

1978

RESOLUTION: OVERCOMING THE HIDDEN HANDICAP OF EPILEPSY

WHEREAS Scripture compels us to care for one another as we care for ourselves: "And so there is no division in the body, but all its different parts have the same concern for one another. If one part of the body suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness." (1 Corinthians 12:25,26) and

WHEREAS the church should be concerned about the good life for all people, and

WHEREAS people with epilepsy have been discriminated against in society because of unfounded fears and unrealistic prejudices built up against them, and

WHEREAS presently in Connecticut, more than 30,000 persons are afflicted, and

WHEREAS Anyone at any age can develop it. Epilepsy is not inherited - head injuries, birth trauma, fevers, infectious diseases and metabolic disturbances can cause it, and

WHEREAS with medication, 80% of the persons with epilepsy can lead productive lives; 50% are completely controlled by medication; another 30% are controlled enough so that epilepsy is not a serious problem for them; and the remaining 20% (the visible population with epilepsy) may have other serious medical problems as well as epilepsy; and

WHEREAS persons with epilepsy have been shown to be excellent employees in that they statistically have a low job absence rate and better than average safety records, and

WHEREAS the church and each member of the church can do much to eliminate the stigma of the "hidden handicap" of epilepsy by helping to erase the misconceptions and prejudices against persons with epilepsy,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Church and Society provide educational materials for congregations so that they may realize that they probably come in contact with persons with epilepsy daily without knowing it, and that through knowledge they may help remove prejudices that presently surround persons with epilepsy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ urge congregations to add their voices to the growing number of people who seek to educate themselves and others about this condition and to do all in their power to eradicate the fear and stigma of epilepsy.