

## 6. RESOLUTION "INTENTIONAL INTERIM MINISTRY"

The Synod voted by acclamation to extend for five minutes the report of Committee 12. On behalf of the Committee, Ms. Cassidy moved that the 17th General Synod adopt the Resolution "Intentional Interim Ministry." After an introduction from Committee member, Ms. Anjanette Mason (CAC), the Rev. Henry Moyer (OHIO) offered a friendly amendment to include association ministers in the list. This was accepted, and it was

89-GS-101 VOTED: The 17th General Synod adopts the Resolution "Intentional Interim Ministry."

### INTENTIONAL INTERIM MINISTRY

WHEREAS, it has long been recognized that the time of transition between pastors is one in which congregations may feel insecure and vulnerable;

WHEREAS, the interim time may be one when congregations are most accessible, teachable, and open to change;

WHEREAS, such congregations almost always seek help from the Conference Minister, Associate Conference Ministers and Association Ministers;

WHEREAS, leadership with special training is valuable in helping congregations prepare for the installed pastor, by providing leadership through such processes as assisting the congregation in being open to change, working through the varied feelings of loss, grief and uncertainty, enabling congregations to resolve conflicts, and in identifying and working on other appropriate agenda to help strengthen a congregation prior to calling the next pastor, and

WHEREAS, more attention is now being given to the importance of such a specialized ministry.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod

1. Expresses appreciation to all those persons who have served in interim ministry settings and recognizes their contribution to the church-at-large as well as the congregations they have served, and offers special recognition to those who have sought out specialized training to better enable them to do this significant and critical task;
2. Calls upon local congregations working in partnership with the Conferences and/or Associations to utilize specially qualified interim pastors in interim situations whenever possible, and avail themselves of specially developed materials and procedures to best prepare for the next installed ministry;
3. Expresses appreciation to the Alban Institute of Washington, D.C., which in 1974 began the pioneering task of training leadership for interim ministry based upon their research findings, and to the Interim Ministry Network, which through representatives from ten denominations since 1981 provides an annual conference, a bi-monthly publication - "The In-Between Times," develops resources and training opportunities for those who work with congregations during the interim time including pastors, consultants, and denominational placement people;
4. Urges pastors, congregations, Associations, Conferences and the Office for Church Life and Leadership to make use of specialized resources and training such as provided by the Alban Institute and the Interim Network in preparing persons for the practice of ministry;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod recommends this resolution to all the Conferences of the church, and requests the Office for Church Life and Leadership to establish an interim ministry program on behalf of the church.

Areas of concern might include exploration of standards, training, issues of call and standing, affirmative action, and relationship to the Interim Ministry Network.

Financial Implications: Subject to the availability of funds.

## 7. GIFT OF COOKIES TO THE CHILDREN IN PUERTO RICO

Assistant Moderator Mr. David Gerth recognized the Rev. Perry White for a point of personal privilege. Mr. White moved and the Synod approved to grant voice without vote to the Rev. George Kuebler, of the Local Arrangements Committee. Mr. Kuebler estimated that as many as 200,000 cookies had been baked. Ms. Lucy Villanueva received a barrel full of cookies to bring to the children in Puerto Rico.

## 8. RESOLUTION "CHALLENGING THE RESURGENCE OF RACISM IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA"

The Moderator called upon the Rev. Peter Nichols (SC), Chairperson of Committee 21, to present the report of the Committee. On behalf of the Committee Mr. Nichols moved that the 17th General Synod adopt the Resolution "Challenging the Resurgence of Racism in the United States of America."

The Rev. Benjamin Chavis, the Rev. Yvonne Delk and the Rev. Shelby Rooks, representing the supporting agencies stood together to speak in favor of the motion, expressing their commitment to the fight for justice. Ms. Debbie Kaynor (CONN) offered as a friendly amendment, and it was accepted, to add CCW to the list of instrumentalities to implement the Resolution.

Mr. David Kniker (ILL) moved to amend the Resolution by moving the first 'Therefore Be It Resolved' to be the first 'Whereas' clause. This was defeated.

The question was called and it was

89-GS-102 VOTED: The 17th General Synod adopts the Resolution "Challenging the Resurgence of Racism in the United States of America."

### CHALLENGING THE RESURGENCE OF RACISM IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### Background

During the last several years, there has been a dramatic and dangerous resurgence of racism in the United States of America. In particular, there has been an increase in the occurrence of overt acts of racially motivated violence throughout the nation. Recently, many states, including the states of California, Maryland and New York, have issued official investigative reports on the marked increase in racially motivated violence.

