

United Church Board for Homeland Ministries,
the Corporate Board

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Polly S. Payton (NY)
Barbara F. Pinello (VT)
Evelyn Rice (FL)
Carolyn Rowland (CAL.N)
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Jacqueline Simpson (FL)

27. RESOLUTION ON UNIFORM PAYMENT POLICY OF HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR RETIRED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST MINISTERS AND SPOUSES

Mr. Esbenshade continued the report of Section V, moved the adoption of the Resolution on Uniform Payment Policy of Health Insurance Premiums for Retired United Church of Christ Ministers and Spouses and called upon Paul Peters (OH) to speak to the motion. There was discussion.

The Moderator indicated that time had expired for consideration of the report of Section V and continuation of the report would occur at the afternoon session.

28. RECOGNITION OF CONFERENCES FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR CHRISTIAN WORLD MISSION BASIC SUPPORT

The Moderator called on the Rev. Theodore S. Horvath, Associate Director of the Stewardship Council, to recognize

certain Conferences for their outstanding support of Our Christian World Mission Basic Support. Mr. Horvath said: "In each of the last two years, we have had a better than six percent increase for Basic Support for Our Christian World Mission, representing a total increase for the two years of \$2,879,000.00. In addition to the increases, this represents a high degree of commitment, conviction, and cooperation as we live out the covenantal relationship in the United Church of Christ in which and through which we are responsible to and for one another as we engage in the ministries and mission of the Church. We want to express appreciation to all of the Conferences and their congregations, to the pastors and lay leaders for this increase in support. Special gratitude is expressed to these Conferences that were recognized at the Thirteenth General Synod who have maintained their record of giving for another two years:

Connecticut, for highest per member giving for National Basic Support.

Washington-North Idaho, for highest per member giving for Total Basic Support.

Florida, for largest percentage increase in Total Basic Support during the past 5 years."

Mr. Horvath called on President Post to give recognition to those Conferences that have made special achievement during this past biennium.

Mr. Post expressed thanksgiving to God and great appreciation for this new level of stewardship by three Conferences, and presented plaques to the Rhode Island Conference for the second highest average in 1982 per member Total Basic Support with the award accepted by Mrs. Charlotte P. Gosselink, President of the Conference and Chairperson of the Board of Trustees; to the Illinois Conference for second largest dollar increase in 1982 Total Basic Support with the award being accepted by the Rev. Harriett N. Martin, Asso. Pastor, Elmhurst, IL.; to the New Hampshire Conference for the largest percentage increase in Total Basic Support during 1980-82 with the award being accepted by Mr. Douglas Hatfield, President of the Conference and Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

29. BIBLE STUDY

The Moderator called on Dr. William L. Holladay who led the General Synod in Bible Study based on Jeremiah 29.

30. RECOGNITION OF THE MINISTRY OF ALFRED C. BARTHOLOMEW

The Moderator called on Secretary Evans who spoke of the retirement of the Rev. Alfred C. Bartholomew, General Secretary of the Service Division of the United Church Board for World Ministries, and invited Alfred and Joyce Bartholomew to the platform. Mr. Evans said: "The United Church Board for World Ministries invites the delegates to this Fourteenth General Synod to join in celebrating the many years of faithful service and ministry of Alfred Bartholomew, General Secretary of the Service Division. We thank him! We love him! We applaud him! May God continue to bless him and Joyce as they move to a new time in their lives upon his retirement at the end of this year!" The delegates stood and recognized the Bartholomews with extended applause.

31. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Moderator called on Secretary Evans for the announcements.

32. RECESS

The Moderator declared the General Synod in recess until 1:30 p.m.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 28

1. CALL TO ORDER

The General Synod was called to order at 1:40 p.m., by the Moderator, Helen I. Barnhill.

2. REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE

The Moderator called on the Rev. Cally Rogers-Witte, Chairperson of the Agenda Committee, who indicated the schedule of reports to be considered at this session of the General Synod.

