

The Office will also work in relation to other ecclesiological issues as appropriate.

The Office for Church in Society will work with The Council for American Indian Ministry on national issues of justice particularly through the Washington office as they concern the administration, Congress and judicial issues. The Stewardship Council will work collaboratively with The Council for American Indian Ministry on interpretation of The Council for American Indian Ministry, on the promotion of the Neighbors in Need offering, and other means of informing the United Church of Christ about the church's mission with Indians.

The Office of Communication will assist in communicating throughout the United Church of Christ, and to the secular press where appropriate, news of the work of The Council for American Indian Ministry and Indian churches.

The Commission for Racial Justice will maintain a close relationship with The Council for American Indian Ministry for the mutual benefit of each body.

The Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries shall maintain The Council for American Indian Ministry's membership in that body and work to develop productive relationships between The Council for American Indian Ministry and the organizations of the other racial/ethnic groups.

The Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, or its successor body, shall maintain a close relationship with The Council for American Indian Ministry for the mutual benefit of each body.

The Council for Health and Human Services Ministries shall make consultation services available to The Council for American Indian Ministry and work collaboratively in appropriate ways.

The conferences in which Indian congregations reside are requested to develop a close working relationship with The Council for American Indian Ministry in relation to church and ministry issues, the participation of Indians in the lives, structures, and programs of the conferences, and in areas of support that are beneficial to the conference and to The Council for American Indian Ministry.

Local churches throughout the United Church of Christ may find it of value to engage in partnerships with individual Indian congregations for purposes of education and mutual support. Congregations are also urged to be well informed about the situation of the Indian churches and people.

All bodies in the United Church of Christ are urged to consult with The Council for American Indian Ministry to secure an Indian perspective when making decisions about Indian issues, funding Indian programs, or working on justice questions. Indian issues are normally very complex with difficult histories, with non-Indians not often understanding their deep ambiguity. The Council for American Indian Ministry is to be a resource to the church on all such questions, providing information from the inside to assist other bodies in making their decisions.

A Coordinating Committee formed by staff representatives from the Executive Office, United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, Office for Church Life and Leadership, Office for Church in Society, Council for American Indian Ministry shall meet at least once a year to implement this Proposal for Action.

The Sixteenth General Synod recommends to the President that the Executive Director of the Council for American Indian Ministry will be a member of the United Church of Christ Executives.

## 9. A STATEMENT TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST AND THE INDIAN COMMUNITY

Ms. Kingsbury, Chairperson of Committee 7, then moved to amend, "A Statement to the United Church of Christ and the Indian Community of the United Church of Christ Expressing Penitence and the Hope of Reconciliation" on behalf of her committee.

Rev. Thomas Walter moved the addition of the word "religion" in two places in the document. After discussion the motion carried.

87-GS-59 Voted: The Sixteenth General Synod adopts "A Statement to the UCC and the Indian Community of the UCC Expressing Penitence and the Hope of Reconciliation" as amended.

### **Statement to the United Church of Christ and the Indian Community of the United Church of Christ Expressing Penitence and the Hope of Reconciliation**

WHEREAS, 1987 is a Year of Reconciliation in Minnesota between the dominant culture and the Indian people. Part of the remembrances is dealing with the 1862 Indian and white conflict.

WHEREAS, last year the United Church of Canada apologized to native people for their historical and present lack of sensitivity to them and to their religious heritage.

WHEREAS, our Indian Concern Committee believes that the Minnesota Conference should lead the United Church of Christ in addressing our Church's wrongs against the Indians.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Sixteenth General Synod adopts the following statement:

The United Church of Christ through its long involvement with Indian people bears a heavy burden of responsibility—as part of the dominant culture—for the ongoing injustice and religious imperialism that have been so disruptive of the inherent values of Indian life and culture.

The United Church of Christ through its antecedent bodies was the first Protestant church to have a mission relationship with the Indians of North America. Beginning with the initial overtures between the Pilgrims and the New England tribes; through the first translation of the Bible into a native tongue by John Eliot; the missionary efforts of Jonathan Edwards, David Brainerd, and many others; down through the major mission outposts among various Indian tribes, established by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in the mid-Nineteenth Century—mission has been understood to mean the conversion of the Indians to Christianity and to western civilizations.

Unfortunately, the cumulative effect of the larger Christian influence has been the disparagement and undermining of the Indian culture and way of life and a spiritual impoverishment affecting both Indians and all people. The cumulative effect of the missionary legacy and the larger Christian influence has been the disparagement and undermining of the Indian culture and the way of life and a spiritual impoverishment affecting both Indian and all people. Often the missionaries were blinded by the pervasive cultural and religious ethnocentrism of western society. We must acknowledge that the church—our church—has consistently treated the Indian as a child in need of direction, as a savage in need of civilizing, and as a heathen in need of salvation.

The result has been to create an overall sense of loss, which has distorted the Indian people's self image, along with cul-

tural and spiritual traditions. The depth of this tragedy, and how it has hurt not only Indian, but all people, has only begun to be realized. We must acknowledge that the church - our church - has, with few exceptions, treated the Indian as a child in need of direction, as a savage in need of civilizing, and as a heathen in need of salvation.

