

Affirms the significance to the church of the implications and issues involved with genetic engineering and genetic therapies;

Encourages all constituencies of the United Church of Christ to read, review and study the positions of the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches of Christ of the United States of America on genetic engineering;

Urges that informed pastors and laypersons participate on Institutional Review Boards of health care institutions which have treatment programs in the field of genetic therapies;

Recommends that the hospitals related to the United Church of Christ establish institutional review boards or Institutional Ethics Committees to review treatment protocol for genetic therapies;

Recommends that colleges and universities related to the United Church of Christ which are conducting genetic research

- 1) develop reasonable and accountable criteria to safeguard the public health during genetic research and the application of genetic therapies, and
- 2) develop public educational forums on genetic engineering and therapies;

Recommends that the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Office for Church In Society convene and participate in a task force including persons from the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, the United Church Board for World Ministries, the Council of Conference Ministers, and a panel of professional persons within the arena of genetic engineering therapy and counseling; and

Recommends that this task force submit a proposed Pronouncement and a Proposal for Action for consideration at the Seventeenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, drawing on the work of the Consultation on Genetic Engineering as well as statements by the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America, the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries and other appropriate sources; and

Informs all constituencies of the church regarding the scientific, therapeutic, regulatory, public health and counseling implications of the knowledge explosion in this field.

Financial Implications: As funds are available.

23. HELPING THOSE WHO SUFFER FROM CHRONIC MENTAL ILLNESS

Mr. James R. Chandler, Chairperson of Committee 14, moved the adoption of the Resolution "Helping Those Who Suffer from Chronic Mental Illness," and spoke to the motion. There was discussion, and Craig Snow (CAC) moved to amend. It carried.

87-GS-91 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod adds at the end of the Resolution "Helping Those Who Suffer from Chronic Mental Illness" the following, "calls upon the Office for Church in Society and United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to communicate the concerns of this Resolution for adequate, affordable insurance coverage to insurers, regulatory agencies, and government legislators at all levels; and finally, calls upon the Pension Boards to renew its efforts to develop and, if feasible, to offer alternatives in mental health benefits including the providing of reimbursement levels of protection comparable to those available for major medical health conditions, to those of its members who may desire and are able to pay for such coverage. Such alternatives could include, but are not limited to, services such as those provided

by licensed and certified counselors, pastoral counselors, and social workers to be considered as eligible expenses."

A second amendment was submitted by Carole Baker (MASS) who asked that text be added to the 4th paragraph. It was carried.

87-GS-92 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod adds to the Resolution "Helping Those Who Suffer from Chronic Mental Illness" the following "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sixteenth General Synod commends to the Churches the accessibility guide for the local congregations PRAY WITH US NOW, which was in the Advance Materials."

87-GS-93 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Helping Those Who Suffer From Chronic Mental Illness" as amended.

Helping Those Who Suffer from Chronic Mental Illness

WHEREAS, there are as many as 10 million persons in this country who are afflicted with chronic mental illness; and

WHEREAS, many are without the proper support in the community to adequately care for themselves often because of de-institutionalization during the past two decades; and

WHEREAS, these people may account for more than 50% 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, Federal funding to human needs has been decreased significantly, and with the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings bill will be further reduced while military spending continues to rise; and

WHEREAS, while there is no known cure for chronic mental illness, those who are afflicted can be helped by proper medical treatment and 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, BE IT RESOLVED, the Sixteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon state and local officials to support and adequately fund community mental health agencies, and calls upon elected representatives and senators in Washington, D.C. shift funding priorities to human services and away from an already inflated defense budget, to prevent further victimization of the chronically mentally ill; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sixteenth General Synod asks congregations to support those of their members with mental illness, and reach out to those in the community, both to support them and to warmly welcome them and accept them into their fellowship; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sixteenth General Synod urges that within local communities, congregations to coordinate with other agencies to help establish and support supervised apartments or group homes, employment projects, constructive daily activities and follow-up programs for the chronically mentally ill; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sixteenth General Synod asks that ministry of care for the mentally ill be extended to support their families who often carry great emotional burdens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sixteenth General Synod encourages congregations to develop specific programs of church wide education on the issue of mental health and illness to help dispel the ignorance, fear, and stigma so prominent in our society; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sixteenth General Synod commends to the churches the accessibility guide for the local congregation, "Pray With Us Now" from the report of the United Church of Christ National Committee on Persons with Disabilities which follows this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sixteenth General Synod

Calls upon the Office for Church In Society, United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, and the Council for Health and Human Services Ministries, under guidance of the Council of Health and Welfare Services, to accomplish these purposes and assist local church efforts in their response to the chronically mentally ill;

Calls upon the Office for Church in Society and United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to communicate the concerns of this Resolution for adequate, affordable insurance coverage to insurers, regulatory agencies, and government legislators at all levels; and finally

Calls upon the Pension Boards to renew its efforts to develop and, if feasible, to offer alternatives in mental health benefits including the providing of reimbursement levels of protection comparable to those available for major medical health conditions, to those of its members who may desire and are able to pay for such coverage. Such alternatives could include, but are not limited to, services such as those provided by licensed and certified counselors, pastoral counselors, and social workers to be considered as eligible expenses.

