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tion and testimony regarding research priorities, testing, and use of genetic engineering technology.

7. The Office for Church Life and Leadership to

facilitate the development of continuing education about genetic engineering for laity and the development of training in genetic counseling for seminarians, clergy, chaplains, and counselors; and to develop and make available worship resources that celebrate creation and affirm the creative, caring ministry of the church.

8. The Coordinating Center for Women to

gather and make available information and resources which address the theological and moral issues of genetic engineering that apply specifically to women, e.g., new reproductive technologies.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod, in light of the rapid development and increasing significance of new science and technology on human life, urgently recommends that the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, in conjunction with the United Church Board for World Ministries, the Office for Church in Society, the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, and other bodies as appropriate, accept responsibility for the continuing study of issues of science and technology in general and genetic engineering in particular, recommending appropriate initiatives and policy formation for the United Church of Christ.

Financial Implications: Subject to the availability of funds.

16. RESOLUTION "THE CHURCH AND REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES"

The appropriate papers were identified for the delegates by Ms. Darling, Chairperson of Committee Five. In her introduction of the Resolution "The Church and Reproductive Technologies," Ms. Darling noted the change of "new birth" language to "reproductive" and the addition of a list of implementors. Ms. Darling then moved the adoption of the Resolution.

The Rev. Barron Barley (PC) spoke in opposition to the motion noting its flaw of asking for study at the same time as encouraging the use of the technologies under study. The question was called and it was

89-GS-48 VOTED: The 17th General Synod adopts the Resolution "The Church and Reproductive Technologies."

THE CHURCH AND REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Summary

This Resolution recognizes that reproductive technologies enable many infertile couples the opportunity to have children, and that these technologies are to be commended for their contribution to reproduction. We affirm the contribution of science to be a gift of God. We see these contributions extending the gift of parenthood, the context for human nurture, the opportunities for joy and love and thereby helping humanity's celebration of the Divine Image. It is important that the church attempt to gain a better understanding of the theological and ethical issues involved in order to better assist

the church's pastoral responsibility in counseling in family related matters, as well as to more effectively influence appropriate legislation concerning these issues.

Background

The sequence of natural human reproduction involves sexual intercourse, tubal fertilization, implantation in the uterus followed by gestation in the uterus. The expression "reproductive technologies" applies to a number of procedures that would supplant all or part of the stages in the natural process of reproduction. The technologies which we seek to address here are artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, cryopreservation and surrogacy.

Artificial insemination, a procedure that replaces sexual intercourse as a means of achieving tubal fertilization, has been available for many years. Infertility may be overcome by AIH, artificial insemination with the sperm of the husband, or AID, artificial insemination with the sperm of a donor.

In vitro fertilization (IVF) is a reproductive method whereby sperm of a husband (or a donor) is united, in a laboratory, with the ovum of a wife (or a donor). This procedure involves several technically sophisticated procedures, (1) laparoscopy (a surgical method for obtaining mature eggs from a woman's ovaries), (2) fertilization of eggs in the laboratory, (3) growth in the laboratory to the eight cell stage, and (4) transfer of a developing embryo to the uterus for implantation (embryo transfer). This technology not only replaces sexual intercourse but also tubal fertilization as the natural process of reproduction. IVF increases the array of reproductive options which could be employed for those women whose infertility is due to fallopian-tube obstruction due to disease.

Another less costly and hopefully more successful procedure is known as GIFT (Gamete Intra-Fallopian Transfer). In this technique the egg is surgically retrieved and placed within the fallopian tube along with the sperm. Fertilization is then achieved within the body.

One of the new techniques that promises to increase the success rate of fertilization is cryopreservation (the freezing of sperm, ova or embryos). Cryopreservation can increase the efficiency of the technology, reducing the number of times a woman must submit to ovum retrieval and providing for safer sperm banking in the face of today's AIDS crisis.

Surrogacy, simply put, is one woman bearing a child for another who wishes to have a child but is unable to do so. Today this form of childbearing is often arranged by a contract whereby the child is given to the adoptive mother, with the surrogate receiving a fee for her service. The pregnancy is usually achieved through artificial insemination with the sperm of the husband of the adoptive mother. In vitro fertilization can also be employed, using the ovum of the adoptive mother and the sperm of her husband or donor sperm if he is infertile. In this final situation a gestational host is still required.

Theological and Ethical Issues

As we assess the various reproductive technologies presently available, we underscore and affirm science as it acts as a channel for God's creativity and the yearning for life. Science, when used appropriately, can be an instrument to initiate God's creative process — the gift of a child. As Christians, we recognize our responsibility to offer pastoral guidance and evaluate the ramifications of technology in the life-giving proc-

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ess. To this end we offer the following theological and ethical statement.

