

MONDAY AFTERNOON

intimidation, fear, sexism, anti-Semitism, and homophobia, with resultant loss of community;

WHEREAS, we are called as God's partners in Christ's service to proclaim and teach the Gospel of compassion and God's love for all (Mt. 28:19-20);

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ calls us to respond to hatred with love, (Matt. 5:43-45) it is incumbent upon us as Christians to preach a Gospel of love and peace as modeled by Christ, who died that all might be redeemed; and

WHEREAS, those who belong to hate groups are also those for whom Christ died;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod encourages conferences, associations, congregations, agencies and instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ to join in active identification of and education about such extremism and the injustices and fears which feed it within our communities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod requests the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to develop a variety of resources with a biblical and theological foundation to equip churches and individual Christians to respond to extremism;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod also encourages peaceful and just public opposition to extremism whenever the need arises; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod call on all members of the United Church of Christ to witness to their faith in the midst of extremism.

Subject to the availability of funds.

10. LIVING THEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

Assistant Moderator Thomas called on the Rev. Barbara Brown Zikmund.

Ms. Zikmund presented General Synod with the "Living Theological Heritage," a set of seven volumes delineating the historical tradition of the United Church of Christ. This work gathers into one place all our history and heritage as a denomination. Ms. Zikmund introduced the Revs. William Hulteen, Thomas Dipko and Shelby Rooks as persons who have been instrumental in the production of these volumes.

11. COMMUNITY BUILDING

Assistant Moderator Thomas called upon the Rev. Pat De Jong and the Rev. Christopher Grundy for community building. They led General Synod in singing "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and "When the Saints Go Marching In."

12. INSTRUMENTALITY PRESENTATION

Assistant Moderator Thomas called upon the Rev. David Hirano, Executive Vice President of the United Church Board for World Ministries, to begin the Instrumentality

Presentation.

Mr. Hirano began the presentation by leading General Synod in singing "Salidummay." The Instrumentality Presentation consisted of stories told in person and on video by persons whose lives had in some way been affected by the work of the national instrumentalities. Following each presentation, General Synod joined in a litany lead by the executives of the instrumentalities. A small booklet containing the testimonies, presented in person or by video, was made available to delegates.

13. RESOLUTION "WELFARE REFORM"

Assistant Moderator Thomas asked Ms. Andrea Mason, Chair of Committee Five, to return for discussion and action on the Resolution "Welfare Reform." Copies of the changes to the resolution were distributed to delegates. Ms. Mason again reviewed the changes.

Assistant Moderator Thomas asked for discussion.

Ms. Lori Ann Bertram (MASS) offered a friendly amendment to add the words, "and victims of domestic violence," in the first and third "WHEREAS" phrases. This was accepted as a friendly amendment.

The Rev. Alfred C. Krass (PSE) offered a friendly amendment to add the words, "working with food banks, local food pantries, hunger coalitions, and Bread for the World to eliminate hunger" at the end of the first "BE IT RESOLVED."

Ms. Noelle Damico (NY) offered a friendly amendment: delete the words, "ministry challenges and opportunities," in the last "WHEREAS" and substitute the words, "poverty, hunger, illness and violence," to read: "WHEREAS, it is our Christian calling, as the church of Jesus Christ and as persons, to respond to the poverty, hunger, illness and violence created by the implementation of this Act;"

Both of these latter amendments were accepted as friendly amendments.

Assistant Moderator Thomas called for the vote.

97-GS-34 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Welfare Reform."

RESOLUTION "WELFARE REFORM"

WHEREAS, the implementation of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PWRA), commonly known as the "1996 Welfare Reform Act", over the next five years threatens millions of children and their families with poverty and homelessness--particularly mentally and developmentally challenged children, children of legally resident immigrants, and victims of domestic violence;

WHEREAS, state, federal, regional and local governments are increasingly calling upon the private and religious sectors to collaborate in accomplishing the positive goals of this

welfare reform and to provide ministries of mercy and support to persons adversely affected;

WHEREAS, we, as responsible Christian citizens, need to be educated about the implications of this Act and become active advocates on behalf of children and others such as legal immigrants, disabled persons, and victims of domestic violence whose needs are not being adequately addressed by this Act;

WHEREAS, we need to know what the states, counties and cities in which we live are doing in response to this Act; and

WHEREAS, it is our Christian calling, as the church of Jesus Christ and as persons, to respond to the suffering, poverty, hunger, illness and violence created by the implementation of this Act;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ views the passage of the 1996 PWRA as unconscionable and calls upon its local churches, associations, conferences, and instrumentalities to become informed about the ministry challenges created by the implementation of the 1996 PWRA and to engage in such ministries of service in the name of Christ, affirming that we are all children of God, including:

- consciousness-raising education of church and the citizenry;
- personal support and encouragement of persons who are or have been receiving public assistance as they move into the work force;
- child care for working parents (for all work shifts);
- interim transportation to and from work and child care;
- supplemental emergency financing for goods and services;

- job training and job placement;
- legislative advocacy to accomplish further needed and corrective reforms;
- active involvement in economic development;
- advocacy for those seeking to establish or retain legal benefits; and
- working with food banks, local food pantries, hunger coalitions, and Bread for the World to eliminate hunger;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod calls upon the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Office for Church in Society, local churches, associations, conferences and seminaries to research and share information, ministry models and strategies to show how church members and churches can and do respond to these ministry challenges and to complement, supplement and improve what is otherwise being done in the public, private and religious sectors of our society; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod requests the Office for Church and Society and the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to monitor the implementation of this resolution throughout the church and to submit a report to the Twenty-second General Synod in 1999.

Subject to availability of funds.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECESS

Assistant Moderator Thomas called upon Ms. Edith Guffey to make announcements. After announcements Assistant Moderator Thomas declared the Eighth Plenary of the Twenty-first General Synod adjourned at 5:00 PM.

MONDAY EVENING, JULY 7, 1997

1. CALL TO ORDER

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called the Eighth Plenary of the Twenty-first General Synod to order at 7:30 PM.

2. SPEAK OUT!

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called upon those participating in the Speak Out!

The Rev. Clyde J. Steckel (MINN) invited delegates and visitors to the PRISM booth to examine their publication.

Ms. Heidi Mannerter (IOWA) requested prayers of healing for the Rev. Robert F. Molsberry, the victim of a hit and run accident.

The Rev. Jan Griesinger, United Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Concerns addressed the issue of economic justice, sharing her concern about the lack of unions in the facilities in which the Synod was meeting.

The Rev. Werner Lang (OHIO) spoke out against an issue of justice and concern for students in care in the United Church of Christ and the lack of the right of appeal they presently have.

Ms. Linda Whitney (MASS) asked the delegates to take a stand for children who are victims of violence. She invited delegates and visitors to celebrate Children's Sabbath on the 3rd Sunday in October

Mr. Kenneth Brown (CAC) reminded the delegates of the prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was incarcerated for a crime that he likely did not commit. Mr. Brown asked the delegates to pray for justice.

Ms. Joan Vander Vliet (MASS) recommended the "New England Women's Celebration 5" which will be held March 13-15, 1998 at the Holiday Inn in Portland, Maine. She encouraged the delegates to share this information with their congregations.