

MONDAY AFTERNOON

fulfilling the ecumenical mandate, and for his patience with us, since we are not known for our reticence! Thanks, also, to Chuck Cooper and Florence Coppola, who have provided enormous help to us all.

“These are some of the highlights of the Council for Ecumenism’s work in the last biennium. Delegates who would like further information are encouraged to talk with members of the Council.

“Undoubtedly, we have left undone some things which could and should have been done. The magnitude of the task is greater than the current structures of the United Church of Christ can manage effectively. We have tried, however, to serve as leavening agents, and we are grateful to many others who have been co-workers in this process.”

4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTION RESULTS: NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Assistant Moderator recognized Secretary Carol Joyce Brun to announce the results of the election for the Nominating Committee of the General Synod.

Those elected were the Rev. Lori Buehler (OHIO), the Rev. Christopher Wilke (RI), the Rev. Benjamin Lewis (CAC), Mr. Eric Norenburg (SW), Ms. Betty Kingsbury (ILL) and Mr. Lucius May (MICH).

5. ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE REV. PAUL H. SHERRY WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Ms. Brun then announced that the Rev. Paul H. Sherry was elected to be the next President of the United Church of Christ. Both candidates, the Rev. Paul Sherry and the Rev. Yvonne Delk reached the podium amid a standing ovation. The grace of God was manifest in their embrace before the Synod.

Mr. Sherry introduced his wife Mrs. Mary Sherry and his daughter, Ms. Mary Beth Sweeney. He also introduced his pastor, and pastor’s wife, the Rev. Leroy Sanders and Mrs. Norma Jean Sanders. He spoke briefly to the Synod giving thanks, introduced his family and expressed his commitment to foster unity and community within the church.

6. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESULTS OF THE BALLOT REGARDING LOCATION OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

The Secretary, the Rev. Carol Joyce Brun, announced to the delegates the ballot count, as provided by the Head Teller, Ms. Diana Corl, regarding the vote recommendation of the Location Committee: 448 yes; 294 no; 5 abstained; and 1 void vote. The national headquarters of the United Church of Christ will be located in Cleveland, OH.

89-GS-56 VOTED: The 17th General Synod

1. Establishes the National Headquarters of the United Church of Christ in Cleveland, Ohio, on or before January 1, 1990.
2. Locates the National Headquarters in the building located at 700 Prospect Avenue.
3. Authorizes the Executive Council or its assignee to lease and purchase the premises located at 700 Prospect Avenue to house the National Headquarters.

4. Encourages all instrumentalities to locate their major offices at the National Headquarters.

7. CELEBRATION AND UNITY REGARDING THE LOCATION OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

The Rev. Thomas Dipko, Ohio Conference Minister, requested that delegates from the New York Conference and Ohio Conference gather about the microphone as Mr. Dipko and the Rev. William Briggs, New York Conference Minister, offered prayer. “We are One in the Spirit” was sung by the Synod following the prayer.

Ms. Fran Appletower (OHIO), on behalf of the Western Reserve Association and the City of Cleveland, welcomed the entire church to the city.

8. UNITING THE COMMUNITY

The Rev. Pat deJong was called upon for a moment of uniting the community.

“For you who were far away, have been brought near. For Christ has broken down the dividing walls of hostility. For in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, slave nor free - for I have called you friends! I pray that we may all be one - may they be in us - just as you are in me - and I am in you!

“I am certain that nothing can separate us from God’s love. For there is neither: death nor life; angels nor principalities nor powers; neither present nor future; neither world above nor world below. There is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ, Jesus our Lord.

“Love is patient and kind, not jealous, conceited or proud. Love is not ill mannered or selfish. Love never gives up.

“If faith, hope and patience never fail, love never ends. These three remain: faith, hope and love. The greatest of these is love.

“Grant us wisdom,
grant us courage,
for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.”

9. REPORT OF COMMITTEE SEVEN, COCU PARTNERSHIP

The Moderator introduced the Rev. Eleanor Morrison (MICH), Chairperson of Committee Seven to present its report. She referred the delegates to “Response to COCU Consensus (In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting” in Advance Materials II, pages 31 - 32 and 114. On behalf of the Committee, Ms. Morrison moved that the 17th General Synod affirm the recommendation. An amendment was defeated, and it was

89-GS-57 VOTED: The 17th General Synod adopts “The United Church of Christ Response to the COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting.”

