

TUESDAY MORNING

Society to convene an Implementation Team on the Pronouncement "Sexual Harassment and Abuse in the Church" to include representatives of instrumentalities and other national church bodies whose purpose shall be to:

coordinate the response of the United Church of Christ to sexual harassment and abuse in all settings of the church where trust in pastoral, counseling, employment or supervisory roles of church leadership may be violated;

assess the needs of the church for policy, programmatic or other resources to address the effects of sexual harassment and abuse in the church;

work collaboratively to identify or develop resources to meet the needs of the church in responding to allegations of sexual harassment and abuse;

establish a mechanism for ongoing communication and monitoring of strategies to end sexual harassment and abuse in the church.

The President of the church shall be invited to meet the Implementation Team to keep him or her apprised of efforts to respond to sexual harassment and abuse in the church and shall be afforded the opportunity to bring concerns to the group.

Others invited to attend shall be:

Commission for Racial Justice
Office for Church Life and Leadership
Office for Church in Society
Office of Communication
Stewardship Council
Pension Boards
United Church Board for Homeland Ministries
United Church Board for World Ministries
Council of Conference Ministers
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries
Council of Seminary Presidents

and such other bodies in the church as may be needed or deemed appropriate.

The cost of the initial gathering will be shared by all participants in an equitable manner, and subsequent meetings or follow up will be funded by a mechanism to be determined by the participants within normal budget procedures.

The Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society will report on the activities, programs and findings of the Implementation Team annually to the Executive Council and to each General Synod.

Subject to availability of funds.

13. RESOLUTION "CONSEQUENCES OF THE PERSIAN GULF WAR FOR A JUST PEACE CHURCH"

Moderator Gosselink invited the Rev. Peter Young (ND), chair of Committee 19, to offer consideration of the Resolution "Consequences of the Persian Gulf War for a Just Peace Church." He asked that Mr. Dale Bishop, United Church Board for World Ministries, be allowed to have voice without

vote to speak to this issue. It was allowed by consensus. He spoke briefly about the dire situation facing the people of Iraq where the infrastructure of the country has been destroyed.

Mr. H. Benjamin Bullard (CONN) offered as a friendly amendment to be added to the very end of the resolution the words "It recommends that an effective way to do this is for members to sign this resolution and present it to their congressional representative." It was accepted.

Ms. Diane Ranney (MASS) moved to amend the resolution. The amendment was passed.

91-GS-62 VOTED: The Eighteenth General Synod amends the Resolution "Consequences of the Persian Gulf War for a Just Peace Church" by adding a paragraph: "Be it further resolved" the words "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod requests our President, Paul Sherry, to communicate with the President of the United States, George Bush, demanding that our country use all available resources, both governmental and private to rebuild immediately the civilian infrastructure of Iraq destroyed by our military in the Persian Gulf War.

91-GS-63 Voted: The Eighteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Consequences of the Persian Gulf War for a Just Peace Church," as amended.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE PERSIAN GULF WAR FOR A JUST PEACE CHURCH

Background and Theological Rationale

Feeling the pain and hopes of our times, and moved by the power of the Holy Spirit, successive General Synods of the United Church of Christ have asserted that we are a Just Peace Church. The recent Persian Gulf War, which devastated Kuwait and Iraq, killed in excess of 150,000 persons, left millions homeless, increased economic disparities, and deepened religious and national animosities in the Middle East, dramatizes the urgency of Christ's call for us to be peacemakers (Matt. 5:9).

Being peacemakers demands the seeking of God's realm, the striving for justice and the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18, Micah 6:8, Amos 5:24). Working for Just Peace is not optional but fundamental to the faith of Muslims, Jews and Christians.

In the Middle East today, peace requires stability. Any hope for a long term peace requires the building of friendships, the seeking of reconciliation between estranged and alienated peoples, and a reduction of incentive for using military solutions.

Above all peace means striving for justice, economically, politically and socially, addressing the disparity of wealth in the region and recognizing the national aspirations of the different groups.

We are a people of faith — whose Statement of Mission calls us "to hear and give voice to Creation's cry for justice and peace . . . to repent our silence and complicity with the forces of chaos and death."

