

Churches of Christ in the United States of America in supporting legislation which will make the Charitable Contributions Law Permanent by removing the provision in the present law that causes it to expire on December 31, 1986.

5. CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING BECOMING AN ALL-CHURCH OFFERING

Mr. Cope introduced the Christmas Fund Offering and the Family Thank Offering becoming all-church offerings by referring to Section II of the Advance Materials, pages 26 and 27.

The Moderator recommended dividing the two issues and dealing with the Christmas Fund Offering first.

Mr. Cope moved that the Christmas Fund Offering become an all-church offering. Following discussion,

85-GS-79 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod commends to the churches, the Christmas Fund Offering of the Pension Boards as an All-Church Offering to be taken during the Christmas season. The purposes of the Christmas Fund are established by the Pension Boards. Funds received from this offering are administered by the Pension Boards which has responsibility and authority for their promotion and use according to the purposes of the Christmas Fund.

6. FAMILY THANK OFFERING BECOMES AN ALL-CHURCH OFFERING

Mr. Cope moved that the Family Thank Offering become an all-church offering.

During discussion a motion was made by Rev. E. Barent Grevatt, to change "1987" to read "1988". After discussion on the amendment, it was passed,

Rev. Richard Vaught moved to amend the motion by adding the following as the last sentence:

"This offering will be called 'Family Thank Offering' only as long as 65% goes for traditional kinds of Family Thank Offering projects." Following discussion, the amendment was defeated.

85-GS-80 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod establishes an All-Church Offering to be promoted in the spring after Easter, beginning in 1988, which shall expand the present Family Thank Offering. The offering shall be administered by the Executive Council as General Synod ad interim and its proceeds used for the purpose of strengthening leadership and churches within the UCC. The Executive Council in consultation with the Council of Instrumentality Executives and the Council of Conference Ministers shall develop the procedures for allocation of the proceeds of the offering. The Fifteenth General Synod directs the Executive Council, in consultation with the Stewardship Council, to name the offering, and directs the Stewardship Council to promote the offering, keeping before the Church in its promotion, the various traditions of the Special Appeals this offering will include.

7. SANCTUARY AND POLITICAL ASYLUM FOR SOUTH AFRICAN REFUGEES IN THE UNITED STATES

The Moderator introduced Mrs. Delores Foster, Chairperson of Committee #21, who referred to Section III, pages 18 and 19. Mrs. Foster moved the Fifteenth General Synod adopt the resolution on Sanctuary and Political Asylum.

85-GS-81 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopts the

Resolution "Sanctuary and Political Asylum for South African Refugees in the U.S."

SANCTUARY AND POLITICAL ASYLUM FOR SOUTH AFRICAN REFUGEES IN THE U.S.

WHEREAS, the Republic of South Africa has established apartheid laws which ultimately victimize all of South Africa; and

WHEREAS, those 23 million indigenous people who are a majority of the population are being denied the human right to vote, live and work where they wish, organize and band together for their liberation and self-determination; and

WHEREAS, the system of apartheid is theologically indefensible and the United Church of Christ affirms the cost and joy of discipleship; and

WHEREAS, the Fourteenth General Synod has gone on record as supporting sanctuary for refugees from Central America; and

WHEREAS, this Commission for Racial Justice and the entire United Church of Christ have gone on record with previous resolutions against the apartheid government and U.S. tolerance of it; and

WHEREAS, there have been 18 million arrests for passbook offenses in the last 60 years, and 163,000 arrests in 1984 alone—which averages out to one arrest every three minutes; and

WHEREAS, the denial of political asylum and the deportation policies of the United States go against what we know as the humane, moral and spiritual values taught in our churches and other community institutions; and

WHEREAS, more than 3,000 people of conscience, including the President and several executives of the United Church of Christ, supporting the Free South Africa movement, have submitted themselves for arrest to demonstrate their opposition to the sub-human plight of Black Africans and other South African people under the apartheid system; and

WHEREAS, Lincoln Congregational Temple, United Church of Christ, Washington, D.C., has offered sanctuary to Them-bekile Xiphu, a South African refugee who has been deemed "deportable" by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service;

THEREFORE, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ supports local UCC churches who offer sanctuary to South African refugees; and supports South African refugees who seek official political asylum in the United States, and;

FURTHER, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the Commission for Racial Justice and the United Church Board for World Ministries to programmatically respond to the issues of sanctuary and asylum for South African refugees in the United States, working in cooperation with other Instrumentalities, National Bodies, Conferences, Associations and local churches of the United Church of Christ, and;

FURTHER, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, through the Office of the President, issues an immediate call to all pastors and congregations. This call would urge an active advocacy campaign to call upon the United States government to grant asylum to South African refugees who are seeking refuge in the United States.