

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

women the figure was over ten percent.

General Synod Fifteen called upon the Executive Council to convene a special consultation to consider Hispanic Ministries in the United Church of Christ and bring recommendations to General Synod Sixteen (85-GS-41). This Proposed Pronouncement and the Proposal for Action that spells out its implementation are the product of that consultations's work and owe a special debt to the leaders of the United Church of Christ Council for Hispanic Ministries.

Biblical, Theological, And Ethical Rationale

"Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an everflowing stream," said the prophet Amos (5:24) over 700 years before Christ. This call to justice was picked up and repeated by nearly every Hebrew prophet who followed and was a cornerstone of Jesus' ethic. The fight against injustice and bigotry remains one of the unfulfilled efforts of the Christian church in every generation. The challenge to love one another remains a faith question for the Christian, for " . . . if any one says, 'I love God,' but hates his brother (or his sister), he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also." (RSV: 1 John 4:20f.)

Called to be Christ's servants in the service of humanity (United Church of Christ Statement of Faith), we in the United Church of Christ—like all our brothers and sisters in the faith—are called to have what some have labeled a "preferential option for the poor." That is, we are called to have a built-in affirmative action policy in all we do. If someone is in need, we are to do something about it. If several someones' are in need, we are to serve the one most needy because that is what we are called to do. That is what it is to be a Christian.

As an expression of our love, a love that binds us both to God and to all humanity, we are to care for brothers and sisters with equity. In the United Church of Christ, we have formalized this caring in a variety of special ways. This is not to say that we have obliterated successfully the divisions that separate us race from race, gender from gender. But we have acknowledged our commitment to do so. The Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries (COREM) is but the most recent example of our effort to coordinate this commitment.

During its first thirty years, the United Church of Christ has made numerous efforts to engage in ministries with and to Hispanics. While some of these have been successful in terms of particular individuals, they have not been successful either in terms of changing the basic needs of Hispanics where they have been undertaken nor in attracting increasing numbers of Hispanics into the United Church of Christ. The needs continue, largely unchanged save for the radical increase in the numbers of Hispanic peoples in our society.

One reason for our lack of success is surely the language barrier. English remains for many Hispanics, especially for those who are first generation immigrants, a second language in which communication is, at best, limited. The number of Spanish-speaking pastors and church workers in the United Church of Christ is minimal. "But how are men (and women) to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?" So queried the writer of the Letter to the Romans (10:14). As Paul said to the Corinthians, "There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning; but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me." (1 Corinthians 14:10f.)

The Statement of Christian Conviction

The Sixteenth General Synod affirms the need for the United Church of Christ to extend existing and initiate new ministries to Hispanic people at every level of church life: local congregations, associations and conferences, and national instrumentalities and other national bodies.

Local congregations need to develop a new or renewed ministry with and to Hispanic people within their local communities.

Associations and conferences need to work with leaders of the larger Hispanic community in identifying needs of that community in areas where the United Church of Christ may participate directly and/or ecumenically in providing leadership and support.

National instrumentalities and other national bodies of the United Church of Christ need to intentionally include Hispanics on their directorates. They need to initiate and extend ministries appropriate to their several mandates that will especially benefit Hispanic people.

14. STATEMENT OF CONCERN BY THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY

After the vote had been taken, a statement of concern was read by Mr. Abraham Reyes, President of the Council for Hispanic Ministries. The statement read by Mr. Reyes is as follows:

"Mr. President, Mr. Moderator, brother and sister delegates to the Sixteenth General Synod,

"In Ames, Iowa, you gave a renewed sense of hope by initiating a study of Hispanic Ministries and needs. Today, we declare that this hope is diminished by what we consider to be a neglectful response to the needs of Hispanics, a true part of our church.

"As children of your past missionary efforts, you taught us to believe that in God's kingdom we were all equals. Yet, we note with a profound sense of sadness that the actions of the predominant society continue to keep us apart on account of our inequality. And we cry with pain when the key leadership of our church makes no intentional effort to redress this injustice.

"We call ourselves a "just peace church." And as you are well aware, justice does not happen in a vacuum. It happens in the midst of acts of justice and not through the meaningless rhetoric of your deliberations.

"Our people are those who live in the abandoned cities of this land, where you have yet to demonstrate a renewed sense of justice.

"Our mothers and fathers are those who cry for a tomorrow when their children cannot be denied by the society that you represent intentional access to systems that empower.

"Our people are those brothers and sisters in their beloved country of Puerto Rico who struggle to sever the chains of oppression from the capitalistic nation of which you are citizens.

