

MONDAY EVENING

had reached. Ms. Starck-Wille said that, after conversation with the submitters, it was stated that this document was brought to the Synod as a report to be received by the Synod and not as a resolution whose content was to be accepted or rejected.

Ms. Starck-Wille, on behalf of the Committee, moved that the Twenty-first General Synod receive the Report of the Action Taken at the 1997 Meeting of the Calvin Synod Conference. She spoke to the recommendation, explaining that receiving the report does not imply agreement or endorsement of the action taken at the Calvin Synod Meeting. Ms. Starck-Wille said that Committee Nine wished to have two persons from their committee speak to the report: one would be a report of the majority of Committee Nine while the other would be a report of the minority.

The Rev. Bruce G. Swanson (CAC) represented the minority report of Committee Nine. Richard A. Koenig (CONN) spoke on behalf of the majority of Committee Nine. Assistant Moderator MacDonald asked for additional discussion.

The Rev. Albert W. Kovacs, (CA.SY) said that, in the spring following the Twentieth General Synod, the Calvin Synod met and created a special United Church of Christ Review Committee to look at the continuing relationship of the Calvin Synod with the United Church of Christ. He stated that information was presented to the churches of the Calvin Synod and that the action that was presented in this report was taken unanimously by the Calvin Synod. The Calvin Synod, in its May meeting, decided to take no action but to refer the matter to local churches for study and reflection. He said there were many who wanted to immediately withdraw from the United Church of Christ but there were others who had encouraged remaining in the United Church of Christ. Mr. Kovacs stated that there is sincere affection for the denomination. He noted that for many years they had listened to different positions and that they continue to listen. He asked if it is not their right to speak, as well as to be spoken to. He said the Calvin Synod did not ask that the General Synod concur with the declarations of the Calvin Synod but that General Synod listen to those declarations.

The Rev. David P. Sickelka (IS) stated that he was a delegate at the last Synod and recalled the disrespect that was displayed when the Calvin Synod offered a motion. He encouraged the delegates, who were in Oakland, to personally apologize to the Calvin Synod. He reminded delegates of the Standing Rules that call for etiquette and respect for all.

Mr. Karl Limvere (NOPL) offered an amendment that General Synod "receive and affirm the Calvin Synod resolution as a valid expression of our Christian faith within the United Church of Christ." Mr. Limvere spoke to the motion.

Mr. Dan Caplan (CAC) and Ms. Kathy Plum (MINN) spoke against the amendment. The Rev. Jeffrey R. Gerber (OHIO) and The Rev. Zoltan Szucs (CA.SY) spoke in support of the amendment.

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called for the vote. The

amendment was defeated.

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called the attention of the delegates to the main motion and asked if there were persons who wished to speak against the main motion. The Rev. Rebecca E. Brenner (PSE), a member of Committee 12, spoke against the motion.

97-GS-41 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod receives the report of the action taken at the 1997 meeting of the Calvin Synod Conference.

REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN AT THE 1997 MEETING OF THE CALVIN SYNOD CONFERENCE

WE MEMBERS AND OFFICERS OF CALVIN SYNOD, both laity and ministers, would join with our kindred of the United Church of Christ in these days of trial and rejection, disorientation and aimlessness, in the search for contemporary ways of witnessing faithfully to our constituent congregations and the world around us;

WHEREAS, our immigrant Hungarian Reformed ancestors turned to the former German Reformed Church and its congregations for pastoral services, in 1891, and were graciously received as brothers and sisters in the Reformed faith, who also accepted the Holy Bible and the Heidelberg Catechism as their own confession;

WHEREAS, the German Reformed Church conscientiously searched for Hungarian Reformed pastors to take care of this growing flock, and helped them to organize Hungarian Reformed congregations with their spiritual and financial assistance;

WHEREAS, the concerned denomination gave encouragement to the organization of a Hungarian Reformed Classis, effectuated in 1896;

WHEREAS, the German Reformed Church changed its name to The Reformed Church in the United States, enabling it to embrace members coming to it from the different backgrounds;

WHEREAS, The Reformed Church in the United States established chairs in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, at Franklin and Marshall College and The Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church, to raise pastors for the Hungarian constituency;

WHEREAS, the denomination undertook the publication of the Reformatusok Lapja, our Hungarian church paper established in 1900;

