

## MONDAY AFTERNOON

### 3. Common Celebration of the Lord's Supper/Holy Communion

The most powerful sign of Christian unity is the common sharing at the Lord's Supper/Holy Communion. Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has reconciled us to God's self, and offered us a new relationship of love and unity with one another. Celebrating the sacrament together, we are responding as one family with thanksgiving to what Christ has done for us, praying as one people that the Holy Spirit will lead us into deeper truth and unity, and remembering as one pilgrim people the promises of hope and salvation.

While it is already possible for these two churches to celebrate the Lord's Supper/Holy Communion together, this declaration of full communion encourages such common celebration more regularly and intentionally. Congregations that are geographically near each other are urged to find ways to share the sacred meal together at least once or twice a year, and to consider more frequent eucharistic services. Conferences and regions, associations and areas are encouraged to plan opportunities to join around the Table regularly and so to bear witness to the conviction that the Lord's Supper/Holy Communion is the central event in the church's life. From it all things flow — engaging in mission, caring for the poor, struggling for justice and peace, making real an inclusive life in Christ, yearning for unity.

The United Church of Christ and the Disciples traditionally have had different eucharistic practices in two respects. Disciples congregations make the Lord's Supper the central point of each Sunday's worship, while most United Church of Christ local churches observe the sacrament monthly or quarterly. Nearly all United Church of Christ local churches have ordained or licensed ministers preside at the Table, whereas elders or ordained ministers preside among Disciples. Neither of these differences, however, need divide our two churches at the Table. The theological issues they raise are being explored in our churches and in the wider ecumenical dialogue in the Consultation on Church Union and in the World Council of Churches.

### 4. Mutual Recognition and Reconciliation of Ordained Ministries

Mutual recognition of ordained ministries (ministers of word and sacrament of the United Church of Christ; ordained elders and ministers of word and sacrament of the Disciples) is intended to acknowledge in the ministries of the partner church the manifest blessing of God and the fruit of the Spirit, and therefore to affirm them as true ministries of the one, holy Church of Jesus Christ. Reconciliation of ordained ministries is intended to refer to future actions by the churches, both separately and together, whereby their ordained ministries become one ministry of Jesus Christ.

Reconciliation is not intended to mean either that the standard of ministerial training and certification or differences in ministerial practice and placement process must become the same for both churches. Reconciliation means that an ordained minister of one partner church may function, whenever invited, and as established procedures permit, as a minister to the other. Such action of recognition and reconciliation of these ordained ministries is in harmony with the wider ecumenical understandings.

Ordained ministry in these two partner churches is sufficiently similar in form and substance to pose no serious theological

obstacle to the mutual recognition and reconciliation of these ordained ministries in subsequent liturgical celebrations.

### 5. Common Commitment to Mission

Unity and mission are inseparable. If we imagine ourselves to be sacramentally one and do not engage together in mission, we deceive ourselves. Christ calls us to unite in one mission in and to a suffering and divided world. The church is called to visible oneness as a sign, instrument and foretaste of God's saving reconciliation of all things in Christ. In declaring full communion, these two churches acknowledge that they are partners together in God's mission to and for the whole world.

The mission of the church takes many forms. The church engages in mission through worship, through proclamation of the gospel, and through action. In worship, the church recalls and celebrates the mighty acts of God in creation, redemption, and providence. Thus graciously renewed in faith, hope, and love, its people are sent out in the power of the Holy Spirit to be ambassadors, witnesses, and servants of Christ in the world. In proclamation, the church tells the story by which its own life is defined. As it confesses unambiguously the Christ in whom it lives, the church invites all who will to enter its fellowship of life in Christ. In its action, the church embodies God's justice, peace, and love. As the church reaches out to others, both individually and systemically, it manifests God's reconciling purpose and saving reign in all the earth.

In partnership, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ fully claim the mission and make deliberate commitment to engage in mission together, wherever and whenever possible.

### **11. REQUEST OF THE OFFICE FOR CHURCH LIFE AND LEADERSHIP AND THE DISCIPLES' DIVISION OF HOMELAND MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENT OF MINISTRY FOR RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE MUTUAL RECOGNITION AND RECONCILIATION OF ORDAINED MINISTERS**

The Rev. Kendall Nordstrom (WIS) moved that the Office for Church Life and Leadership of the United Church of Christ and the Division of Homeland Ministries and the Department of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be asked to meet and discuss the implications of the Mutual Recognition and Reconciliation of Ordained Ministers in the document "Ecumenical Partnership."

89-GS-59 VOTED: The 17th General Synod requests the Office for Church Life and Leadership of the United Church of Christ and the Division of Homeland Ministries and the Department of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to meet and discuss the implications of "Mutual Recognition and Reconciliation of Ordained Ministers" in the document "Ecumenical Partnership," and that these findings and specific recommendations as to how mutual recognition and reconciliation of ordained ministers will take place be placed before the delegates of the next General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the next General Synod of the United Church of Christ."

### **12. MIDDLE EAST DIALOGUE**

The Moderator recognized Mr. Dale Bishop, Regional Secretary for the Middle East of the United Church Board for World