

## MONDAY EVENING

task a rehabilitation plan of incarceration that is not a profit-making business.

Rev. George C. Martz (PC) stated he served three congregations for 14 months who have been on the fringe of the United Church of Christ for at least five years. They originated the resolution "Hearing the Voices of the Churches." Rev. Martz thanked the Synod for the compassion shown in supporting this resolution and for restoring hope in our covenantal relationship with many congregations.

Rev. Barron P. Barley (PC) stated that while it is bad when someone is gunned down or dies of cancer through another's activity, it is worse when a person is not helped to see the way of abundant blessing, when they are not helped to see how Jesus is the Christ, when a person is not given to hear or understand the scriptures. He encouraged faith in the Salvation of Jesus Christ.

Moderator Norman-Richardson thanked the Speak Out! participants and stated that the next Speak Out! would be Tuesday morning.

Moderator Norman-Richardson invited Rev. Norman W. Jackson and Dr. Mary Luti to the stage for a time of reflection.

### 3. REFLECTIONS

Mr. Jackson asked how we look at structure, since we have spent so much time talking about restructure. He observed there is a real need to see precisely where we are and what kind of priorities we will have in the new structure. He stated that there is also grief because structures are dying and some people will no longer be working in positions they have been competent at and called to. Gary Oniki said there are two ways to look at structure: the way it looks on paper and the way it looks with whomever it is that is implementing and living that structure. At this moment we only have the structure on paper. We do know that the new structure has extraordinary potential and what it becomes depends not just on the five new officers, but on all of us.

Ms. Luti reflected on a recurring theme at General Synod: the Gap. She explained this is shorthand for the opinion that there is a debilitating distance between and among the various settings of our church. She hears there are many gaps, sometimes attributed to the nature of our structure, sometimes attributed to the people who staff those structures or to the way we do process. No matter where you sit in our church it seems that at some time or another we all fall into the

gap and at some time or another everyone is deeply disappointed, angry, resigned or just plain cynical. The gap is a many headed creature. Ms. Luti encouraged us all, always courageously, to name the gaps, to denounce them if they need denouncing and to work hard to amend them, to bridge them. She also encouraged that we exercise generosity with one another and give credit where credit is due.

Moderator Norman-Richardson thanked the Reflectors and reminded the delegates that the final piece of business from Committee 14 will be addressed at the end of the agenda when the remaining agenda has been completed. She called upon Mr. Antoine Crenshaw, Chair of Committee Eight, to present the recommendations of the Committee.

### 4. RESOLUTION "CREATING FOUR SPECIAL MISSION OFFERINGS"

Mr. Crenshaw presented the Resolution "Creating Four Special Mission Offerings" and explained the process the Committee followed. He indicated several changes the Committee made: changed the subtitle of the Strengthen the Church Offering to "Faithfully Building the Body of Christ;" added the words "through its local congregations and conferences" in the fourth paragraph of the first "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED" and in the same paragraph added the words "accessible to all; changed the word "our" to "the" in the subtitle "Remembering those who serve the Church" under the Christmas Fund and used biblical and theological rationale to create three "WHEREAS" statements at the beginning of the resolution to add scripture reference in the text of the resolution.

Mr. Crenshaw moved the adoption of the resolution "Creating Four Special Mission Offerings." Mr. Crenshaw yielded his time to Rev. Earl D. Miller of the Stewardship Council to speak to the resolution.

Mr. Miller spoke about a 90-year-old woman in Montana who made a pledge to that conference's million dollar capital campaign of \$15 a month for as long as she lived. When asked why she came to that decision, she said that earlier she had pledged \$14 a month for as long as she lived to the Make A Difference! campaign and she believed she could and should do better. Mr. Miller explained that this resolution is a result of the Twenty-first General Synod asking the Stewardship Council to lead the Church to do better with our offerings. Research indicated support for reducing six offerings to four saying they would personally support the four and believed their congregations would, as well. He asked for support for this opportunity to continue doing good, to expand

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God's mission, to create a new set of four special mission offerings, to make true the Apostle Paul's call to Christians to complete an offering and to excel in generous undertakings.

Moderator Norman-Richardson recognized delegates for discussion.

Rev. Nancy L. Swanson (WIS) spoke as a member of Committee Eight stating she was impressed with the research study and that the proposal is a good response to the study. Ms. Swanson stated the largest concern she has heard is the dropping of the Just Peace and Hunger Appeals and this concern was addressed. She urged support of the resolution.

