

of de-institutionalization during the past two decades; and  
WHEREAS, these people may account for more than 50 per cent of the homeless; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance or perpetuation of myths, the mentally ill are often discriminated against in finding housing and employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, while there is no known cure for chronic mental illness, those who are afflicted can be helped by proper medical treatment and by the emotional support of caring family and friends; and

WHEREAS, we are called to be instruments of God's love to all and especially to those who are ill, discriminated against, lonely, unaccepted and neglected;

THEREFORE, The Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

Requests that the appropriate division of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, in cooperation with the Council for Health and Human Services establish a network throughout the United Church of Christ, actively to develop and disseminate information about the nature of chronic mental illness and which can fight discrimination and fear directed toward those suffering from these disorders;

Encourages congregations to develop specific programs of church wide education on mental health and illness to help dispel the ignorance, fear and stigma so prevalent in our society;

Encourages congregations to reach out to persons with chronic mental illness and welcome them into the community of Christ and extend the ministry of care to their families;

Encourages congregations, within their local communities, to coordinate and to help establish and support supervised apartments or group homes, employment projects and constructive daily activities for those suffering chronic mental illness;

Calls upon local congregations and national instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ, especially the Office for Church in Society, the appropriate division of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Council for Health and Human Services to be advocates for supporting the needs of those in our communities who suffer from chronic mental illness.

No financial implications.

#### 4. HOMELESS YOUTH

Rev. Sandra Graham, on behalf of Committee #24, also moved that the Fifteenth General Synod adopt the Resolution on, "Homeless Youth." The newly elected Executive Council member, class of 1991, Mr. Antoine Crenshaw spoke to the resolution, as did other delegates.

85-GS-68 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Homeless Youth."

#### HOMELESS YOUTH

WHEREAS, youth are increasingly victimized by dreadful housing shortages and deteriorating family conditions; and

WHEREAS, many youth are forced into the streets at an early age; and

WHEREAS, young people's lives are constantly being physi-

cally, mentally and spiritually threatened, resulting in drug abuse, prostitution and ultimately, suicide; and,

WHEREAS, the homeless youth situation causes pain and suffering, for the homeless youth and for family units thus broken; and

WHEREAS, the homeless youth are often diverted to other ways of life not prescribed by the good news of the gospel; and

WHEREAS, the Church is called to care for the oppressed, the hurting, and the homeless; and

WHEREAS, General Synod XIV voted a youth/young adult ministry priority,

THEREFORE, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ requests that the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries:

—Initiate the development of programs identifying and addressing the needs of homeless youth;

—Create effective models of preventive counseling ministries in consultation with youth, young adults, other adults and appropriate resources;

—Report its progress and actions to the Executive Council by the Fall of 1986;

—Apprise the conferences, associations, local churches and appropriate instrumentalities of the needs of homeless youth as well as suggested models for action.

Financial Implications: The implementation of this resolution is subject to availability of funds.

#### 4. HUNGRY AND HOMELESS

Ms. Graham then moved on behalf of Committee #24 that the Fifteenth General Synod adopt the Resolution on, "The Hungry and the Homeless." Ms. Graham spoke to the resolution. There was discussion. Rev. Peggy McClanahan (NEB), moved to add at the end of the "therefore" second paragraph: "and the positive results of our ministry among them."

Another amendment was moved by Rev. Wes Haynes, Maine Conference,

"Be it further resolved that the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

—urges that local congregations, associations, conferences, agencies and instrumentalities be voices for and with the poor in advocating public policies which address the systemic causes and the inadequate funding of programs which have increased the number of hungry and homeless in our society."

The Amendment was adopted.

85-GS-69 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "The Hungry and the Homeless" as amended.