3. REPORT OF SECTION V CONTINUED

The Moderator reminded the delegates that at the conclusion of the morning session, the Synod was considering the Resolution on Uniform Payment Policy of Health Insurance Premiums for Retired United Church of Christ Ministers and Spouses and that the Rev. Carole Carlson was prepared to offer an amendment to the motion to adopt the Resolution.

4. RESOLUTION ON UNIFORM PAYMENT POLICY OF HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR RETIRED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST MINISTERS AND SPOUSES CONTINUED

The Moderator called on Ms. Carlson who moved to amend the motion by adding the word "Layworkers" to the title of the resolution, by adding the word "Layworkers" at the end of the fourth line of the new summary paragraph, by inserting the word "layworkers" in each paragraph following the words "retired ministers," and by changing the second sentence in Paragraph 3 to read "However, many UCC retired ministers, lay workers, and spouses find themselves in the middle retirement benefit bracket," and by inserting a new first sentence in Paragraph 4 to read "The present Policies in Conferences and Associations concerning assistance toward health insurance premiums relate only to retired ministers and spouses."

There was discussion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion to amend the motion was adopted. It was

83 GS 66 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts as amended the Resolution on Uniform Payment Policy of Health Insurance Premiums for Retired UCC Ministers, Layworkers, and Spouses.

RESOLUTION ON UNIFORM PAYMENT POLICY OF HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR RETIRED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST MINISTERS, LAYWORKERS, AND SPOUSES

Summary

This resolution calls upon the Fourteenth General Synod to recommend that the Executive Council and the United Church of Christ Pension Boards gather information and develop a plan for a Church-wide United Church of Christ payment policy of Health Insurance Premiums for Retired Ministers, Layworkers and Spouses including an implementation plan to be presented to the Fifteenth General Synod.

Background Information

At the Eleventh General Synod, the following two Overtures were presented: 1) On payment of Health Insurance Premiums for Retired Ministers and their Spouses; and 2) United Church of Christ Retirement Income Supplementation Fund for Lay Workers. The Eleventh General Synod directed the Executive Council "to provide for a study that would thoroughly research the matter as a total UCC responsibility to its retired ministers, layworkers, and their spouses, and present a recommendation for a uniform policy to the Twelfth General Synod for its consideration" (77 GS 69). As a result of this study, the Twelfth General Synod did adopt a supplementation policy for Health Insurance Premiums for Retired Ministers, Layworkers and spouses. Guidelines for supplementation are as follows:

1. The general requirement concerning income levels and age at retirement, death and disability shall be the same as that established for the supplementation of clergy and layworkers small annuities;
2. The individual shall have been a participant in the United Church of Christ denominational health insurance plan administered through a Conference or national Instrumentality for the five consecutive years prior to retirement, death or disability; and
3. The retired individual is currently participating in the continuing plan for retirement clergy or layworkers provided through the denominational plan in which the individual has participated during the five years preceding the retirement, death, or disability of the member." (79 GS 66)

The Twelfth General Synod also recommended that the above policy be followed by Conferences. The Council of Conference Ministers was asked to explore the implications of this policy for retired clergy receiving payment assistance toward their health insurance premiums.

There is in fact no uniform practice among Association and Conferences for retired ministers and spouses. In October 1982, Dr. William K. Laurie, Ohio Conference Minister, conducted a survey of assistance policies among the Conferences. Twenty-three Conferences responded to the inquiry. For retired ministers and spouses, the results were as follows:

- 9 Conferences—Provide no assistance
- 8 Conferences—Provide 50% of premium assistance
- 6 Conferences—Provide 100% of premium assistance

In most Conferences, retired ministers must have served the last five years of their ministry within the Conference before being eligible for assistance. Conference Ministers indicated that there is need for a national uniform policy to be administered by the United Church of Christ Pension Boards. None of the Conferences responding to Dr.

Laurie's survey indicated whether they were supplementing layworker's health insurance premiums.

Under the current guidelines adopted by the General Synod (79 GS 66) retired ministers, layworkers and spouses with small annuities are receiving some assistance. At the October 1982 Executive Council meeting, it was authorized that the supplementation of health insurance cost for eligible participants be increased from \$94.50 per annum to \$186.00, effective January 1, 1983. The health insurance supplementation included the cost of dental insurance.

