13.7 million/day).

According to the National Safety Council, there were 50,800 deaths resulting from motor vehicle accidents in 1981, and 1,900,000 disabling injuries. This means that for every death, there are 37 persons disabled! This further means that approximately 950,000 disabling injuries resulted from alcohol related motor vehicle accidents in 1981 (2600/day). Hospital emergency room data show that injuries due to motor vehicle accidents are significantly more severe than those due to other causes.

Many misconceptions held by the general public about the drunken driver also cloud the issues. Contrary to popular opinion, for instance, the overwhelming bulk of motor vehicle crashes in which alcohol plays a role usually involve large quantities of alcohol and not merely one or two drinks.

It can be concluded from research and from crash statistics that alcohol-related crashes pose a serious problem in the highway environment and are one of the most difficult traffic safety problems to impact.

Biblical and Theological Rationale:

The biblical and theological basis for the church's concern and responsibility is rooted in the teaching of Jesus Christ. We are challenged to stand with the afflicted, the defenseless, the despised, and with those who are hurting.

The central teaching of the New Testament is that Christ loved us enough to die in our stead. Therefore, it is out of a profound sense of gratitude to Him that we feel a need to live morally and responsibly.

To serve God daily and as good stewards of His creation, and to respond to the commandment to love one another,

we then involve ourselves in the problems of our society. One such problem is the serious consequences of driving while intoxicated.

As yeast influences the whole loaf, Christians acting in concert, out of conviction, and led by the Holy Spirit, can significantly influence what happens in our society.

WHEREAS, approximately half of all motor vehicle related deaths in the United States involve alcohol; and

WHEREAS, approximately 25,000 deaths are due to motor vehicle accidents involving alcohol each year; and

WHEREAS, approximately 950,000 disabling injuries result from the same cause; and

WHEREAS, these deaths and disabling injuries impose tremendous pain and suffering upon the families affected and upon the community; and

WHEREAS, more deaths each year are due to motor vehicle accidents than any other cause for persons between the ages of 10 to 34; and

WHEREAS, we believe that Christians acting in concert can significantly influence what is happening in our society;

THEREFORE, the Fourteenth General Synod urges each individual, each Conference and congregation, all concerned civic organizations, and all levels of Government to take whatever actions possible within their purview to decrease the number of deaths and disabling injuries due to motor vehicle accidents involving alcohol; and

... calls on the Board for Homeland Ministries, together with the Office for Church in Society, to create a Task Force to determine specific ways the United Church of Christ membership, as individuals and as an organization, could actively participate in decreasing the number of deaths and disabling injuries due to motor vehicle accidents involving alcohol; and

... requests the President of the United Church of Christ to communicate to the President of the United States, appropriate members of Congress, and the Governors of the States, our concern about motor vehicle accidents involving alcohol and our support for actions which they may take in reducing the number of deaths and disabling injuries.

11. WORSHIP REFLECTION

The Moderator called on the Rev. Sarah Bentley who led the Synod in worship reflection.

12. RECONSIDERATION OF THE RESOLUTION ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

The Moderator reminded the General Synod that at the beginning of this evening's session, a motion was made to reconsider the Resolution on Christian Marriage and Family Life that had been adopted by the General Synod. The Moderator indicated that discussion was now in order on the motion to reconsider this action of the General Synod. There was extended discussion. A motion to terminate debate was adopted, and upon being put to a vote, the motion to reconsider was lost.

13. REPORT OF SECTION II

The Moderator called on the Rev. Robert Curry (ME), Chairperson for the report of Section II.

14. 1984/85 YOUTH BIENNIUM

Mr. Curry referred to the report of the Section and made

several corrections in the first item, 1984/1985 Youth Biennium, moved its adoption and called on Debora Dockstader (CAC), Chairperson of the small group that considered this resolution, to speak to the motion. There was discussion.

The Moderator recognized Dan Felson (IL) who moved to amend the motion by deleting from the fifth paragraph of the resolved section the words "under 21" and substituting the words "between the ages of 14 and 21." There was discussion. A motion to terminate debate was adopted. Upon being put to a vote, the motion to amend the motion was lost.

The Moderator recognized Eric Wirth (IS), who moved to amend the motion by adding at the end of the fifth paragraph of the resolved section the words "including full voting participation on local church, Association, Conference, national boards, Instrumentalities and other national bodies." A motion to terminate debate on the motion to amend and the main motion was adopted. Upon being put to a vote, the motion to amend the motion was lost. It was

83 GS 48 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on the 1984/1985 Youth Biennium.

RESOLUTION ON THE 1984/1985 YOUTH BIENNIUM

The United Church of Christ needs emphasis on involvement and empowerment of youth in ministry at all levels of the Church. This encouragement of youth ministries captures a concern and a vision that the Body of Christ includes young people as well as adults.

WHEREAS, the United Nations has declared 1985 as the International Year of Youth; and

WHEREAS, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth General Synods considered youth as a priority; and

WHEREAS, the youth of today are in need of guidance, caught in the struggle of media suggestions and peer influence which often obscure the religious life offered by the Church; and

WHEREAS, the Apostle Paul suggested that youth training should include the enabling of youth to fulfill their spiritual needs; and

WHEREAS, a lack of spiritual guidance and communications has caused some youth to turn to cults and other pseudo-religious groups; and

WHEREAS, a focus should be applied to bring closer understanding, communication and fellowship between adults and youth of the Church;

THEREFORE, the Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ designates 1984-85 as the youth biennium of the United Church of Christ; and

1. requests that the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, in concert with youth, plan opportunities and experiences that will enable our youth to make Christian faith decisions;
2. designates the 1984 National Youth Event of the United Church of Christ as the beginning of these opportunities and experiences;
3. urges the Conferences, Associations, plus local churches to plan events to complement United Nations activities of the International Year of Youth;
4. urges the Executive Council to dedicate one day of the