

MONDAY EVENING

- support efforts to pass legislation that makes quality health care available and accessible to all women and children regardless of their economic status;
- support welfare programs for poor women that are not punitive or demeaning workfare programs that deprive the poor of dignity and a livelihood;
- support efforts to pass comparable worth legislation, guaranteeing women and men equal pay for work of comparable worth, including women employed by the church;
- support legislation to provide adequate, affordable child care for families with working parents;
- support education and training programs that will be available to poor women and offer them skills that can help them rise above the poverty level;
- support the right of women to reproductive freedom, including restoration of Medicaid funding for abortions;
- support the campaign to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment;
- support legislation and programs to improve and enrich the lives of women who are disabled as well as poor;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod calls upon members in the Church to study the issues of women and poverty in a global context and to raise consciousness, educate and call others in the Church to action as an act of solidarity with their sisters around the globe.

Financial Implications: Subject to the availability of funds.

5. RESOLUTION "CHILDCARE, WORKPLACE AND FAMILY LIFE"

The Moderator introduced Ms. Carol Gnewuch, Chairperson of Committee 11, who moved that the 17th General Synod adopt the Resolution "Childcare, Workplace and Family Life."

89-GS-66 VOTED: The 17th General Synod adopts the Resolution "Childcare, Workplace and Family Life."

CHILDCARE, WORKPLACE AND FAMILY LIFE

WHEREAS, scripture reminds us that we are all children of God and heirs to the promise of God, and

WHEREAS, the words of Jesus call us to "See that you do not despise one of these little ones . . ." (Matthew 18:10) and Jesus identified a child as the greatest in the realm of heaven, and taught his followers to receive children, for "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in me to stumble, better . . . to be drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matthew 18:5-6), and

WHEREAS, historically, people of faith have responded to that call by caring for children in church-housed and church-sponsored child care centers, group homes and hospitals in addition to traditional Christian education programs, and

WHEREAS, churches are the largest aggregate providers of child care in the United States, with one church in three the

home of a weekday program, studies show that for every child in Sunday School, eight children are enrolled in the church-housed day care program. And in Connecticut, for example, 110 or 23 percent of all church-housed licensed child care programs are located in United Church of Christ buildings, and

WHEREAS, national, state and local studies confirm that the number of children needing care continues to rise dramatically as economic need, changes in family structure and other factors increase the number of working parents, and

WHEREAS, delegates to General Synod XIII, in approving the Family Life Priority, urged that the "social, economic and political conditions which create family stress be analyzed and addressed," and that all parts of the Church be enlisted as "witnesses for Christ and humanity . . . that all families be ministered to creatively;"

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod of the United Church of Christ stands with and seeks to protect the children of our country by encouraging public policy and workplace changes such as flexible medical and parental leave benefits, time- and job-sharing and other responses which improve the quality of life for children and their families including children with special needs, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod affirms quality child care and encourages churches, Conferences, appropriate offices and Instrumentalities to initiate and expand child care programs and increase support for child welfare advocacy efforts throughout the church by:

1. Encouraging local churches to develop and/or expand quality programs appropriate to their community needs and to support their members in seeking workplace changes that have a positive effect on family life, and
2. Urging Conferences to develop strategies to support churches in their work, fostering ecumenical and interfaith partnerships aimed at strengthening our witness and response to the problems facing children and their families, and
3. Requesting the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to develop resources and strategies that will encourage, support, and enable churches, Associations, and Conferences to expand their involvement in child care and other family life issues, and
4. Calling upon members of our church family who are policy makers in corporate, business and public sectors to be sensitive to changing family patterns and the flexible responses they require, and
5. Urging the Office for Church in Society to continue to support legislation that will increase the availability of quality child care and inform our child advocacy networks of the status of such legislation, and also to encourage the reintroduction of legislation such as the Family Leave Act, and
6. Calling upon the Coordinating Center for Women and the Commission for Racial Justice to increase their networks' involvement in advocacy for quality child care and affirmative workplace changes, and
7. Supporting individuals and congregations currently offering child care programs and urging churches to consider expanding preschool programs into full-time child development centers, and
8. Calling upon future meetings of Synod, national gatherings of the Church, Conference annual meetings and association meetings to provide adequate, on-site complimentary child care.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod calls upon clergy, church educators and other members of the United Church of Christ to integrate issues of child care, work place and family life in preaching, worship, educational activities, mission and parish life.