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST RESPONSE TO THE COCU CONSENSUS: IN QUEST OF A CHURCH OF CHRIST UNITING

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Background

Since 1962, the churches of the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) have engaged in a serious and inclusive search for theological agreement on a number of matters which divide churches. Published steps along the way include Principles of Church Union (1966), A Plan of Union (1970), and In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting (1976). By 1980 a revised version of the Quest document was judged mature enough to be sent to the COCU churches for their official response. It was again revised and formally remanded to the churches as The COCU Consensus in November, 1984.

To date, all member communions of the Consultation on Church Union, with the exception of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), have responded to the three questions asking whether The COCU Consensus is:

- (1) an expression of the Apostolic faith, order, worship and witness of the church,
- (2) an anticipation of the Church Uniting which the participating bodies wish to become, and
- (3) a sufficient theological basis for the proposed covenanting acts and uniting process.

Responses have been almost universally affirmative to the first two questions. Some responses to the third question, however, have voiced reservations about the covenanting acts and the uniting process described in a 1984 draft proposal, Covenanting Toward Unity.

Since 1984 the proposed covenanting acts and uniting process have been significantly amended. They are now found in a revised covenanting document entitled, Churches in Covenant Communion, approved by the COCU plenary in December 1988. As the UCC takes action on The COCU Consensus we do so in the context of the most recent revision, anticipating formal action on the Churches in Covenant Communion at a later date. The Episcopal Church has endorsed questions one and two, but postponed its response to question three until its next triennial Convention (1991) when it will respond to that question and the revised covenanting document, Churches in Covenant Communion.

The UCC Council for Ecumenism believes that there has been sufficient evaluation of the COCU Consensus over the past four years. As a basis for our anticipated study of the proposed covenanting acts and uniting process it offers the attached UCC Response to the COCU Consensus for action by the 17th General Synod.

Text of the Resolution

The 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms the United Church of Christ Response to the COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting, as printed in the appendix, and recognizes in The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting

1. an expression, in the matters with which it deals, of the Apostolic faith, order, worship and witness of the Church;

Commentary: Although parts of the document are more in keeping with UCC understandings of theology and mission, no parts of the document fail to point toward a fuller confession of our common faith which can emerge out of life together within one ecclesial fellowship.

2. an anticipation of the Church Uniting which the participating bodies, by the power of the Holy Spirit, wish to become;

Commentary: Admitting that its passion to be a united and uniting church is always tempered by human fears and limitations, the United Church of Christ views its entire history as an ecumenical journey.

3. a sufficient theological basis for the covenanting acts and the uniting process proposed at this time by the Consultation.

Commentary: It applauds the theological environment which provides the context for this emerging consensus, and in keeping with the Preamble to our Constitution, the United Church of Christ "acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, Son of God and Savior. It acknowledges as kindred in Christ all who share in this confession."

10. RESOLUTION "ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP"

On behalf of the Committee, Ms. Morrison moved that the 17th General Synod adopt the Resolution "Ecumenical Partnership."

Ms. Morrison referred to Advance Materials II, pages 114 - 116.

89-GS-58 VOTED: The 17th General Synod adopts the Resolution "Ecumenical Partnership."

ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

Background

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ affirm the New Testament understanding of the essential unity of Christ's church. Recognizing that there is a need for visible unity, the churches have turned to each other and to other churches to speak of how this unity can be realized.

This biblical understanding of our essential unity has led both churches into other ecumenical settings as well. The churches' efforts to heed the gospel call to overcome the separations that early beset the church of Jesus Christ have given birth to the Consultation on Church Union, the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches and other expressions of the ecumenical movement.

In 1911 the United Church of Christ predecessor bodies and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) held their first conversations. Since 1961, official conversations have been aimed at achieving a deeper and more visible unity.

The declaration of an Ecumenical Partnership and establishment of an Ecumenical Partnership Committee by the 15th General Synod of the United Church of Christ (1985) and the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (1985) followed six years of work by a joint steering committee. A responsibility of the Ecumenical Partnership Committee was to take to the General Synod and the General Assembly in 1989 proposals for action that would lead to full communion between the two churches.

Text of the Resolution

WHEREAS, the gospel of Jesus Christ unites Christ's follow-