"This church is called by God to do this mission. Not when it is painless or when your own human existence remains unchanged. There is no witnessing or cost of discipleship in the comforts of pagan and luxurious temples. God has called the church to missions in spite of your rules and parliamentary requirements.

"The Resolution for action that will come before you ex-

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pressed what we believe to be just the beginning for Hispanics. However, our church's neglectful response over the past 10 years has now compelled us to conclude that nothing, or very little, will be done.

"Our soul is hurting and our hearts are broken! It is, therefore, with a profound sense of corporate loss that we must leave you now! We will return to hear your response to our claim for justice."

The Hispanic delegation walked out of the Public Auditorium.

15. POSTPONEMENT OF DISCUSSION ON THE PROPOSAL FOR ACTION "THE HISPANIC MINISTRY OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST"

Ms. Bland referred the delegates to the Committee 5 report of

the Proposal for Action and moved that the Sixteenth General Synod adopt the Proposal for Action "The Hispanic Ministry of the United Church of Christ."

Rev. Edward Walker moved that the discussion of the Proposal for Action on the Hispanic Ministry be postponed to a time determined by the Business Committee in order that the Hispanic brothers and sisters might be present to speak to this proposal, pro or con. It was agreed to postpone this item until the Hispanic members returned to the plenary.

16. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Moderator called on Secretary Brun for announcements.

17. RECESS

The Moderator declared the meeting in recess until 1:30 p.m.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 29

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Moderator, Mr. Kenneth P. Stewart, called the General Synod to order at 1:30 p.m.

2. SPEAK OUT

The Moderator called on the Secretary, Rev. Carol Joyce Brun, to conduct the Speak Out, which was a time for delegates and visitors to speak for up to one minute on matters of concern that are not on the business agenda of the General Synod. Some of the subjects presented during Speak Out were

A reading of a list of the churches which are open and affirming, as follows:

Riverside Church, New York, NY; Riverside-Salem Church, Grand Island, NY; Wellington Avenue United Church of Christ, Chicago, IL; La Mesa Community Church, Santa Barbara, CA; Grace United Church of Christ, Norton, OH; The Church of the Covenant, Boston, MA; First Congregational Church, Amherst, MA; Church of the United Community, Roxbury, MA; Peace United Church of Christ, Oakland, CA; First Congregational Church of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN; First Congregational United Church of Christ, Washington, DC; College Avenue Congregational, Modesto, CA; Amherst Community Church, Buffalo, NY; First Congregational, Alameda, CA; and Altadena Congregational, Altadena, CA.

A statement that in the UCC inclusive language is used too often in lieu of scripture.

Concern expressed about human rights in Hungary.

Two statements on the courage of Lesbian/Gay Coalition at this Synod and an affirmation of the Lesbian/Gay Coalition and their stand.

Recognition of the extensive UCC camping programs for youth and young adults.

Thanks for worship leaders and for traditional and innovative aspects of worship with a plea to treat musical offerings as gifts - not as entertainment. No applause at worship services.

Support of Public Education.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA FOR COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR MONDAY AFTERNOON

Mr. Stewart reminded the delegates that each report had 25

minutes only. Mr. Stewart suggested that the agenda be modified so that the Pronouncement on Hispanic Ministry of the United Church of Christ be postponed until that body returned to the General Synod floor. The order of the day would be Committees 8, 11, 9, 13, 26, and 21.

The Moderator called for the report of Committee 8.

4. PRONOUNCEMENT "FULFILLING GOD'S COVENANT WITH ALL CHILDREN"

Ms. Janet Lyons (CONN), Chairperson of Committee 8, presented the recommendations from that committee. She referred the body to the report.

Ms. Lyons thanked Ms. Pat Conover and Ms. Nanette Roberts for their work on the Proposed Pronouncement "Fulfilling God's Covenant with All Children."

A motion was made to add the word "physically" before "emotionally" and to delete paragraph 4 of section 4.

A motion was made and carried to vote separately on the amendments.

87-GS-61 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod separates the amendment concerning the Proposed Pronouncement "Fulfilling God's Covenant with All Children."

87-GS-62 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod amends the Proposed Pronouncement "Fulfilling God's Covenant with All Children," by adding the word "physically" before "emotionally."

The motion to delete paragraph 4 was defeated. The delegates then acted on the main motion which was the Pronouncement.

87-GS-63 VOTED: The General Synod adopts the Pronouncement "Fulfilling God's Covenant With All Children" as amended.

Pronouncement Fulfilling God's Covenant With All Children

Summary

Calls upon the United Church of Christ to intensify its long-standing commitment to economic and social justice through support of specific policies which help, empower, and sustain all children, particularly those children most in need. Children deserve the opportunity to uncover and nurture their gifts, to