We recall in the Book of Genesis that God looked upon creation and pronounced a blessing: "It is good." These stories speak to our vocation, that we have been called to be stewards and caretakers of creation. This is further affirmed in the life and ministry of Jesus. We see evidence of this vocation in the longings of Jesus to heal and transform the lives of people, and to foster community fed and guided by God's love. We acknowledge that even in the midst of God's blessings upon us, human selfishness and sin can cause us to stumble or lose sight of a holy intent. In all things there is grace and judgment. Therefore as stewards, all our decisions need to be tested in this light.

As caretakers with God of the human community, we believe that God has given us the ability to discover and uncover ways to overcome alienation and hurt. In this resolution, we wish to recognize the intense yearnings of those seeking to reproduce, and who suffer a sense of loss due to their infertility. We earnestly invoke the presence of God's Holy Spirit on all of our decisions.

In the midst of this discernment process, we lift up three ethical principles as a plumbline for our thinking. The principle of beneficence calls us to promote that which is good, that which upholds health and wholeness among all creation. Autonomy, the call of freedom and of human will, grants us each the right and privilege of making free and uncoerced decisions. Justice has always been a foundational principle as each person is granted rights and dignity, encompassing a global and cosmic dimension. These principles represent a commonly accepted moral framework for dealing with the ethical issues that we confront in reproductive technologies.

From a Christian perspective we acknowledge that we have been created for community. The basis for that covenantal relationship is love and compassion. This is experienced in the Christian tradition in several ways. God takes the initiative to love us unconditionally. We celebrate this in the Sacrament of Baptism. This steadfastness in love allows us to love one another. Much of the focus of Jesus' ministry was in extending compassion, which literally means "to suffer with." This "standing with" one another is also to be assumed as a model for us.

The need for compassionate and honest screening and counseling is a concern common to any of the reproductive technologies and family configurations involved. Here is where ethical deliberation is the responsibility of the infertile party in consultation with religious and health care professionals. Risks to health, mental anguish, financial cost, and just consideration of all parties are to be weighed. Discernment is of the utmost importance in the counseling of single parents and those seeking a surrogacy arrangement.

In surrogate arrangements the potential for exploitation is great. Justice calls us to protect against the seduction of financial contracts for women living in poverty. Although surrogacy and the use of donor sperm leave us with questions regarding the rights of a child to rootedness and an unambiguous identity, there may be situations where all parties enter into surrogacy with an unselfish, examined, and humane conscience.

The final and most uncharted frontier for ethical consideration is that of cryopreservation, the freezing of sperm, ova, or embryos. Cryopreservation lessens the financial burden of such

procedures and reduces the need for repeated surgeries. However, legal issues can be raised as to negotiation of rights over and use of the preserved specimens.

To conclude, we recall the words of the Apostle Paul who addresses the wholeness and integrity of community: "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." (1 Cor 12:26)

In all the areas discussed above, there are no simple answers. We affirm the reproductive technologies as they enable persons to reproduce and thus celebrate the Divine Image. We recognize that these technologies are not universally available, and that the cost is quite high in both financial and emotional terms. We acknowledge the intense yearnings and grief of those who seek to reproduce and are unable. We believe that God grieves with them. We support the rights of children to a loving and nurturing environment, and seek to support families to that end. May we walk with humility in all things, seeking the presence and help of our God.

Text of Resolution

WHEREAS, infertility affects one in six American couples, and

WHEREAS, infertility is a major life crisis fraught with intense and difficult emotions, including tension in relationships, feelings of low self-esteem and resentment, grief over the loss of a potential child, and isolation for lack of understanding and support, and

WHEREAS, most reproductive technology programs do not offer formal psychological counseling and/or pastoral counseling, and

WHEREAS, the Biblical Story unfolds a vision of responsible oneness with God and all humanity, and

WHEREAS, our historic faith, affirmed through the activity of God in Christ, calls us to compassionate discernment as we act as grateful, covenanted partners with God in all the continuing activity of creation and birth, and

WHEREAS, we affirm science as a gift of God that may enable couples to reproduce and thus celebrate the Divine Image, and

WHEREAS, we recognize the potential for misuse of science and technology and the potential for personal and economic exploitation, and

WHEREAS, reproductive technologies are expensive, insurance coverage is minimal, and results are not guaranteed, and

WHEREAS, we support the rights of children to a loving and nurturing environment, and seek to support families to that end;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ, supports the rights of families to make decisions regarding their use of the reproductive technologies. We strongly recommend that our churches and the medical community provide honest and compassionate counseling in a supportive environment;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod calls upon the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, the Coordinating Center for Women, and the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries to cooperatively initiate and

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implement a comprehensive study of the medical, scientific, theological, moral and ethical issues of reproductive technology and the advantages and potential risks;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod calls upon local churches of the United Church of Christ to continue to study these issues with resources provided by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, the Coordinating Center for Women, and the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries.

