

SUNDAY EVENING, JULY 6, 1997

1. CALL TO ORDER

Assistant Moderator Margaret MacDonald called the Sixth Plenary to order at 7:30 PM.

2. SPEAK OUT!

Assistant Moderator MacDonald asked the participants for Speak Out! to come to the microphones.

Ms. Sue Bertolette (PSE) announced a job opportunity for retreat ministry in her conference.

The Rev. Davida Foy Crabtree (CONN) informed delegates of the 200th Birthday Celebration of the Missionary Society of Connecticut and highlighted the Society's work over the years.

Ms. Betsy Boeschel, President of the Board of the Community Renewal Society, introduced the Rev. Yvonne Delk, the Executive Director. Ms. Delk announced that on January 15, 1998 the Community Renewal Society will co-sponsor a special performance of the world premier of the opera, "*Amistad*" with the Lyric Opera of Chicago. She said that the *story of the Amistad* is our story and, in September, the Society will launch a city-wide initiative around the theme of racism and renewing the covenant among churches.

The Rev. Jon A. Fogle (PC) spoke about brain disorders and the importance of recognizing the disorder as the same as any other biological disorder. He said that the church should work to break the fear of isolation related to this disorder and should urge the Pension Board to recognize the problem and provide coverage.

Ms. Rebecca Wentworth (MINN) thanked the United Church of Christ for the chance to work with Partners in Service.

The Rev. José A. De Jesús (ILL) shared information about the Council for Hispanic Ministries.

The Rev. Cathy Barker (MINN) reflected on the blizzards and floods which have devastated that area and expressed gratitude for all the prayers and special offerings.

The Rev. Warren Kreml (CA NV,N) reminded the delegates of the importance of teaching tolerance. He stressed this as an important message to parents in preparing and teaching children. He also encouraged families to become active in Open and Affirming Congregations.

Ms. Nicole Marshall (WASH) spoke on behalf of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, asking delegates and visitors for their support and input.

Ms. Irma C. Romero (ILL) shared her concern about Puerto Rican political prisoners, saying that more help is needed in these crucial times. She asked that all United Church of Christ publications include an article about political prisoners.

The Rev. JoAnn R. Bogart (RM) stated that she serves as the United Church Press Educational Consultant for the Western

Region. Ms. Bogart called attention to the new confirmation resources entitled "Affirming Faith."

Assistant Moderator MacDonald thanked the speakers for their participation.

3. RESOLUTION "TOWARD A NEW VISION OF GIVING"

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called on Mr. Daniel Spacek to present the work of Committee Six.

Mr. Spacek thanked the committee members for their hard work. He discussed the integrity of the resolution and guided the delegates through the changes the committee made. Mr. Spacek moved the adoption of the Resolution "Toward A New Vision Of Giving" and spoke briefly in support of the motion. There was no discussion.

97-GS-17 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Toward A New Vision Of Giving."

RESOLUTION "TOWARD A NEW VISION OF GIVING"

WHEREAS, our Christian faith calls us to name, proclaim and live out our radical belief that giving helps us to grow in God's image as called for in Christian Faith, Personal Stewardship, and Economic Sharing, a pronouncement of the Eighteenth General Synod, United Church of Christ;

WHEREAS, the theological expression that undergirds this vision of giving and receiving in the United Church of Christ challenges us to claim God's gift of discipleship;

WHEREAS, the church, "created by God for mission, lives its vocation only when it is engaged in mission" (UCC Missio Dei Paper, Committee on Structure, 1993);

WHEREAS, the relationships that bind all members of the United Church of Christ in a community of faith strengthen each part of the church and the whole church; and

WHEREAS, through resources such as, Many Stewards' Offerings: Multicultural Wisdom and Practice, we learn much from others and ourselves about the nature of giving and its relationship to all settings of the church;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod calls on individuals and every setting of the United Church of Christ to live as disciples of Jesus, witnessing to a faithful use of money;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod calls on the pastors and leaders of the United Church of Christ to nurture stewards with new vigor, aware of and enriched by many approaches to giving that often are based in:

