

## MONDAY MORNING

addresses the issues of self-determination and the welfare of the East Timorese;

WHEREAS, because there is current political ferment in Indonesia and consequent hopes for greater self-determination for the East Timorese people coupled with the uncertainties for the future from potentially destabilizing elements in the East Timorese society into which there has been a significant influx of non-East Timorese; and

WHEREAS, the Protestant Church in East Timor with its over 25,000 members has been facing these social and political challenges and will now be facing them at a new level of intensity and involvement;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms with a new sense of responsibility this ecumenical partnership with the Protestant Church in East Timor as an expression of our on-going solidarity and desire for shared life and faith;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-second General Synod give thanks for the faithful witness of a church and its leadership which despite its relatively small size and potential vulnerability has spoken the prophetic word and lived the life of the leaven; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Twenty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages the appropriate units of the church to continue their advocacy and support of the cause of the East Timorese people and the expressions of solidarity with the Protestant Church in East Timor.

Funding for this action will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

### 11. RECOGNITION OF PARTNERSHIP WITH EAST TIMOR

Ms. Norman-Richardson called on Rev. Eric Gass, Area Executive for Southern Asia. Mr. Gass reviewed the history leading to the resolution and called on the Assistant Moderator of the Protestant Church in East Timor, Rev. Orlando Marcal. Rev. Marcal brought greetings from East Timor and expressed gratitude for the partnership with the United Church of Christ. Mr. Marcal asked the General Synod to pray for the people of East Timor.

On stage with Rev. Marcal was Rev. David Y. Hirano, Executive Director of the Board for World Ministries, and Rev. Paul H. Sherry. Documents of the Partnership

Agreement were signed, and gifts were exchanged. The delegates responded with a standing ovation.

### 12. RESOLUTION "AFFIRMATION OF PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AND UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST"

Ms. Branch referred the delegates to page 157 of the Program/Worship and Business Book and presented the Resolution "Affirmation of Partnership Between United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, and United Church of Christ" and moved its adoption.

Rev. Richard W. Cowles, Jr. (NY) requested that the delegates hear from the person representing the partner church prior to voting.

Ms. Norman-Richardson called on Rev. Daniel Hoffman, Area Executive for Africa to introduce the General Secretary of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, Mr. Steve Titus.

Mr. Hoffman explained the history of the involvement of the United Church of Christ with the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA) and introduced Rev. Steve Titus, President of the UCCSA, who spoke to the Synod.

99-GS-28 VOTED: The Twenty-second General Synod adopts the Resolution "Affirmation of Partnership between United Congregation Church of Southern Africa and United Church of Christ."

### AFFIRMATION OF PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AND UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WHEREAS the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA), numbering 235,900 members, carries out ministries of witness and service in Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe;

WHEREAS, the partnership of the United Church of Christ with the UCCSA has continued uninterrupted since 1833, when the first American Board missionaries were sent to South Africa;

WHEREAS, both the UCCSA and United Church of Christ have worked together diligently to oppose apartheid in South Africa and to establish democracy in South Africa;

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WHEREAS, the UCCSA will commemorate its 200th anniversary in 1999, celebrating the arrival of the first British Congregational missionaries in southern Africa; and

WHEREAS, the UCCSA and the United Church of Christ have repeatedly committed themselves through the United Church Board for World Ministries to engage together in partnership;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ congratulates the UCCSA on its 200th anniversary;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-second General Synod reaffirms the historic relationship between the United Church of Christ and the UCCSA.

Funding for this action will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

The Assistant Moderator Norman-Richardson returned the podium to Assistant Moderator Frieberg.

### 13. RESOLUTION "INTERFAITH RELATIONS AND THE CHURCHES"

Assistant Moderator Frieberg called on Mr. David Cavanaugh (CA NV,N), Chair of Committee 13.

Mr. Cavanaugh referred the delegates to page 124 in the Program/Worship and Business Book and the Report on "Interfaith Relations and the Churches," and page 87 of the Program/Worship and Business Book for the recommendation of the Executive Council regarding this resolution. Mr. Cavanaugh moved receipt of the report and asked Rev. Randi J. Walker, Chair of the United Church of Christ Council on Ecumenism to speak to this motion. One change in wording was noted on page 130, paragraph 11 replacing the words "available for the common good" with the word "respected for the common good."

99-GS-29 VOTED: The Twenty-second General Synod receives the policy statement of the Interfaith Relations Commission of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA titled "Interfaith Relations And the Churches;" and requests its constituent bodies to engage in a two-year study of the statement utilizing resources developed by the NCCCUSA and to develop a mechanism for providing feedback to the United Church of Christ Council on Ecumenism so that a United Church of Christ statement on Interfaith

Relations may be developed for report to and consideration by the Twenty-third General Synod.

### INTERFAITH RELATIONS AND THE CHURCHES A POLICY STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE USA

*Developed by the Interfaith Relations Commission of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, this statement is the result of a four-year process of consultation with member communions and with NCCCUSA program units, in particular the Faith and Order Commission and the Ecumenical Networks Commission, and the Black Church Liaison Committee. At a number of stages, representatives of other religious traditions also shared responses to the document, which have been helpful in its creation.*

*This Statement provides policy guidelines for the National Council of Churches, and is offered for the consideration of its member communions as a source for guidance, reflection, and action. When approved, this document will be made available with accompanying material for study and discussion. It is our hope as well that it will contribute to the wider discourse on religious diversity and community in our national life.*

#### PREAMBLE

"As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18). As disciples, we seek to testify to the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, to embody that love in the world, and to respond to the leading of God's Holy Spirit. We seek God's grace in our common effort to understand ever more fully how to live as the body of Christ in this religiously plural and culturally diverse time and place.

We speak out of a changing experience of religious diversity in our country. Events in the United States and across the world have made us more aware of the significance of the world's religions and their influence on politics, economics, and cultures. We speak out of what we have been learning in our shared ecumenical life. At home and abroad, the work of building Christian unity and our efforts for peace and human development are increasingly intertwined with questions regarding our relationships with those of religious traditions outside the historic Christian church.

#### Historical, Political and Social Context

The Americas have always been religiously plural. For millennia, their indigenous peoples have practiced their