For example, ugly incidents between white and black students continue to plague colleges and universities across the nation. Governmental indifference to such incidents and complacency by the majority to the pain of racism, combine to create an atmosphere in which racist acts are tolerated. The result is an

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increasing sense of isolation on the part of minorities, and a deepening of the gulf between majority and minority communities.

Recent decisions by the United States Supreme Court that signal a reduction in the need for mandated affirmative action programs, that limit the circumstances under which civil rights cases can be tried, and that increase the burden of proof for civil rights violations on victims of discrimination mark an erosion of our national commitment to ensuring full justice for minorities.

Upon the recommendation of the Racial Justice Working Group of the Division of Church and Society, the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. has defined prejudice as "a personal attitude towards other people based on a categorical judgment about their physical characteristics, such as race or ethnic origin." Further, the National Council of Churches has defined racism as "racial prejudice plus power. Racism is the intentional or unintentional use of power to isolate, separate and exploit others. This use of power is based on a belief in superior racial origin, identity or supposed racial characteristics. Racism confers certain privileges on and defends the dominant group, which in turn sustains and perpetuates racism. Both consciously and unconsciously, racism is enforced and maintained by the legal, cultural, religious, educational, political and military institutions of societies. Racism is more than just a personal attitude; it is the institutionalized form of that attitude." Staff from the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ participated in the development of this definition of racism, as part of the Policy Statement on Racial Justice adopted by the National Council of Churches.

There is a deep connection between racism and violence in the American psyche. Historically, it has found expression in the violent subjugation of Native Americans, the enslavement of African-Americans, the World War II internment of Japanese Americans, and periodic outbreaks of popular xenophobia directed toward non-Anglo Saxon citizens.

Racism has also been found as one of the causative factors for the concomitant resurgence in acts of hate and violence. The California Attorney General's Commission on Racial, Ethnic, Religious and Minority Violence Final Report concluded that there is a definitive relationship between hate, violence and racism. For example, the report found that "Hate violence persists in California and poses a threat to the peace and safety of our communities. In every region of the state, incidents have occurred in which racial, ethnic, religious and sexual minorities have been harassed, intimidated, assaulted and even murdered."

At times, the gospel has been misused to justify racist activity. The myth of the "white man's burden" has been a powerful factor in the conquest of non-white peoples, often justifying death and destruction in the name of salvation and progress. Even today, hate groups claiming to be evangelists of the gospel continue to advocate violence toward minority groups.

The recent National Council of Churches report, *They Don't All Wear Sheets: A Chronology of Racist and Far Right Violence - 1980-1986*, states that "Not a day has passed in the last seven years without someone in the United States being victimized by hate violence, harassment, vandalism, arson, assault and murder motivated by racism, anti-semitism and other forms of bigotry plague every section of our country. This

violence is a largely unrecognized cancer eating away our communities and social institutions."

The 1988 Final Report of the New York Governor's Task Force on Bias Related Violence concluded that "Acts of bias-related violence are directed not at individuals solely, but at the group of which the victim is perceived to be a member. Because of this, both the victim and the community are depersonalized, isolated, violated, and robbed of the sense of security required if one is to live, work, play, pray, or interact in any sustained or substantive manner in a society composed of diverse groups. Bias violence is not unique to New York State, nor can it be dismissed as an urban problem. It occurs in all regions of the country and in all types of communities. Virtually no racial, religious, ethnic or minority group has been spared the ignominy of bias attacks. The causes of bias violence lie in ignorance and fear, in inequality and in segregated housing and schools and in economic shifts and real and perceived economic threats."

The United Church of Christ has adopted policy statements on aspects of racism in previous General Synod actions, both in the form of a pronouncement and several resolutions. It is the increasingly violent character of racist acts which are now occurring in a unprecedented number of cities and towns, as well as on college campuses, throughout the United States that necessitates the United Church of Christ to reaffirm its commitment to challenge racism and to take appropriate measures to help stem this dangerous resurgence.

### Theological Rationale

Racism is a sin and an evil that stands as an affront to the Christian faith. Racism is an expression of idolatry, replacing faith in God, who created all peoples equal in the image of God, with the belief in the superiority of one race over another. When this idolatry is expressed by those who possess economic and political power, it leads to a cruel and extensive repression of selected peoples and negation of their identity and value as given by God.

