

protection in their own right through either the Social Security system or an annuity plan,

WHEREAS local churches hire lay employees such as secretaries, custodians, organists, choir directors and directors of Christian Education, many of whom are employed only part-time, and often fail to join the Social Security system, rendering these lay employees utterly without protection,

WHEREAS Associations and Conferences demonstrate, by their actions, leadership for churches and church-related institutions,

WHEREAS lay employees, whether full-time or part-time, need the protection of the Social Security system and an additional annuity plan in order to accrue benefits at all their positions in order to acquire adequate total pension benefits for retirement, and

WHEREAS the Pension Boards, through the Retirement Fund for Lay Workers, does provide an annuity plan vehicle for providing additional pension protection for lay employees,

THEREFORE, The Fourteenth General Synod:

REQUESTS the Office for Church Life and Leadership, in cooperation with the Pension Boards, to undertake a vigorous program of education with United Church of Christ churches, Associations, Conferences, national Instrumentalities and UCC-related institutions concerning the pension needs of lay church employees and the need to participate in both the Social Security system and the Retirement Fund for Lay Workers,

URGES all Associations and Conferences to adopt personnel policies which assure Social Security and annuity protection for each member of their staffs,

URGES all local churches, Associations, Conferences, national Instrumentalities and church-related institutions to participate in the Social Security system and to enroll their lay employees, both full-time and part-time, in the Retirement Fund for Lay Workers, or some other adequate plan, and to pay the recommended dues on their behalf,

URGES Associations and Conferences to assist local churches in understanding the importance and ethical imperative of their providing adequate pension protection for their lay employees and to assist the churches in taking the necessary steps to secure needed coverage,

URGES the Office for Church Life and Leadership and the Board for Homeland Ministries to include the need for adequate pension protection for lay employees in all their publications and planning for meetings and events addressing the concerns of lay employees, and

URGES the Association of United Church Educators to continue to advocate for adequate pension protection for lay Christian educators.

8. RESOLUTION ON ASSURING THE FUTURE OF CHURCH-RELATED AND OTHER INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. Esbenshade continued the report of Section V, referred the delegates to the Section report, moved the adoption of the Resolution on Assuring the Future of Church-Related and Other Independent Colleges and

Universities, and called on Jean Thomas (PNE), Chairperson of the small group that had considered the resolution, to speak to the motion. There was no discussion, and it was

83 GS 90 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Assuring the Future of Church-Related and Other Independent Colleges and Universities.

RESOLUTION ON ASSURING THE FUTURE OF CHURCH-RELATED AND OTHER INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

WHEREAS the historic involvement of the United Church of Christ and each of its four predecessor communions in the founding and nurturing of independent educational institutions and in support for education at all levels represents a proud heritage of more than three centuries of service to church and society;

WHEREAS the contemporary involvement of the United Church of Christ in education at all levels and its support, in particular, for thirty independent liberal arts colleges which are members of the Council for Higher Education of the United Church of Christ represent continuing commitments to higher learning and to partnership between church and school as integral parts of the church's mission for its own life and the elevation of society;

WHEREAS the American system of higher education, equality of opportunity and the quality of life in our democratic society are enhanced because of the viable presence of both government-sponsored and independent educational institutions which each serve the public good;

WHEREAS the continued viability, and service of many church-related and other small, independent colleges and universities, including most of the colleges related to the United Church of Christ, are gravely threatened by the economic realities of the day, including small endowments, less wealthy alumni and friends, and declining student enrollments, especially among lower and middle-income students, because of cut-backs in student aid by government and increasing competition from state universities and colleges;

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has committed itself through several earlier actions of General Synods: "To join with the Council for Higher Education in seeking continued and increased United Church of Christ support at national, Conference, Association and local levels for each of the institutions through a variety of means";

The Fourteenth General Synod, United Church of Christ, calls upon the United Church of Christ at all levels:

1. To renew commitment to education in general and to church-related and other independent colleges and universities in particular;
2. To continue to endorse and participate in support programs which call the educational institutions related to the United Church of Christ to the attention of prospective students, and which seek increased visibility for, and awareness of, church-related higher education within the United Church of Christ; and
3. To support efforts to achieve closer cooperation with educational institutions related to the United Church of Christ, including the establishment of Conference

task forces on education for purposes of vigorous advocacy and support.