Text of the Resolution

WHEREAS, the Fifteenth General Synod affirmed the United

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Church of Christ as a Just Peace Church, committed to friendship, justice, and common security from violence, and further declared that war must be eliminated as an instrument of national policy;

WHEREAS, the Seventeenth General Synod called for negotiations for a Just Peace in the Middle East, and United Church of Christ partner churches in Jerusalem have called upon Christians throughout the world to support them in working to bring both Israelis and Palestinians to the negotiating table;

WHEREAS, the Executive Council voted to encourage "inter-faith dialogue among Jews, Muslims and Christians as fundamental to working out a lasting peace with justice in the Middle East" in their vote on March 3, 1991 (91-3-EC-80);

WHEREAS, the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in August, 1990 was in violation of international law;

WHEREAS, although military force achieved short-term objectives with relatively small American losses, the longer term aims of justice, peace, democracy, and security for the region are as remote as ever; and

WHEREAS, the Persian Gulf War resulted in the death of over 150,000 people, as well as ongoing suffering and death in the aftermath, tragic disruption of millions of lives, and pollution of the environment.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, recognizing anew as a result of the Persian Gulf War the imperative for a stable, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the Middle East on terms acceptable to the peoples of the region, urges the United States Administration and all other parties concerned to pursue efforts to negotiate a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of the legitimate claims of both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples — as expressed in the U.N. Security Council resolutions number 242 and 338, which call upon Israel to withdraw from territories occupied in 1967 and to affirm the right for all states, including Israel, to live peacefully within the recognized boundaries — calls upon all members of the United Church of Christ to support and encourage policies which reflect this solution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod calls upon the United States Administration and Congress to oppose in appropriate diplomatic and economic ways the accelerated construction of the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod condemns all incidents of discrimination against persons of Arab origin which occurred as a result of the Gulf War, affirms the need for a more informed understanding by Americans of the history, culture, problems, and aspirations of all the peoples of the Middle East, and encourages instrumentalities, conferences, congregations, and members of the United Church of Christ to take initiatives to develop such understanding and to overcome the hostile and unsympathetic images of Middle Eastern people which are commonly expressed.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod urges the United States administration to restore and nurture peaceful and constructive relationships with all countries in the Middle East, including those with which diplomatic relationships have been broken, such as Iraq and Iran, and to limit the delivery of arms to the Middle East.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod urges the United States administration to work with the United Nations Security Council to lift non-military sanctions against Iraq, to enable Iraq to undertake the enormous tasks of relief and reconstruction especially the critical public health needs now confronting their population.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod rejects the interpretation of the Persian Gulf War as a just war, and urges the United States administration and Congress to cooperate in the resolution of international disputes by active negotiation among the parties concerned and, where necessary, by economic sanctions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod requests our President, Paul Sherry, to communicate with the President of the United States, George Bush, demanding that our country use all available resources, both governmental and private to rebuild immediately the civilian infrastructure of Iraq destroyed by our military in the Persian Gulf War.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod calls for continued coordinated efforts of all expressions of the United Church of Christ to more effectively and consistently work for a Just Peace in the Middle East. It recommends that an effective way to do this is for members to sign this resolution and present it to their congressional representatives.

14. RESOLUTION "SUPPORT FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN OF OUR ARMED FORCES"

The Moderator asked Mr. Peter Young to give the rest of his report. He moved the adoption of the Resolution "Supporting for the Men and Women of Our Armed Forces."

Ms. Judith Brain (MASS) moved to amend the resolution.

91-GS-64 VOTED: The Eighteenth General Synod amends, "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod urges chaplains, churches, and conferences to give pastoral and prophetic support to those more than 1,000 conscientious objectors within the military who were forced to disobey orders, go AWOL, or be imprisoned - some of whom have suffered severe mistreatment - when their claims, made shortly before or during the Persian Gulf War, were seriously delayed as an unintended consequence of the war." The amendment passed 330 to 275.

91-GS-65 Voted: The Eighteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Support for the Men and Women of Our Armed Forces," as amended.

SUPPORT FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN OF OUR ARMED FORCES

WHEREAS, we recognize that many of our fellow Americans have served and are serving in our Armed Forces and may be called upon to forfeit their lives for our country;

WHEREAS, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ stated on July 7, 1981, that it "desires to hold within its fellowship in love all those whose consciences are bound to Christ (including) those who accept military service . . . ;"

WHEREAS, the Sixteenth General Synod stated that in keeping with the tradition of both the Evangelical and Reformed and Congregational Christian Churches, (it) has affirmed that