

responsive to the call of service in the service of all personhood, whether through volunteerism or seeking a job based on a given "call" after an extensive education. We are asking you to remember the various contributions made by persons with disabilities in the past, such people as Albert Einstein, Helen Keller, Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas A. Edison, to name but a few. Employing persons with disabilities should be the least problem in our churches. The past (4) Synods have addressed attitudinal changes. We ask now for the next step; full inclusion into the life and workings of the church.

WHEREAS, there are over 36 million persons with disabilities in the United States, and that number is increasing daily and,

WHEREAS, the past four Synods have affirmed and reaffirmed the full participation of persons with disabilities in the life and leadership of the church and society, and

WHEREAS, through the completion and return of the Accessibility Chart mailed to each church (a 90% return), we applaud the progress being made by our churches, yet recognize that deficiencies are still present.

The Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ

- 1) challenges each church to raise its own aggregate score on the Accessibility Chart by a minimum of 20% by June, 1987.
- 2) urges associations, conferences, and instrumentalities and other national bodies to plan and hold their meetings in accessible locations.
- 3) calls upon the denomination to continue to monitor governmental actions that will have an impact upon the quality of life of persons with disabilities and to inform the instrumentalities and other national bodies, church related institutions, conferences, associations, local churches, and advocates for persons with disabilities of these changes.
- 4) recommends that local churches, associations, conferences, and instrumentalities and other national bodies seek out persons with disabilities to become actively involved in all aspects of the church. Further, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ recommends to the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries the following action steps for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, including employment opportunities, as guidelines for becoming more open:

**Leadership Training:** To begin a program, by January 1986, to educate staff members of conferences and associations in ways to provide leadership training to local churches and other church related institutions regarding the issue of inclusiveness. In addition, attention should focus on the future professional and volunteer employment in all aspects of the Church for persons with various disabilities.

**Self-Evaluation Studies:** To develop by March 1986, instruments, including models, to enable local churches and church related institutions to evaluate themselves and their facilities in terms of architectural, attitudinal, and programmatic accessibility and functionality, including a compilation of areas of need, and the cost necessary to meet those needs. Employment of all persons with disabilities, including clergy should be considered.

**Transition Plan:** To develop by October 1986, a process to implement the areas of change as determined by the local churches and church related institutions. An effort should be made to monitor and assist in the actual implementation of the above.

Further, it is requested that a progress report be submitted to the Sixteenth General Synod.

**Financial Implications:** Fifty thousand dollars for each of three consecutive years subject to the availability of funds.

## 12. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The Moderator next introduced Rev. James Bowley, Chairperson of Committee #16, who pointed out that in the report of Committee #16, the word "therefore" should be inserted in front of "Be It Resolved" in the first paragraph, and that the two paragraphs of the report will replace the final paragraph printed in the Advance Materials Section III, page 15. On behalf of the Committee, Mr. Bowley moved that the Fifteenth General Synod adopt, "A Resolution on Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action."

There was debate and an amendment was moved and defeated to strike "protected class" from the last paragraph. Debate was closed, and

85-GS-45 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopted the Resolution "Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action."

### EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Coordinator is charged with the responsibility of monitoring the employment and hiring policies of the United Church of Christ, relative to equal hiring and placement of minorities on Boards, Agencies and staff of the United Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, the United Church Board for World Ministries has had intentional efforts to implement and encourage full participation of minorities in the mission of the World Board through overseas placement, service on boards and agencies by appointing Mr. Richard Stenhouse as a consultant to the United Black Christians of the UCC for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, the United Black Christians have passed a resolution in support of these actions on the part of the United Church Board for World Ministries;

THEREFORE, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms the effort of the United Church Board for World Ministries to place minorities in its mission service and further encourages a continued intentional effort to that end;

FURTHER, the Fifteenth General Synod directs the Coordinator of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action to give its intentional support to the placement of under represented protected class individuals by working in close cooperation with the Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Coordinator.

At this time, Mr. Bowley introduced Mr. Jesse Alexander, EEO/Affirmative Action Coordinator of the United Church of Christ.