#### THE HUNGRY AND THE HOMELESS

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ has been given a Gospel mandate to feed the hungry and to share our daily bread with our neighbor; and

WHEREAS, in the United States, "Hunger in America a Growing Epidemic," a recent study by the Physicians' Task Force on Hunger in America, shows that as many as

20,000,000 people are likely to go hungry at least two days each month; and

WHEREAS, recent studies estimate that there are 10,000 homeless people in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area and 30,000 in the St. Louis metropolitan area, and there are many, homeless throughout America; and

WHEREAS, the Physicians' Task Force estimates that \$5 to \$7 billion a year in added outlays for food aid would end the hunger problem in the United States alone; and

WHEREAS, there is still much work to be done in advocating and providing services for the hungry and the homeless;

THEREFORE, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

—Affirms the efforts of congregations, associations, conferences and instrumentalities as they have responded to the call of Christ heard in the voices of the poor of our nation;

—Urges the Stewardship Council, during the biennium 1985-1987 to highlight the work of congregations and agencies ministering among the homeless and the hungry of our land, dramatizing as boldly as possible the suffering of the poor, and the positive results of our ministry among them;

—Requests that the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, in consultation with the Council of Conference Ministers, create and implement a design which provides funding, staff support and encouragement to assist congregations in feeding the hungry and housing the homeless;

—Asks that the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries submit a report to the Sixteenth General Synod.

FURTHER, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

—Urges that local congregations, associations, conferences, agencies and instrumentalities be voices for and with the poor in advocating public policies which address the systemic causes and the inadequate funding of programs which have increased the number of hungry and homeless in our society.

Financial Implications: subject to the availability of funds.

## 6. INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LECTIONARY: A CASE OF CENSORING HOLY SCRIPTURES

The Moderator called on Ms. Carol Fujita of the Southern California Conference, Chairperson of Committee #22. Ms. Fujita presented the Resolution submitted by 7 local churches in Illinois as new business by Rev. David Kimberly (NY), "Inclusive Language Lectionary: A Case of Censoring the Holy Scriptures."

Ms. Fujita moved on behalf of Committee #22, that no action be taken on this resolution.

85-GS-70 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod takes no action on the resolution "Inclusive Language Lectionary: A Case of Censoring the Scripture".

## 7. DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OF PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

The Assistant Moderator, Mr. Guy T. Outlaw moved to the microphone and called on Rev. Robert Brauning, (NEB),

Chairperson of Committee #17 who spoke to the committee report. On behalf of the Committee, Mr. Brauning moved that the Fifteenth General Synod adopt the Resolution on, "The Discriminatory Treatment of Prisoners of Conscience. Mr. Brauning then spoke to the resolution as did many others.

An amendment was moved, seconded and discussed to change the following:

Paragraph 1, line 2: add "all" before prisoners, strike the rest of the paragraph and substitute "especially prisoners of conscience". The amendment was defeated.

85-GS-71 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "The Discriminatory Treatment of Prisoners of Conscience."

## THE DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OF PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

### THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

The New Testament Scriptures inform us that Christ had a concern and an interest for those who were in captivity and imprisoned. This concern is reflected in the beginning of His public ministry where in Luke 4:16-20 He says that He is the One who has come to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and release to the captive and freedom to the oppressed.

Hebrews 13:3 reminds us to "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity as being yourselves also in the body."

Jesus clearly manifested in Matthew 25:31-40 his personal concern for incarcerated people and emphasized that the relationship with those in need is part of our Christian responsibility. "When did we see you, Lord? . . . When I was in prison you came to me. If you do it to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you have done it unto me."

The Scriptures commit us to bring to your attention the cry for justice and mercy for prisoners who are subjected to discriminatory treatment from the prison officials. Because we are called by Christ to bring the good news to the captives and to preach release to the oppressed, we have a responsibility to improve the prison conditions of prisoners.

WHEREAS, participants at the UCC National Meeting of Women in July 1984 were moved by an urgent concern for the plight of incarcerated women, particularly of Alejandrina Torres in the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Chicago, and sent to Norman Carlson, Director of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons, 500 letters of protest which condemned such inhuman treatment; and

WHEREAS, the President of the UCC appointed an Investigative Team which included representation from the CCW, the Executive Council, and other national bodies to look into the conditions of the imprisonment of Alejandrina Torres; and

WHEREAS, continued investigation by Church representatives has revealed treatment which violates the civil and human rights of prisoners who conscientiously object to a particular position of their governments;

WHEREAS, women who are prisoners of conscience have been subjected to particular physical and mental cruelties not practiced with other inmates such as restricted visiting