Mr. Don Driemeier (MO) spoke in favor of the resolution, making note that his church now conducts all six offerings. He explained that a slight increase in giving to the four offerings could compensate for the elimination of the two because the costs of the promotion of the two will not be incurred. He urged support of this resolution.

Seeing no one in opposition to the resolution, Moderator Norman-Richardson called for the vote.

99-GS-41 VOTED: The Twenty-second General Synod adopts the Resolution "Creating Four Special Mission Offerings."

### CREATING FOUR SPECIAL MISSION OFFERINGS

WHEREAS, Jesus spoke frequently about the use of money, invited people to give, and celebrated those who did;

WHEREAS, Hebrew scriptures call upon God's people to give, through tithes and offerings, to religious institutions and to the needs of the poor;

WHEREAS, in Paul's letters, there are frequent references to the need for Christians to give gladly and generously, such as in 2 Corinthians where Paul asks the Corinthian Christians to complete a special offering and "excel also in this generous undertaking," commending the Macedonian Christians for their extreme and voluntary generosity;

WHEREAS, we celebrate that members and friends of the United Church of Christ understand the call to engage in and financially support God's mission;

WHEREAS, we celebrate the many varied special offerings received by congregations as they address

needs and issues in their communities and we affirm these efforts as the work of the whole United Church of Christ;

WHEREAS, we celebrate the special offerings planned and encouraged by the conferences of the United Church of Christ for ministry and mission unique to their particular settings;

WHEREAS, we celebrate that for years members and friends of the United Church of Christ have given faithfully to four All-Church Offerings and to two Special Appeals;

WHEREAS, the Twenty-first General Synod passed a resolution, "*Toward a New Vision of Giving*," that 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;

WHEREAS, the resolution called for the redesign to be completed by the Spring of 1999 with approval of any changes, including the time line for implementation, to be made by the General Synod in 1999;

WHEREAS, the Stewardship Council and the All-Church Offerings Design Team that it formed and staffed have carefully studied and broadly tested ideas for a new design of offerings;

WHEREAS, the extensive research shows that a high percentage of people called for continuity in the names of the offerings;

WHEREAS, the extensive research shows that a high percentage of people called for as much specificity and description in the name of each offering as possible; and

WHEREAS, the extensive research shows that a high percentage of people expressed a strong willingness to contribute to the new Special Mission Offerings and to encourage support from their congregations;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ will begin a new denomination-wide pattern of four Special Mission Offerings on February 1, 2001, replacing the denomination-wide pattern of four All-Church Offerings and two Special Appeals;

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the four new Special Mission Offerings be as follows:

### **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**

#### **Giving Help, Hope and Life**

Through this offering we will support ministries of disaster relief, economic development, refugee resettlement, health care and social service in over 70 countries, including the United States and Canada. Gifts to this offering will provide the hope and help that keep individuals and communities working to transform the quality of their lives.

People will be invited to give to **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING** during Lent each year.

Gifts received for **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING** will be allocated by Wider Church Ministries. A report of the mission made possible will be given to the church each year.

### **STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH**

#### **Faithfully Building the Body of Christ**

Through this offering we will share in the growth and future of the United Church of Christ through its local congregations and Conferences. We will further our commitment to be a multi-racial/multi-cultural church, accessible to all. We will strengthen and renew existing congregations and fund leadership for new congregations. We will provide for exciting new programs for youth and young adults and fund leadership development for the whole church.

People will be invited to give to **STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH: Faithfully Building the Body of Christ** on Pentecost Sunday each year, or on an optional date - Thanksgiving, the United Church of Christ Anniversary, or the local church anniversary.

After promotional costs are paid, gifts received for **STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH: Faithfully Building the Body of Christ** will be shared -- with Conferences allocating 50% of the receipts and Local Church Ministries, in collaboration with the Office of General Ministries, allocating 50%. A report of the ministry made possible in each Conference and through the national allocations will be given to the church each year.

### **NEIGHBORS IN NEED**

#### **Justice and Compassion Like a Mighty Stream**

Through this offering we will express our deep commitment to reaching out and touching neighbors with justice and compassion. This will allow us to speak prophetically to those in power and to advocate for a society where all people have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives. In the spirit of Christ, we will seek to confront evil in the world and to alleviate suffering. We will do this through direct service as well as advocacy. This offering will include support for the work of the Council for American Indian Ministry, efforts to eradicate hunger, and the promotion of justice, peace and reconciliation.