Financial Implications: Subject to the availability of funds.

17. UNITING THE COMMUNITY

As the rain fell outside, the Rev. Patricia deJong led the community in reflection on "The Ocean."

18. SPEECHES BY CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE

For a few moments Assistant Moderator David Gerth invited the Synod to listen to the silence. He then announced the plan for five minutes for each nominee for the office of President to speak to the Synod. Mr. Gerth indicated the nominees for President would speak first, followed by the nominee for Director of Finance and Treasurer. Reminding the Synod of the earlier comments of Mr. Kiesel, Mr. Gerth explained the measure by which he would determine the mark of demonstration versus signs of appreciation. He encouraged applause by the Synod following each speech but suggested that it be of a modest duration.

19. THE REV. PAUL H. SHERRY'S SPEECH

"Mr. Moderator, sisters and brothers in Christ:

"I wish to thank God for the honor, privilege and challenge to accept this nomination to be President of the United Church of Christ. I thank the Nominating Committee for its vote of confidence in my ability to assume this important leadership position in the life of our beloved church.

"It is in a prayerful spirit of thanksgiving and challenge that I appeal to each of you who are delegates to the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ for your support and your vote.

"The challenge and responsibilities of this office are enormous and awesome, yet as Mary and I have prayed about this election, I stand before you ready, willing and able to be President of this great church at this time when there is a yearning and crying out for pastoral, professional and prophetic leadership. If I am elected President, I solemnly pledge to reach out and to lead the whole of the United Church of Christ toward the fulfillment of our Statement of Faith and our Statement of Mission. We are the United Church of Christ: we are sisters and brothers of different races and many backgrounds . . . and we are all precious in God's sight. If I am chosen by you, I will labor diligently to unite further the diversities within our church into a dynamic unity and witness for Christ's sake across this nation and throughout the world.

"We acknowledge in the Preamble to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ that Jesus Christ, Son of God and Saviour is the sole head of the Church. We acknowledge as kindred in Christ all who share in the confession. Thus, the President of the United Church of Christ has to be led by the

spirit of the living God . . . by the spirit of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church.

"One of the things that I have learned over the years about the United Church of Christ is that we are a people committed in faith to God's mission of justice, peace and love.

"In this moment of transition, the United Church of Christ is challenged to live out our faith to make a difference in this troubled world. In our urban areas and our rural areas, there is a growing sense of alienation and hopelessness. I believe our church should speak to the crises in our midst and also be empowered by God to make a difference, and to help heal the sin-sick soul of our society and of the global community. . . . There is a balm in Gilead!

"I know that the role of President working in the partnership with local churches, Associations, Conferences, and Instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ must be the multiple role of minister, pastor, chief executive officer of the General Synod and ecumenical representative. Yet the effectiveness of this office should not be limited simply to questions of authority and power. My definition of effective leadership is to provide the necessary energy and commitment to carry the United Church of Christ forward — toward the 21st century with a viable and vibrant mission.

"The ranks of the hungry and of the down-trodden continue to grow in nearly every corner of the globe at a time when billions of dollars are being spent recklessly on weapons of war and death. I will hear the cries of the oppressed. . . . I will hear their cries and I will work to stop their pain. I will work with you to combat racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, the continuing discrimination against the disabled. Apartheid in South Africa must be dismantled. Indeed, we must re-commit ourselves to battle all forms of racial and social injustice in society and in the church.

"We must not let the decision of our relocation of our national headquarters paralyze or divide us. Whether it is in Cleveland or in New York, I intend to be the President of the whole church in faith, in action, in prayer and in witness.

"I pledge to you my continuing devotion to God, my deep love for our church and my commitment to be with you and to stand with you and to work with you to continue to build this church and a world fit for all of God's people. As your president, I would follow where God leads and willingly accept the cost and joys of discipleship. In the word of our Statement of Mission, I shall work for justice, healing and wholeness of life . . . to embrace the unity of Christ's church . . . and to discern and celebrate the present and coming reign of God.

"Thank you for your vote."

20. THE REV. YVONNE V. DELK'S SPEECH

"Sisters and brothers, my name is Yvonne Delk, and I stand before you as a candidate for the office of President of the United Church of Christ. The journey to this moment began 50 years ago, when my mother sat in Macedonia Congregational Christian Church and dedicated the child that was growing inside of her to God. It was my mother's belief that with God all things are possible. It was her prayer that surrounded me, inspiring me and always reminding me of who I was, in ways that I would not be free to walk away from. I'm clear that my life belongs to God. And all that I am or