The United Church of Christ takes responsibility for its part in this ongoing atrocity, and expresses to you, our Indian brothers and sisters, a deeply felt sorrow and a penitent spirit. At the same time, we seek an ongoing reconciliation that can be expressed in dialogue, mutual concern, and, furthermore, a reconciliation that seeks to share your wisdom, truth, and sensitivity. We affirm as essential your struggle to reclaim cultural traditions and pledge our support.

**10. INTRODUCTION OF BISHOP HORST GIENKE**

The Moderator called on Mr. Post, who introduced Bishop Horst Gienke, of the German Democratic Republic, who brought greetings.

**11. PRESENTATION OF THE WORK OF THE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL**

The Moderator introduced Ms. Christine Powell and Rev. Ted Horvath of the Stewardship Council, who presented the work of the Stewardship Council. An audio visual presentation was part of the report.

**12. PRESENTATION OF THE WORK OF THE UNITED CHURCH BOARD FOR HOMELAND MINISTRIES**

The Moderator introduced Rev. Faith Ferre, Vice President of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, who introduced Rev. C. Shelby Rooks, Executive Vice President. They made a verbal presentation, which was followed by an audio visual presentation on behalf of the work of the board.

**13. PRONOUNCEMENT "THE HISPANIC MINISTRY OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST"**

Vice Moderator Althea Kaohi introduced Ms. Elizabeth Bland, Chairperson of Committee 5, who referred to the April 1, 1987, revision of A Proposed Pronouncement "The Hispanic Ministry of the United Church of Christ." She moved adoption of the Pronouncement. There was discussion and two friendly amendments were accepted by the Chair. Ms. Kate Lawrence asked that in the background statement, paragraph 2 "Mexican-American War" be changed to read "Mexican-North American War," and in paragraph 3 "culture to American cities" be changed to read "culture to North American cities." It was

87-GS-60 Voted: The Sixteenth General Synod adopts the Pronouncement "The Hispanic Ministry of the United Church of Christ."

**Pronouncement  
The Hispanic Ministry of the United Church of Christ**

**Background Statement of Significance and Rationale**

While the predominant Anglo culture of the United States of America dates its history from the English settlement of Jamestown (1607) and Plymouth (1620), Hispanic Americans date their cultural entry into the area now comprising the United States to a time following the exploration and discovery voyages of Cristobal Colon (Christopher Columbus), the time of Spanish exploration in Florida (1513) and Texas (1519), the settlement of St. Augustine (1565), Francisco Coronado's

incursion into New Mexico (1540), and the founding of the Franciscan missions in California (1769-1776).

Santa Fe, New Mexico is the oldest seat of government in the United States. El Camino Real, the Royal Road, first served travelers between Mexico City and Santa Fe in 1581. Until Mexico, in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ceded more than 525,000 square miles of land to the United States following the Mexican-North American War (1846-1848), most of the present Southwestern United States looked South to Mexico, rather than East to the United States.

In recent years, immigration from Puerto Rico (especially in the 1950's and 1960's), Cuba (especially in 1959 and 1965), Mexico (especially in 1910's, 1920's, 1940's, and 1950's), and other Latin American countries has brought Hispanic life and culture to North American cities and rural areas throughout the nation. The population of Southern California and Southern Florida are estimated today to be nearly fifty percent Hispanic, a radical shift that has come about in the past twenty years. Increasing pockets of Hispanics populate many of the Northern and Eastern metropolitan areas. Apart from Puerto Rico, where the Iglesia Evangelica Unida de Puerto Rico, a conference of the United Church of Christ, represents a merger of former mission interests of Congregational, Evangelical United Brethren, and Methodist background, the United Church of Christ has only 19 Hispanic congregations. There are, of course, numbers of individual Hispanics who are members of integrated congregations.

While fewer than ten United Church of Christ conferences report direct Hispanic ministries, twenty-one of them—just over half—report some sort of involvement in Hispanic ministry, often on an ecumenical basis. For several years a United Church of Christ Council for Hispanic Ministries has been recognized as a special interest group by the General Synod. This Council is a full member of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries (COREM). Both the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the United Church Board for World Ministries have intentionally included Hispanics on their corporate boards and directorates. The truth is, however, that by and large Hispanics in the United Church of Christ are a largely voiceless and powerless ethnic minority. Only a small handful of Hispanics have been elected or appointed to staff positions at either the conference or national level of the United Church of Christ.

The 1980 census (which has been criticized for undercounting Hispanics and other racial and ethnic minorities) identified an increase of around sixty percent in the Hispanic population since the census of 1970. That represents six times the rate of increase of the total American population. Hispanics are a young population. By 1978 figures, their median age was 22.1 years, compared with thirty years for non-Hispanics. Even without new immigration, the Hispanic population in the United States will continue to grow as the young people establish new families and enter their child-bearing years.

Over eighty-five percent of all Hispanics live in urban areas, mainly in sub-standard housing of the inner cities and this population is disproportionately poor. In 1978, the median income of Hispanic families was \$11,421 as compared with \$16,284 for non-Hispanic families. Twenty-one percent of all Hispanic families had incomes below the poverty level. Unemployment was also greater among Hispanics: nine and one half percent of Hispanics were unemployed, and the figure was even higher among Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans. Along with their lower income and higher unemployment goes a lower level of education. Among Hispanic males twenty-five years of age or older in 1978, nearly nine percent had only a fifth-grade education or less. Among Hispanic