

MONDAY MORNING

WHEREAS, a growing number of these congregations are experiencing a decline in both membership and resources, making it ever more difficult for many of them to secure and afford the full-time services of an ordained pastor while continuing their commitment to and support of the denomination's wider mission;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Nineteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognize and give thanks for the ministries of small-membership congregations and pastors within the denomination, and that a ministry to and with small-membership congregations in town and country settings be affirmed as a calling from God to a valid life-time vocation of service which deserves the support, encouragement and blessing of the whole church;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Synod urges all conferences, associations and local churches to commend these congregations and their pastors and grant them appropriate recognition and a vote of thanks;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Synod respectfully requests the national instrumentalities, offices, commissions and agencies of the church, together with the seminaries, to place a priority on the needs of and opportunities for ministry in town and country settings, and:

1. that appropriate educational resource materials and programs be developed in response to the unique needs of these congregations and their leaders;

2. that alternative models for ministry be developed, reclaimed, restored and renewed through joint planning and development efforts involving conference, instrumentalities and seminaries; and
3. that denominational policy and practice ensure that the voice of the pastors and people of small-membership congregations in town and country settings be heard and heeded in matters related to the faith and life of the United Church of Christ;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Nineteenth General Synod respectfully requests that a denomination-wide strategy for congregational and pastoral renewal through community mission be developed to give witness to the unity of God's mission in all settings.

A progress report on the development of this strategy and report shall be given to General Synod Twenty. We request that responsibility for this be assigned to the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries in consultation with Office for Church in Society, Office for Church Life and Leadership and United Church Board for World Ministries.

Subject to the Availability of Funds.

20. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECESS

Assistant Moderator Malaski called the order of the day and asked Ms. Bernice Powell Jackson for announcements. Following announcements, Assistant Moderator Malaski declared the Nineteenth General Synod to be in recess until 2:00 p.m. Monday afternoon.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 19, 1993

1. CALL TO ORDER

Moderator David Ruhe called the 6th plenary of the Nineteenth General Synod to order at 2:00 p.m. He informed the delegates that Assistant Moderator Malaski learned earlier that his house in South Dakota was flooded. Mr. Malaski left Synod to be with his family and Moderator Ruhe asked that the Synod remember Mr. Malaski in prayer.

2. SPEAK OUT!

Moderator Ruhe called on the Rev. Richard Sparrow (MASS), Co-ordinator of the Speak Out!, to begin the Speak Out! [*Summaries of Speak Outs! are found in Appendix D.*]

3. RESOLUTION "SRI LANKA"

Moderator Ruhe called on the Rev. Elizabeth Fisher (CT), Chairperson of Committee Five, to report the work of that committee. Ms. Fisher stated Committee Five had several resolutions to consider. She first introduced and moved to adopt the Resolution "Sri Lanka."

93-GS-39 VOTED: The Nineteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Sri Lanka."

RESOLUTION "SRI LANKA"

WHEREAS, Jesus taught: "Blessed are the Peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God." Matthew 5:9 (NRSV);

MONDAY AFTERNOON

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ has historic ties with the Jaffna district in the north of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon), beginning at the arrival there on March 22, 1816 of James Richards, with his wife, Sarah Richards, being one of the five founders of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (predecessor organization of the United Church Board for World Ministries); and has had a continuous missionary presence in Sri Lanka since that time;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), through the United Church Board for World Ministries and the Division of Overseas Ministries, respectively, have ongoing ties with the Jaffna district;

WHEREAS, the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ has a special partnership with the Jaffna Diocese (the one Sri Lankan diocese of the Church of South India) and, in the past, the Rhode Island Conference had a similar partnership;

WHEREAS, the human toll from fifteen years of conflict makes the Sri Lanka situation one in special need of attention;

WHEREAS, in the context of emergency rule, human rights continue to be violated in all parts of the country and intimidation of government opponents is widely practiced;

WHEREAS, the Jaffna Peninsula is under continual blockade, is intermittently bombed by Sri Lankan forces and an all-out assault is a constant possibility;

WHEREAS, it appears clear that the main political actors lack the will to negotiate a settlement of this conflict;

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Jaffna College Funds, at its meeting on June 7, 1991, called on the United Church Board for World Ministries to address human rights issues in Sri Lanka as a top priority and to communicate these concerns to the governments of the United States and Sri Lanka;

WHEREAS, the United Church Board for World Ministries at its 183rd Annual Meeting held on June 26-29, 1992, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, passed a resolution calling on the churches and the international community to work for a peaceful resolution of the conflict;

WHEREAS, the Sri Lanka Task Force of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference is working diligently to promote a peaceful resolution of the conflict through contacts with churches, ecumenical agencies, the United States Government and the international community; and

WHEREAS, at the initiative of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference and the United Church Board for World

Ministries, a Sri Lanka Action Coalition has been formed under the auspices of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA for the purpose of influencing United States policy toward Sri Lanka;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Nineteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ hereby calls on: all parties to the conflict, including the Sri Lanka Government, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam(LTTE), the anti-LTTE Tamil groups and the civilian Home Guards, to cease fighting and observe human rights conventions; all political parties and interest groups in Sri Lanka to assist the negotiating process by declaring acceptable terms for a settlement, and by abandoning the politics of narrow nationalism, chauvinism and short-term gain;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Nineteenth General Synod calls on the international community, including the United States Government and other foreign aid donors, non-governmental organizations and churches, to promote peace and human rights in Sri Lanka and to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of that country;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Nineteenth General Synod calls on the United Church Board for World Ministries to continue, along with the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), its active support of the ecumenically based Sri Lanka Action Coalition;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Nineteenth General Synod calls on the Office for Church in Society and the Office of Communication to facilitate the efforts of the United Church Board for World Ministries and the Indiana-Kentucky Conference to attract national media attention to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Nineteenth General Synod calls on the United Church Board for World Ministries, the Office for Church in Society and local churches to use all available means to educate the members of the United Church of Christ on this issue.

Subject to the availability of funds.

4. RESOLUTION "THE BRUTALIZATION AND OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN IN TIMES OF WAR"

Continuing with the report of Committee Five, Rev. Elizabeth Fisher moved the adoption of the Resolution "The Brutalization and Objectification of Women in Times of War."

93-GS-40 VOTED: The Nineteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "The Brutalization and Objectification of Women in Time of War."