WHEREAS, the denomination negotiated the Tiffin Agreement with our Mother Reformed Church in Hungary, in 1921, to receive the Hungarian Reformed churches into its own fold;

WHEREAS, The Reformed Church in the United States formed a new denomination by union with The Evangelical Synod of North America, and retained the Heidelberg Catechism as a doctrinal standard alongside the Augsburg

Confession;

WHEREAS, The Evangelical and Reformed Church authorized the organization of four Classes comprising the Magyar Synod out of the Hungarian Reformed congregations;

WHEREAS, forty years ago, in 1957, The Evangelical and Reformed Church merged with The Congregational Christian Churches in Cleveland, Ohio, according to a Basis of Union which declared that the new Constitution would assure that Synods are to retain their present status until they are united by their own action and when mutually agreeable, and without abridgment of the rights of churches which participate;

WHEREAS, The Magyar Synod, now known as Calvin Synod, was the only one of the Synods that voted against the merger, but loyally conformed to the good order of the previous denomination and entered the new one in good faith;

WHEREAS, The United Church of Christ in its Constitution has declared its dependence upon the word of God in the Scriptures, and that it professes the same historic faith of Christendom expressed in the ancient creeds and the confessions of the Reformation; and Calvin Synod has defined in its Constitution our reaffirmation of the Heidelberg Catechism and the Second Helvetic Confession as the standards of our faith;

WHEREAS, we have remained a fully constituted Synod, in historic continuity for over a century, prior to the mergers which brought into being The Evangelical and Reformed Church and The United Church of Christ, with which we are now affiliated as a self-governing community;

WHEREAS, as constituent members and a duly constituted Synod in the United Church of Christ, it is our right, privilege and Christian duty to witness first of all to our coworkers in this fellowship; and

WHEREAS, in previous General Synod Meetings and at other times we have pointed out the progressive deviation

and distancing of our denomination from biblical standards and these confessions so cherished and defended by our pious predecessors;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in defense of the faith of the apostolic Church and the Reformers, of Ulrich Zwingli and Martin Luther, of John Calvin and the Hungarian Reformed Galley Slaves, of those Kings, Princes and National Protectors, of our immigrant ancestors and our faithful members, we raise our voices anew; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we members and officers of Calvin Synod do hereby call upon the faithful Christians in The United Church of Christ to adhere to the authority of the Holy Bible and the basic creeds and confessions of our faith, that we are witnesses to our holy churches, our beloved nation and to our Lord's entire creation, as true disciples of the Son of God; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Calvin Synod invites and urges all other members, churches, associations and conferences, delegates and officers, to join in this petition and resolution to the General Synod of The United Church of Christ.

13. POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

Assistant Moderator MacDonald recognized the Rev. Paul J. Pic (SC) for a Point of Personal Privilege. Mr. Pic requested that the minutes of the General Synod reflect that the vote on Full Communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Reformed Church in America, was approved by a majority of voting delegates.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECESS

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called on Secretary Guffey for announcements. Following announcements, Assistant Moderator MacDonald declared the Ninth Plenary to be in recess following evening prayers.

TUESDAY MORNING, JULY 8, 1997

1. CALL TO ORDER

Assistant Moderator Frank Thomas called to order the Tenth Plenary of the Twenty-first General Synod and asked Mr. Arthur Clyde to lead the delegates with a hymn.

2. BIBLE STUDY

Assistant Moderator Thomas called on the Rev. Wesley Ariarjah to lead General Synod in worship. Before Mr. Ariarjah began Bible Study, he said that it had been a privilege, a joy and an enriching experience to be in Columbus.

Mr. Arthur Clyde closed Bible Study by leading the delegates in a hymn.

The Rev. Paul H. Sherry thanked the Rev. Ariarjah for his

wisdom and presence and also thanked him for his ministry with the World Council of Churches.

3. SPEAK OUT!

Assistant Moderator Thomas called on the delegates and visitors for the morning Speak Out!

Ms. Sarah Young (PNE) commented that it was important to acknowledge and support the gifts that youth and young adults have to give.

The Rev. Steven P. Miller (Hunger Action Office) thanked those who support the Hunger Action Fund and encouraged others to do the same.

The Rev. Wendy S. Schindler-Chasney (OHIO) spoke about the Great Lakes Regional Youth Event that will be held