

TUESDAY MORNING

during the summer of 1998 at Elmhurst College, Illinois. The theme will be "A Call to Connect."

Ms. Susan Tower Larsen (OHIO) invited delegates to join in a moment of thanks for the Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries. She said that the Council is composed of youth and young adults from across the country who have worked tirelessly on behalf of youth and young adults and on behalf of our church. She also acknowledged and thanked the Rev. Gordon J. Svoboda for his work as staff to the Council.

Ms. Sandra Sorensen (Office for Church in Society) spoke about the need to educate people regarding the Chief Wahoo/Cleveland Indians logo issue.

The Rev. Stephen W. Welch (WIS) spoke about the anti-racism program. Mr. Welch thanked Ms. Bernice Powell Jackson who provided packets on racism. These packets will help to educate and motivate adults and children.

The Rev. Charlotte H. Still (Office for Church Life and Leadership) spoke about the packet called "Leadership Files" and explained how the information could be used.

The Rev. Nozomi Ikuta (American Missionary Association) spoke about racism. Ms. Ikuta urged everyone to make sure the dialogue doesn't end here.

The Rev. Laurie W. Etter (CONN) encouraged delegates and visitors to visit a prison in their area.

Ms. Sarah Blossom (IK) shared that her congregation has a special relationship with the Diocese in Sri Lanka. Ms. Blossom then offered a prayer for Sri Lanka.

The Rev. Rollin O. Russell (SOC) announced the availability of the position of Associate Conference Minister which has a deadline of July 31. He also said the Southern Conference is extremely proud of their sister and friend, Ms. Brenda Allen, who is completing her term on the Executive Council and who has served as the Chair of Executive Council over the last biennium.

Jeanne Zaragoza (ILL) spoke about social justice, specifically addressing the issue of Puerto Rico's political prisoners.

4. ELECTION RESULTS

Assistant Moderator Thomas called on Ms. Edith Guffey to announce the election results.

Ms. Guffey said that the Nominating Committee played a crucial role in the life of the church and that announcing the election results is always difficult when there was a contested election. She thanked all of those who were willing to be nominated when they knew there was a very real possibility that they would not be elected. Ms. Guffey then announced those elected to the Nominating Committee, Class of 2003: the clergy elected were: Rose Mary McCombs-Maxey (CAC); Yvonne Samuel (MO) and Ramón Hernández (MI). The laypersons elected were Sandy Casmeay (MINN), Terry Dean (SC) and Sachi Fujita (CAL.S).

5. INVITATION TO THE TWENTY-SECOND GENERAL SYNOD

Assistant Moderator Thomas called on the Rev. Daehler Hayes, Rhode Island Conference Minister, who extended the invitation to the Twenty-second General Synod, which will be in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1999. The Rev. Hayes introduced those on stage from the Rhode Island Conference. Ms. Carol Williamson, President of the Rhode Island Conference, invited all delegates and visitors to the Twenty-second General Synod.

6. AGENDA COMMITTEE

Assistant Moderator Thomas then called on Ms. Vicki Beckman, Chair of the Agenda Committee. Ms. Beckman thanked the delegates for the work they had accomplished and encouraged them for the work that remained to be done.

7. GENERAL SYNOD COMMITTEE REPORTS - BLOCK K

Assistant Moderator Thomas called on Ms. Jean Wade, Chairperson of Committee Three, to present the recommended actions from Committee Three. Items assigned to this committee were: "Democracy and Human Rights in Nigeria," page 160 of the Program, Worship and Business Book, "Female Genital Mutilation," page 162 of the Program, Worship and Business Book and "Withdrawal of U.S. Bases from Okinawa," page 183 of the Program, Worship and Business Book.

8. RESOLUTION "DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA"

Ms. Wade thanked the members of Committee Three and all who assisted in the process. She briefly described the work of the committee and then moved that the Twenty-first General Synod adopt the Resolution "Democracy and Human Rights in Nigeria."

