

## MONDAY EVENING

WHEREAS the time has come for religious leaders to call for repentance for the sin of violence and our idolatrous fascination with weapons, and to resolve to work with God's life-giving Spirit to restore hope to the victims of violence and our communities; and

WHEREAS the Seventh General Synod in 1969 called for licensing and testing of all gun owners, limiting ammunition sales to license owners and limiting all "handguns to persons whose occupation requires them to possess a handgun for self-protection;"

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twentieth General Synod calls upon all United Church of Christ churches and members to engage in renewed spiritual reflection in order to better understand the roots of violence in our culture and to consider the resources of our faith in ending such violence;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twentieth General Synod requests a national body of the United Church of Christ to negotiate with the national leadership of the National Rifle Association to secure its help in eliminating firearm violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twentieth General Synod endorse legislative provisions that will:

- strengthen the licensing and registration of handgun transfers;
- restrict firearm possession by persons convicted of violent crimes and by juveniles;
- limit handgun purchases to one per month;
- strengthen regulation of gun dealers;
- increase civil and criminal liability for misuse of firearms;
- prohibit semiautomatic assault weapons, Saturday night specials, explosive ammunition and large-capacity magazines;
- require gun safety devices; and
- require training in the safe use of firearms as a condition of licensing.

Subject to the availability of funds.

### 7. COMMUNITY BUILDING

Moderator Melendez called on the Rev. Pat De Jong, Pastor, First Congregational United Church of Christ in Berkeley, for a time of community building.

### 8. RESOLUTION "IN RECOGNITION OF 100 YEARS OF U.S. COLONIALISM IN SIX ISLAND NATIONS"

Moderator Melendez called on Mr. Walter Anders, Chairperson of Committee Eight. Mr. Anders led the delegates in a prayer from Samoa using the text entitled

"God's World" from The New Century Hymnal, page 864. Mr. Anders moved adoption of the Resolution "In Recognition of 100 Years of U.S. Colonialism in Six Island Nations" as stated in the Program/Worship and Business Book, pages 169-171, and also in packet E.

Moderator Melendez asked for discussion.

The Rev. Ken Whitwer (MICH) moved that lines 43 and 44 be deleted from the resolution. The motion was seconded.

There was discussion for and against the amendment. Moderator Melendez stated that the time for discussion had expired and Mr. Rolf Wicks (OHIO) moved to extend debate for 15 minutes. The motion was seconded.

95-GS-60 VOTED: The Twentieth General Synod defeats the request to extend debate.

Mr. Eric Smith (ME) moved the previous question and the Twentieth General Synod voted to close debate.

95-GS-61 VOTED: The Twentieth General Synod defeats the amendment to delete lines 43 and 44 from the Resolution.

Ms. Kris Menger (CPC) proposed a friendly amendment to page 1, line 43, adding the words "non-violent" between "released" and "prisoners." The Committee Chair did not accept this as a friendly amendment. The amendment was seconded.

95-GS-62 VOTED: The Twentieth General Synod defeats the amendment.

95-GS-63 VOTED: The Twentieth General Synod adopts the Resolution "In Recognition of 100 Years of U.S. Colonialism in Six Island Nations."

### RESOLUTION "IN RECOGNITION OF 100 YEARS OF U.S. COLONIALISM IN SIX ISLAND NATIONS"

WHEREAS the prophet Isaiah announced the pardon of sin (40:1-2), saw Cyrus as Yahweh's anointed instrument of liberation (45:1-5), interpreted suffering as redemptive, and called the people of Israel to bring good news to the poor, release to the captives and liberty to the oppressed (61:1-2);

WHEREAS Jesus proclaimed that the time (*kairos*) had come for God's reign of justice and liberation to be fulfilled (Mark 1:15 and Luke 4:16-19);

WHEREAS the year 1998 will be the 100th anniversary of the U.S. acquisition of the lands of Guam, Hawai'i, Eastern (American) Samoa, the Philippines, Cuba, and Puerto Rico;

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WHEREAS the United Nations, in recognition of the violent and destructive nature of colonialism, has declared this the Decade of Decolonization, so that there will be no colonies at the close of this millennium;

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ, as a Just Peace Church, is called to oppose the sins of racism, colonialism and greed; and

WHEREAS the Eighteenth General Synod affirmed the rights of Native Hawaiians and Puerto Ricans to self-determination;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twentieth General Synod declares its solidarity with the peoples of Guam, Eastern (American) Samoa, Hawai'i, the Philippines, Cuba and Puerto Rico, and also declares its perception of 1998 as a *kairos* moment, a time to join the United Nations in bringing an end to colonialism in this millennium;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twentieth General Synod calls on all settings of the United Church of Christ, in collaboration, where possible, with ecumenical, interfaith and secular partners:

1) To engage in an intensive process of study and reflection about various aspects of colonialism, including the history of sugar, environmental and cultural

destruction, the role of the church and its missionaries, tourism, and the political status of the various colonies of the United States of America;

2) To accompany, support, and advocate for colonized peoples in their struggles to overcome mental spiritual, and physical colonization, and in their struggles to assert their rights for land, culture, language, and other aspects of self-determination; and

3) In accordance with the U.N., to support the release of prisoners of conscience in the United States incarcerated because of their actions to resist U.S. colonialism.

Subject to the availability of funds.

### 9. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECESS

Moderator Melendez recognized Ms. Edith Guffey for announcements. At 9:07 PM Moderator Melendez declared the Twentieth General Synod to be in recess following the Service of Evening Prayer. The next plenary will begin Tuesday morning at 9:00 AM.

### 10. WORSHIP

A brief service of evening prayer was led by the Rev. Louis Medyesi, Pastor of the Hungarian Reformed Church, Fairport Harbor, Ohio.

## TUESDAY MORNING, JULY 4, 1995

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Assistant Moderator Donna Debney called the Twentieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ to order at 9 AM.

### 2. BIBLE STUDY

The morning Bible Study was a reflection of the General Synod text reading from The New Jerusalem Bible. Ms. Sally Hindman of Inner City Ministries in Oakland coordinated an artistic interpretation of the text and the Rev. Daniel Romero (CAL.S) offered a Biblical and theological reflection.

### 3. SPEAK OUT!

Assistant Moderator Debney called on delegates and visitors for the Speak Out! and reminded delegates the final Speak Out! would be during the Tenth Plenary this afternoon.

Mr. Dan A. Williams (NEB) praised Yvonne Delk's sermon at the United Black Christians' Convocation and

regretted that many delegates were unable to hear the sermon. He encouraged all delegates to join the United Church of Christ Justice and Peace Network.

The Rev. Ann Houlette (IK) advised the delegates that today was the birthday of Indiana-Kentucky conference minister, the Rev. Carla Bailey. The delegates sang happy birthday!

The Rev. Wayne Shannon (IK) offered a song in appreciation of the General Synod shuttle bus drivers.

The Rev. Wendy Schindler-Chasney (OHIO) honored the youth from all over the country who have performed service in the Oakland area and stated their work will be long remembered. She asked all delegates to support youth and help them attend the National Youth Event, July 25 to 29, 1996, in South Carolina.

Mr. Glenn Alvarez (ILL) shared with the delegates that two years ago his younger brother was murdered, a victim of violence at age 16. His death brought pain to his church and his family. He said that the three resolutions regarding violence passed yesterday will help his church, his family and victims of violence to heal.