Financial Implications: Subject to the availability of funds.

6. RESOLUTION "CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY"

Ms. Gnewuch then moved that the 17th General Synod adopt the Resolution "Chemical Dependency."

Mr. Peter Schmehl, a member of the Business Committee, moved to amend the eleventh Whereas, and to make changes to the first three paragraphs of the Therefore, Be It Resolved. The amendment was

89-GS-67 VOTED: The 17th General Synod amends the Resolution "Chemical Dependency" as follows: In the Whereas paragraph, which begins "Concentrated effort . . ." by replacing the words "with the exception of" with the word "including," and in the Therefore, Be It Resolved, paragraphs, after the word "instrumentalities," insert the words "and other national bodies," and after the words "Homeland Ministries" insert the words "and the Council for Health and Human Services Ministries" in the three places where such words appear.

89-GS-68 VOTED: The 17th General Synod adopts the Resolution "Chemical Dependency," as amended.

CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY

WHEREAS, Jesus calls us to ministries of healing and lives of wholeness;

WHEREAS, the disease Chemical Dependency is recognized by the American Medical Association and the World Health Organization, as one of the most serious health problems in the world today;

WHEREAS, Chemical Dependency is a primary, chronic, progressive, and if left untreated, fatal disease;

WHEREAS, Chemical Dependency affects not only the physical and emotional components of human health and behavior, but also the spiritual health of the total person;

WHEREAS, large numbers of those affected by Chemical Dependency are within the church, clergy and laity alike presenting the symptoms with the same incidence;

WHEREAS, Chemical Dependency affects persons of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, levels of education, religions, gender, and sexual orientation and regardless of social or financial position;

WHEREAS, it is estimated that victims of Chemical Dependency so seriously affect an average of four other persons (co-dependents) that they too must be listed as casualties in need of care;

WHEREAS, the total costs associated with alcohol and drug-related problems are immense, the damage widespread, the consequences severe, the suffering incalculable;

WHEREAS, domestic violence is often related to alcohol and other drug abuse;

WHEREAS, it has been demonstrated that alcoholics and addicts need not "hit bottom" before beginning the recovery process;

WHEREAS, concentrated efforts to meet the problems created by Chemical Dependency have proliferated in virtually every organized section of our society, including the church;

WHEREAS, as those who are chemically dependent are children of God and recipients of the grace of God;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the 17th General Synod reaffirms Resolution (83 GS 100) on Substance Abuse, and urges its local congregations, associations, Conferences, boards, Instrumentalities and other national bodies, to consider the following actions:

That the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries develop an 800 hotline number available nationwide for immediate spiritual guidance and counselling and referral to individuals afflicted with chemical dependency and provide resources, information for clergy and laity;

That the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries work with the ecumenical community to develop Christian Education curriculum materials (K-adult) that will enhance Christian self-esteem and aid in critical thinking and decision making, strengthen resistance to negative peer pressure, and clarify value systems of the faith community;

That the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries work with United Church of Christ Seminaries to develop course offerings and continuing education experiences dealing with chemical dependence for seminarians, pastoral counselors and local church clergy and lay leaders;

That the Office for Church in Society use the full weight of its office toward lobbying efforts in all areas where poverty, unemployment, education, law enforcement, and corruption continue Chemical Dependency. Further, that we urge our governments to expend more monies in drug, alcohol prevention and treatment programs. In addition, that our government develop sanctions against those nations importing drugs into our country, and further that our country cease giving aid to the growing of tobacco and its export abroad;

That the Pension Boards, Conferences with independent health insurance plans, and Executive Council review the problem and reconsider health insurance coverages on those who are chemically dependent and their co-dependents;

That local congregations examine the Chemical Dependency problems in their own communities; and that they be sensitive to these as they plan liturgical and social celebrations;

That local congregations be encouraged to offer meeting space to self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and related programs such as Alanon, Adult Children of Alcoholics and Alateen.

Financial Implications: Subject to the availability of funds.