- differing denominational heritages,
- varieties of racial and ethnic cultures,
- differing generational perspectives and lifestyles, and

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- different ways of giving in partner churches globally;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod calls on all settings of the United Church of Christ to invite giving by articulating and claiming a clear vision of how each setting engages in God's mission;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod calls upon congregations, associations, conferences, national ministries and institutions related to the church to be well focused in their invitation to give, to share the stories that more closely connect the giver with the face of mission, to be prompt in thanking givers, and to be accountable for the use of money given;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod directs the Stewardship Council to introduce and test, in partnership with conferences, the concept of giving through a special mission opportunities catalog, based upon appropriate guidelines, looking at initial results after two years. The use of such a catalog throughout the church would be done with Executive Council approval;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod directs the Stewardship Council, in partnership with the All-Church Offerings Committee of the Executive Council, to redesign the current All-Church Offerings and Special Appeals with a view to making the new Special Mission Offerings easily promoted, widely inviting, consistent with new structural realities, and able to invite giving that enables special mission to be undertaken, while maintaining our priority on Our Church's Wider Mission (Basic Support), and allowing for local churches' special offerings. The re-design is to be completed by the spring of 1999 with approval of any changes, including the timeline for implementation, to be made by the General Synod in 1999;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod directs the Stewardship Council to work with several conferences in partnership to test a way of inviting individuals to give directly to our common ministry and mission through Our Church's Wider Mission. This testing shall last at least two years and any changes made as a result will be done with the approval of the Executive Council;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod directs the Stewardship Council to work with the seminaries of the United Church of Christ in developing a plan for renewed support of the seminaries in their work of theological education and the training of pastors and leaders for the church, based on the 1975 action of the Tenth General Synod;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod directs the Stewardship Council to continue to work on a comprehensive plan to invite the whole church to faithfully give and receive in ways that:

- faithfully engage in God's mission
- ensure the vitality of the church, with an interim report to the General Synod in 1999 and a final report for General Synod action in 2001; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that together, as a community of faith, the United Church of Christ commits itself to a new vision of giving, so that:

- our giving helps to connect us to one another, rather than divide us, and
- our giving connects us with God, with Jesus Christ who embodies God's mission, and with the Holy Spirit.

Subject to the availability of funds.

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called on the Rev. Earl D. Miller, Executive Director of the Stewardship Council. Mr. Miller asked the delegates to read together the theological statement that undergirds this new vision of giving.

4. PRESIDENT'S CANDIDATE SPEECH

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called on the Rev. Paul H. Sherry, President of the United Church of Christ, for his candidate speech. *[The complete text of President Sherry's speech is located in Appendix B.]*

5. TREASURER'S CANDIDATE SPEECH

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called on the Rev. Doris Powell, Director of Finance and Treasurer, to give her candidate speech. *[The complete text of Ms. Powell's speech is located in Appendix B.]*

Assistant Moderator MacDonald thanked each candidate and reminded the delegates that the election will take place during the Monday morning Plenary.

6. RESOLUTION "AFFIRMING DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES IN AN EMERGING GLOBAL ECONOMY"

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called on the Rev. Luis A. Pérez to present the recommended actions from Committee 11. Mr. Pérez spoke of the work of the committee and asked committee members to stand for recognition. He noted changes in the proposal and then moved the adoption of the Resolution "Affirming Democratic Principles in an Emerging Global Economy." Mr. Pérez spoke to the motion.

97-GS-18 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Affirming Democratic Principles in an Emerging Global Economy."

RESOLUTION "AFFIRMING DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES IN AN EMERGING GLOBAL ECONOMY"

WHEREAS, The United Church of Christ has spoken consistently for a biblically-based and just approach to economic relationships nationally and internationally; and

WHEREAS, national and international economic changes today affect the traditions and values of civil liberties and political democracy in the United States and around the world;