Financial Implications: Funds for this Resolution to be provided through regular budgetary processes.

Pray With Us Now

Key and point scores:

- P = Parking spaces and curb cuts (2 points)
- R = Ramps and elevators to sanctuary, fellowship hall, and education building (15 points)
- A = Aisle and pew arrangements for persons using wheelchairs (2 points)
- Y = Sanctuary accessible (both chancel and pulpit) (5 points)
- W = Washrooms accessible to persons using wheelchairs (6 points)
- I = Interpreted services for deaf persons (5 points)
- T = Technological devices (e.g., audio loops) for hearing-impaired persons (5 points)
- H = Hymnals in Braille or large-print worship service and hymn sheets (5 points)
- U = Ushers and staff trained to deal with persons with disabilities (5 points)
- S = Symbols, images, color, and sound used for persons who are mentally retarded (4 points)
- N = Non-uses of sexist and "handicappist" language (4 points)
- O = Outreach in advocacy (sponsoring half-way houses, celebration of Access Sunday, etc.) (5 points)
- W = Wholistic approach in education, for example, for retarded persons, etc. (9 points)

This approach unlike the former one, gives points for various kinds of accessibility (including mobility, visual, auditory, and awareness). More importantly, under the new standard a church must make efforts in several different areas (the

PRWTHO columns), thereby assisting persons with different kinds of disability.

The six columns (PRWTHO) total a numerical score of 38 points; 13 more are needed, at a minimum, to achieve a level of 51 points, which is the new standard for minimal accessibility. Thus a point score of 51 out of a possible 72, will be the new and we believe more balanced standard for accessibility, and will go a long way toward making our churches truly accessible to persons with all types of disabilities. In addition, it is in and of itself an educational instrument, assisting the churches toward the self-assessment which General Synod 15 requested.

Grace Period for use of Previous Measurement (Pray With Us)

It is not our intention to change the status of churches judged accessible by the "Pray With Us" standard. They will continue to be called accessible. In addition, any church which achieves 7 columns out of the 10 on the standard between the time of this report (January, 1987) and the end of General Synod 16 (June 30, 1987), will still be judged accessible. But we hope that the "Pray With Us" standard will inspire them to greater effort, and remind them that there are still many steps to be taken toward accessibility. And for a church to be declared accessible after July 1, 1987, it must achieve 51 points on the "Pray With Us Now" scale.

24. RESOLUTION "PERSONS WITH ONSETTING DISABILITIES"

Mr. Chandler, on behalf of Committee 14, moved the adoption of the Resolution "Persons with Partial Disabilities." There was discussion, including input from the Pension Boards. An amendment was made and defeated. Rev. David C. Johnston, UCC National Committee on Persons with Disabilities, moved to amend by changing the title and subsequent references to Persons with Onsetting Disabilities.

87-GS-94 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod adopts the amendment to change the title and subsequent references from "Persons with Partial Disabilities" to "Persons with Onsetting Disabilities."

Ms. Dory Wilkinson, Business Committee, moved to amend the Resolution by deleting "any" and insert "good."

87-GS-95 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod adopts the amendment to the Resolution "Persons with Onsetting Disabilities" to delete "any" and insert "good."

87-GS-96 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution, "Persons with Onsetting Disabilities" as amended.

Persons with Onsetting Disabilities

WHEREAS, every General Synod since 1977 has spoken strongly and forcefully regarding our attitudes and ministries with persons with disabilities, and

WHEREAS, General Synod Eleven adopted a pronouncement entitled, "The Church and Persons with Handicaps" which says, in part:

"It is our responsibility and our opportunity to strengthen and heal one another within the human family . . . Our contemporary society has a special need for the ministry of the handicapped. . . . The United Church (calls for their) participation within the mainstream of community and church life," and

WHEREAS, General Synod Fifteen adopted a Resolution calling for the "Full Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the Life of the Church", and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ has within its fellow-