Ms. Wade called on Mr. Nicolas Gourdet, (United Church Board for World Ministries) to speak to the motion. Mr. Gourdet spoke of the many injustices and oppression the Nigerian people are enduring. He said that, just as the United Church of Christ took the lead in standing against apartheid, the United Church of Christ must take the lead in standing for human rights and democracy in Nigeria.

There was no discussion and Assistant Moderator Thomas called for the vote.

97-GS-42 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Democracy and Human Rights in Nigeria."

RESOLUTION "DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA"

WHEREAS, the unelected military dictatorship of Nigeria, headed by General Sani Abacha, has demonstrated its intent to remain in power without returning the country to civilian rule any time soon;

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WHEREAS, the Nigerian military regime has abused systematically civil and human rights of the Nigerian people, as documented by Amnesty International and other international human rights organizations; and

WHEREAS, the World Council of Churches International Strategy Meeting on Nigeria in 1996 urged member churches to work towards democratization of Nigeria;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

- A. Calls on the Nigerian military regime to move without further delay to relinquish its undemocratic hold on power and allow the country to return to civilian rule, under representatives elected June 12, 1993;
- B. Urges the government of the United States to exercise leadership concerning Nigerian issues within international organizations such as the United Nations by:
 1. Calling for a complete freeze of the assets and bank accounts of Nigeria's rulers and their families;
 2. Calling for an international travel ban on Nigeria's military rulers, their families and civilian officials in the employment of the military regime;
 3. Calling for an international ban on the sale of military or police equipment to Nigeria;
 4. Calling for an international sports boycott of Nigeria;
 5. Calling for international suspension of all non-humanitarian aid to Nigeria;
 6. Continually pressing the Nigerian military regime to free all political detainees, to lift restrictions on media, and to practice judicial processes which provide the fair legal representation to which Nigerian citizens are entitled;
 7. Making significant funds available to non-governmental organizations and grassroots community groups in Nigeria to enhance their capacity to do human and democratic rights education and other work which will encourage democratic and popular participation and build a more extensive democratic culture;
 8. Calling for an international ban on the purchase of Nigerian oil;
 9. Continuing to press Shell Oil to work to influence its parent company, Royal Dutch Shell, to cease despoliation of the natural environment in Ogoniland; to take measures to ensure that in the future the lands and livelihoods of the Ogoni people are not adversely affected by oil extraction techniques; to take steps to rehabilitate the spoiled environment in Ogoniland; and to compensate

adequately the Ogoni people whose livelihoods have been adversely affected by environmental degradation;

10. Being prepared to provide significant and sustained aid to Nigeria once civilian rule is in place to help build a strong and vibrant civil society, and to strengthen or put in place appropriate mechanisms for monitoring the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democratic development and the establishment of good governance practices;

- C. Directs the President of the United Church of Christ to:
 1. Represent this position to government bodies, ecumenical organizations, advocacy groups and partner churches grappling with human rights today in Nigeria; and
 2. Communicate this position to religious organizations and leaders in Nigeria, including the Christian Council of Nigeria and the Church of the Province of Nigeria;
- D. Requests the United Church Board for World Ministries and the Commission for Racial Justice to develop educational and advocacy materials focusing on human rights in Nigeria.

Subject to the availability of funds.

9. RESOLUTION "FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION"

Ms. Wade called the attention of the delegates to the next item of business to be considered, the Resolution "Female Genital Mutilation." Ms. Wade moved the adoption of the resolution, briefly spoke to the motion and asked Ms. Janet Steeds (NY) to speak to the resolution as well.

Discussion followed and Assistant Moderator Thomas called for the vote.

97-GS-43 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Female Genital Mutilation."

RESOLUTION "FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION"

WHEREAS, Jeremiah offers Biblical support that wisdom, strength, and money do not matter as much as kindness, justice, and equity;

WHEREAS, the "Good news of Jesus is violated if we ignore the pain of some of the most vulnerable children of this world." (Valerie Russell, UCC Office for Church in Society);

WHEREAS, there is no basis for Female Genital Mutilation in the Bible or the Koran, and it is not practiced in Saudi Arabia, the cradle of Islam;

WHEREAS, it is stated in Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that parties shall take all effective