The Church is called to define racism as sin against God and is summoned to confess and work to eliminate it. The Statement of Mission of the United Church of Christ, in part, states:

As a people of the United Church of Christ, affirming our Statement of Faith, we seek within the Church Universal to participate in God's mission and to follow the way of the crucified and risen Christ,  
Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are called and commit ourselves . . .  
To praise God, confess our sin, and joyfully accept God's forgiveness . . .  
To name and confront the powers of evil within and among us.  
To repent our silence and complicity with the forces of chaos and death . . .  
To work for justice, healing and the wholeness of life.

The resurgence of racism in our midst, both within church and society, serves as a challenge to our faith in Jesus Christ. Theologically, the Gospel of Jesus Christ compels us to speak out and take action against this new rising tide of racist violence and evil which threatens to engulf our nation.

### Text of Resolution

WHEREAS, there is compelling evidence of erosion in our

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national commitment of ensuring full justice and equity for minorities;

WHEREAS, there has been a dangerous and violent resurgence of racism throughout the United States of America during the last several years;

WHEREAS, the unprecedented increase in incidents of racial violence throughout every region of the nation has been documented by state and federal authorities;

WHEREAS, the present magnitude of the problem of racism poses a grave threat to the nation's stability and harmony;

WHEREAS, there appears to be indifference, apathy and, in some cases, tolerance of the cancer of racism increasingly eating away at our national life and social institutions;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ theologically affirms the oneness of humanity and the sinfulness of racism;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ has had a long and an unparalleled tradition of confronting racism through the mission work of all of its Instrumentalities and other National Bodies, and in particular, through the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ;

WHEREAS, the Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the "Pronouncement on Increased Racial Violence Against Blacks in the United States;"

WHEREAS, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted the "Resolution on Racially Motivated Violence Against Pacific Islanders and Asians in America," and

WHEREAS, the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries recently convened a National Consultation on "Contemporary Racism and the Role of the Church" which urgently called attention to the resurgence of racism in the United States.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ confesses that racism in all its forms is a sin against God and an evil that stands as an affront to the Christian faith;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirms a commitment to struggle against racism in the United Church of Christ, in the United States and worldwide;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ condemns the current resurgence of racially-motivated violence and those organizations that foster it;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all Instrumentalities and other National Bodies, Conferences, Associations, related institutions and local churches of the United Church of Christ to declare, by official action, a renewed determination to eliminate racism within church and society;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all congregations to break the conspiracy of silence with regard to racism and to stand publicly with the victims of racism in their communities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ renews and reaffirms its commitment to policies of affirmative action through which minority people will be helped to attain economic, political, and social equity within the frameworks of institutional and public life in the United States;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the President of the United Church of Christ, the Instrumentalities, Conferences, Associations, and local churches to communicate directly to the President of the United States and to all members of the Congress of the United States our support for the passage of H.R. 3914 and S.419, the "Hate Crime Statistics Act of 1989," which would require all law enforcement agencies to document more effectively and record acts of racially motivated violence throughout the nation; and to support the establishment of a new federal bipartisan Commission on the Resurgence of Racism in the United States with similar force of law to the Kerner Commission of the late 1960's;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod calls upon the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, the Commission for Racial Justice and the Office for Church in Society to develop educational resource materials on the resurgence of racism for use throughout the United Church of Christ;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod calls upon the Commission for Racial Justice, the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Office for Church in Society to coordinate and seek the cooperation and involvement of the Council of Conference Ministers in the development and dissemination of a "Pastoral Letter" on contemporary racism and the role of the church, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ requests from the Commission for Racial Justice a progress report to the Eighteenth General Synod, and that in the next round of the budget process this matter be given special consideration.

### 9. PRESENTATION BY DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND TREASURER ELECT

Mr. Charles Lockyear Director of Finance and Treasurer presented Ms. Doris Powell, the newly elected Director of Finance and Treasurer. She was greeted with warm applause.

Ms. Powell introduced the Rev. Larold K. Schultz, her pastor. Flowers from classmates at the Pacific School of Religion, Ms. Powell's Alma Mater, were presented to her. Ms. Powell spoke to the delegates and visitors.

### 10. RESOLUTION "SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE CHURCH - NO LONGER NAMELESS"

The Moderator introduced the Rev. Scott Landis (PSE), Chairperson of Committee 17, who presented the report of the Committee.

On behalf of the committee Mr. Landis moved that the 17th General Synod adopt the Resolution "Sexual Harassment in the Church - No Longer Nameless."

89-GS-103 VOTED: The 17th General Synod adopts the Resolution "Sexual Harassment in the Church - No Longer Nameless."