People will be invited to give to **NEIGHBORS IN NEED: Justice and Compassion Like a Mighty Stream** during the period between American Indian Ministry Sunday (third Sunday in September) and World Communion Sunday (first Sunday in October) each year.

Gifts received for **NEIGHBORS IN NEED: Justice and Compassion Like a Mighty Stream** will be allocated by Justice and Witness Ministries and the Council for American Indian Ministry. A report of the mission made possible will be given to the church each year.

### **THE CHRISTMAS FUND**

#### **Remembering Those Who Serve the Church**

Through this offering we will help meet a variety of compelling needs, including emergency grants for active or retired clergy at times of financial crisis as well as gift checks at Christmas to low-income retired clergy and widowed spouses. Through this fund we will also be able to assist both lay and clergy retirees by supplementing their unusually low pensions and providing needed assistance with health insurance premiums for those with low retirement incomes.

People will be invited to give to **THE CHRISTMAS FUND: Remembering Those Who Serve the Church** during Advent/Christmas each year.

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Funds received for **THE CHRISTMAS FUND: Remembering Those Who Serve the Church** will be allocated by The Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ, in collaboration with the Conferences as appropriate. A report of the ministry made possible will be given to the church each year;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-second General Synod directs that promotional materials for these four Special Mission Offerings will be sensitive to the variety of languages and cultures of the constituents and they will be distributed to every congregation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that General Synod requests congregations and congregational leaders to promote all four offerings and invite all members and friends to contribute;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all giving to these offerings will be credited to congregations as *Our Church's Wider Mission, Special Support*;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the proceeds of the offerings will be used for the announced purposes, after the necessary promotional costs have been deducted; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Twenty-second General Synod directs the Stewardship Council, in partnership with the All-Church Offering Committee of the Executive Council, to begin the process of planning for, instituting and promoting the four Special Mission Offerings in order to begin this new offering process in February 2001.

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

Moderator Norman-Richardson called on Mr. Dennis Johnson (MASS) to present the recommended actions from Committee Four.

### 5. RESOLUTION "BORDER JUSTICE ISSUES: A CHALLENGE FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY CHURCH"

Mr. Dennis Johnson, Chair of Committee Four, presented Resolutions "Border Justice Issues: A Challenge for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church," on page 163 and "Border Justice Resolution," on page 165 in the Program/Worship and Business Book. Mr. Johnson stated that since both resolutions parallel one another, the committee formed a subcommittee to create one

resolution but keep the spirit of both. Mr. Johnson moved the adoption of the resolution "Border Justice Issues: A Challenge for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church." Mr. Johnson yielded his time to Ms. Petra Malleis-Sternberg (SW) and Mr. Ron Stief (UCBHM) who spoke on behalf of Committee Four.

Ms. Malleis-Sternberg explained that the resolution is a combination of the Committee for Racial Justice and the Southwest Conference resolutions. She reported that the Committee worked hard to incorporate the concerns of both resolutions and the final product is a faithful addressing of the issues. She spoke about the benefits of this resolution and urged its passage.

Mr. Stief explained that since 1994 the Southwest Conference, the United Church Board for World Ministries and the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries have been engaged in a process to educate ourselves on globalization, to analyze border economics and to reflect on our biblical mandate to do justice. He stated that this resolution is about "doing" justice, and thanked God for the individuals and churches of the Southwest Conference who have taken on a controversial issue fraught with the potential of division and brought a unified voice to this General Synod. Mr. Stief also urged passage of this resolution.

Mr. Matthew Leathers (CA NV,S) proposed a friendly amendment to add the word "legally" in the description of Mexican Americans crossing the border in the ninth "WHEREAS." He feels there is ambiguity in the resolution and an assumption that all Mexicans crossing the border are illegal.

Mr. Johnson did not receive this as a friendly amendment.

99-GS-42 VOTED: The Twenty-second General Synod defeated the motion to amend.

Discussion returned to the main motion.

Mr. Hugh C. McLean (CONN) offered a friendly amendment to substitute at the second "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED" the words "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED."

The friendly amendment was accepted by Mr. Johnson.

Ms. Linda Jaramillo (CPC) urged passage of the resolution stating she found it exciting that the resolution included the issue of transforming minds, changing hearts and making ourselves aware of what is really going on there.