The Fourteenth General Synod, United Church of Christ, calls upon the Council for Higher Education of the United Church of Christ, in cooperation with the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, the Office for Church in Society, and other appropriate instrumentalities and national bodies:

1. To recommend programs of advocacy and strategies for assessing, monitoring, and interpreting the impact of public policy on education, especially as public policy affects church-related educational institutions and with particular attention to the needs of poor and moderate-income students; and
2. Requests the Council for Higher Education to report to the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ on its continuing efforts to assure the future of church-related and other independent colleges and universities.

9. RESOLUTION ON INCLUSIVENESS ON ASSOCIATION CHURCH AND MINISTRY COMMITTEES

Mr. Esbshade continued the report of Section V, referred the delegates to the New Business document, Part II, page 39, to the Section report, moved the adoption of the Resolution on Inclusiveness on Association Church and Ministry Committees, and called on James Walters (PC), Chairperson of the small group that considered this resolution, to speak to the motion. There was discussion.

The Moderator recognized Alice Young (IK), who moved to amend the motion by reinserting the seventh Whereas paragraph to the resolution that had been deleted by the Section. There was discussion. 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 main motion was lost. It was

83 GS 91 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Inclusiveness on Association Church and Ministry Committees.

RESOLUTION ON INCLUSIVENESS ON ASSOCIATION CHURCH AND MINISTRY COMMITTEES

WHEREAS St. Paul admonished the church in Rome to cease condemnation with these words: "Who will be the accuser of God's chosen ones? It is God who pronounces acquittal; then who can condemn? It is Christ—Christ who died, and, more than that, was raised from the dead—who is at God's right hand, and indeed pleads our cause"; (Romans 8:31-34) and

WHEREAS St. Paul affirmed the inclusive nature of God's grace and love with these words: "Then what can separate us from the love of Christ? Can affliction or hardship? Can persecution, hunger, nakedness, peril, or the sword? 'We are being done to death for thy sake all the day long,' as Scripture says; 'we have been treated like sheep for slaughter'—and yet, in spite of all, overwhelming victory is ours through him who loved us. For I am convinced that there is nothing in death or life, in the realm of spirits or superhuman powers, in the world as it is or the world as it shall be, in the forces of the universe, in heights or depths—nothing in all creation that can

separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord"; (Romans 8:35-39) and

WHEREAS throughout the history of the Christian Church, God has called persons of every sexual orientation to the Christian ministry and such persons have brought to the ministry commitment to the Gospel of Christ, selfless dedication in the service of humanity, and the clarity and strength of their personal faith in Christ and the all-sufficient truth of God's abiding love and grace irrespective of their individual sexual orientations; and

WHEREAS there is growing awareness within the United Church of Christ that same-gender oriented persons called by God to ministry have faithfully proclaimed the Gospel and served the church with honor and dedication while enduring immeasurable suffering because the church has been unwilling to affirm their full personhood, inclusive of their same-gender orientation, and has perpetuated discriminatory practices causing such ministers to fear the loss of employment and the violation of Christian vocation as ordained ministers; and

WHEREAS lesbian and gay United Church of Christ seminarians, many of whom have been baptized and nurtured in the Christian faith in United Church of Christ congregations, have responded to God's call to ministry and are preparing themselves for Christian vocations, including the ordained ministry; and

WHEREAS many such seminarians have already affirmed their lesbian and gay identities, have a comprehensive knowledge of their personal sexual orientation, live responsible and socially conscious lifestyles, and understand the dynamics of homophobic oppression in their own lives, in the church, and in the society as a whole; and

WHEREAS United Church of Christ associations which have elected lesbian and gay laypersons and clergy to Church and Ministry committees have found their contributions to the work of those committees to be invaluable in bringing understanding and sensitivity to the inclusive nature of God's love and God's liberating activity in calling same-gender oriented persons to the Christian ministry; and

WHEREAS the Church has a responsibility to affirm the inclusive nature of God's love for all persons and to cease its discriminatory practices toward persons seeking to serve God and humanity through Christian vocation; and

WHEREAS lesbian and gay clergy within the United Church of Christ have been called to specific ministries, including parish ministry, and have and are demonstrating that irrational fears about their ability to exercise their ministries responsibly are unfounded;

THEREFORE, the Fourteenth General Synod calls upon congregations, Associations, and Conferences of the United Church of Christ to be faithful in continuing educational efforts designed to increase understanding of same-gender oriented persons and their commitment to the Christian faith and to the church; and

Recommends that Associations throughout the United Church of Christ be open to consideration of the nomination and election of avowed lesbian and gay laypersons and clergy to their Church and Ministry committees.