

1987 RESOLUTION: CARE FOR THE HOMELESS POOR

WHEREAS, We believe that the Holy Spirit inspires and moves us to action through prayer and Scripture; and

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ our Lord would have the Gospel preached to the poor (Matthew 11:5; Luke 4:18); and

WHEREAS, God has a steadfast love for the poor (James 2:5; 1 Samuel 2:8); and

WHEREAS, Scripture calls us to share the Gospel in word and deed (James 2:14-26; Matthew 25:31-46; Isaiah 58:6-12, 3:15; Amos 5:1-27); and

WHEREAS, The Connecticut Department of Human Resources reports that 3,000-5,000 persons are homeless each night, based upon reports from the 43 emergency shelters in the state, and that the shelters regularly are filled to or exceed legal capacity; and

WHEREAS, The Connecticut Department of Human Resources reported in June, 1987 the causes of homelessness to be:

- 1) A shortage of affordable housing;
- 2) A decrease in the availability of residential hotels;
- 3) Decreased involvement of the federal government;
- 4) More frequent deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill;
- 5) Drug and alcohol related problems; and
- 6) Certain economic conditions including:
 - a. minimum wage earners not being able to keep pace with the cost of housing; and
 - b. public assistance being inadequate to meet the cost of housing; and
 - c. seventy-five percent (75X) of the women and children in Connecticut shelters receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the 120th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ:

1. Call for a day of prayer and fasting and the hearing of, receiving of, and sharing of God's Word relevant to the homeless poor on a Sunday during Advent; and
2. Request that the Conference staff help the local churches to look at the housing situation in their own community and in neighboring communities, both urban and rural, and to become effective advocates for the homeless poor; and

3. Accept the declared goal of General Synod XVI: to enlist all members of the United Church of Christ in study and action so that they can understand, experience, and respond to the Biblical mandate to care especially for the homeless poor by:

--Seeking through theological reflection a sound and sympathetic comprehension of God's unfailing love for the poor; seeking to study and understand the political, economic, and social conditions which lead to the homelessness;

--Discovering and developing models for local congregations to seek out, serve, and work with and for those members of rural, suburban and urban communities who are in greatest need, and who include single men and women, families, elderly persons, infants, children and youth;

--Promoting participation from churches and communities in addressing the problem of non-existent or sub-standard low-income housing everywhere in our nation; developing leadership for the building of church-based community organizations to empower people to deal with problems of poverty and homelessness such as unemployment, poor education, family disruption, the cycle of poverty and violence;

-- Advocating at local, state, and federal levels of government for funded programs to empower the homeless poor through adequate housing, educational and health services, meaningful employment, and a daily life characterized by that consistent respect from others to which all members of God's family are entitled.