

1990

RESOLUTION: IN RESPONSE TO THE NEEDS OF TEENAGED PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN

WHEREAS, Jesus recognized the special vulnerability of children when he taught, "Let the children come to me, do not try to stop them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14); and

WHEREAS, We believe that all persons are children of God, created in God's image, and are committed to justice and compassion in all relationships, particularly with "the least of these" (Matthew 25:40); and

WHEREAS, Low self-esteem is the leading cause of teenaged pregnancy, and eighty-two percent of young women who give birth at age fifteen or less were themselves children of teenaged parents, and a teenaged pregnancy is often the first step on the downward spiral of poverty for a woman and for her children; and

WHEREAS, Teenaged parents face overwhelming obstacles in obtaining adequate affordable and accessible child care, housing, medical care, and education, for both themselves and their children; and

WHEREAS, Prejudices and punitive attitudes have prevented us as churches and as individuals from recognizing and responding to the issues surrounding teenaged pregnancy and parenting;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the 123rd Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, urge all of our member churches to educate themselves concerning the epidemic problems of teenaged pregnancy and teen parenting in their churches and their communities; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that our member churches be asked to involve themselves in advocacy and action to provide adequate affordable accessible child care, housing, medical care, and education for teenaged parents and their children; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that our member churches be encouraged to establish, in their congregations and communities, opportunities for teenaged parents to develop healthy parenting skills and self-esteem through programs of discussion, mentoring, and counseling; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Christian Education and Youth of the Connecticut Conference be requested to gather statistics, information, and resources concerning teenaged parenting, and to channel this educational material to the local churches so they can respond in their congregations, in their communities, and through their town and state governments; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Public Policy Advocate of the Connecticut Conference be directed to lobby in the State Legislature on matters involving the needs of teenaged parents.