It is recognized that there are retired ministers, layworkers and spouses with an adequate retirement income who are able to absorb the health insurance premiums. However, many UCC retired ministers, layworkers and spouses find themselves in the middle retirement benefit bracket. The escalation of health insurance premiums is now becoming a burden to them at a time of life when health care is apt to be most necessary.

The present policies in Conferences and Associations concerning assistance toward health insurance premiums related only to retired ministers and spouses. For example, four retired ministers who reside within Central Southeast Ohio Association retain their standing in the Associations where they served prior to retirement. If they transferred ministerial standing to Central Southeast Ohio Association, they would lose the benefits from their former Association or Conference. Furthermore, they would not be eligible to receive premium assistance because they had not served the last five years of ministry in the Association where they now reside. While not all Associations or Conferences would terminate insurance premium assistance upon transfer of ministerial standing from one Association to another, there are those that do. Thus another inequity exists.

In the majority of Conferences, health insurance assistance is provided by Basic Support dollars. As insurance premiums continue to rise sharply, this becomes a budgetary concern for Associations and Conferences. Within the Ohio Conference, Associations were confronted with a crisis situation concerning the 1983 premium costs. Consequently, the Board of Trustees authorized that the Annual Christmas Fund be promoted in such a manner as to insure that the national appeal would receive a fair increase and that the amount over and above would be utilized to supplement health insurance premiums for retired ministers and spouses.

The issue before this denomination is to develop an equitable policy and practice so that no one in the system will be hurt. In order to implement a national policy, the Executive Council and Pension Boards in consultation with the Council of Conference Executives should set guidelines taking into consideration all existing practices. In order to promote the transition from present system(s) to a national policy and practice, the Associations and Conferences would provide funds from Basic Support and other sources that are currently being budgeted for premium payment supplementation.

WHEREAS, The United Church of Christ voices and publicly acclaim its concern for human dignity for all peoples in all nations, so do we recognize and acknowledge our concern for those who have devoted a portion of their

lives in the furtherance of the church's obligations and mandates, as known and related to them; and

WHEREAS, there is no uniform practice among Associations and Conferences regarding payment assistance for health insurance premiums for retired ministers and spouses; and

WHEREAS, the current practice among Associations and Conferences is not equitable in that some provide 100% or 50% assistance for premium payments while others provide no assistance whatever; and

WHEREAS, the present supplementation policy does not provide assistance for all retirement brackets, and Conferences and Associations have had to provide assistance for the majority of UCC retired ministers; and

WHEREAS, the current funding practices among Associations and Conferences does affect the total mission of the United Church of Christ,

THEREFORE, the Fourteenth General Synod recommends that the Executive Council and the UCC Pension Boards gather information and develop a plan for a church-wide UCC payment policy of health insurance premiums for retired ministers, layworkers and spouses, including an implementation plan, to be presented to the Fifteenth General Synod in 1985; and

THEREFORE, the Fourteenth General Synod recommends that the Executive Council and the United Church of Christ Pension Boards implement by January 1, 1985 a uniform UCC supplementation policy regarding Health Insurance premiums for retired ministers, layworkers and spouses; and

That the Executive Council and the United Church of Christ Pension Boards in consultation with the Council of Conference Ministers develop supplementations guidelines and funding procedure for payment of retired ministers', layworkers' and spouses' health insurance premiums beyond current supplementation.

5. RESOLUTION ON AFFIRMING THE INTEGRITY OF THE BIBLE

Mr. Esbshade continued the report of Section V, referred the delegates to Advance Materials V, page 41, moved the adoption of the Resolution on Affirming the Integrity of the Bible, and called on John Syster (FL) Chairperson to the small group that considered this resolution, to speak to the motion. There was discussion. It was

83 GS 67 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Affirming the Integrity of the Bible.

RESOLUTION ON AFFIRMING THE INTEGRITY OF THE BIBLE

WHEREAS, due to the proliferation of Bible translations and paraphrases, there is confusion among people in our churches in distinguishing 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; and

WHEREAS, we believe that the church has continuing