

1989

RESOLUTION: AFFIRMING PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES AS FULL PARTNERS IN MINISTRY

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches us, "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts, and though all its parts are many, they form one body; so it is with Christ; if one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it" (1 Corinthians 12:12,26); and

WHEREAS, The church as the Body of Christ is the outward and visible sign of God's love and grace for people, and we are called by our Lord Jesus Christ to a ministry of reconciliation (John 17: 20-23), we remain incomplete without the presence of persons with disabilities (John 9:1-5); and

WHEREAS, An accessible church is one which must overcome two barriers - the physical or architectural barriers which make it difficult for persons with disabilities to enter, and the interpersonal barriers which prevent persons with disabilities from feeling meaningful, accepted, and welcome;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the 122nd Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, call upon the Board of Directors to create an ongoing interdepartmental task force which includes at least three persons with disabilities; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this task force call upon the churches in the Connecticut Conference to reevaluate the accessibility of their facilities, programs, and fellowship and to be encouraged to broaden significantly by 1992 their ministries to persons who have disabilities; and that this task force report annually to the Board of Directors, the Affirmative Action Committee of the Board, and to the Annual Meeting; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be creative in its efforts to educate and promote accessibility in churches, for example, by introducing an annual Sunday for "Accessible Awareness" for recognizing successful efforts in achieving the goals of this resolution: and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon each church in the Connecticut Conference to open itself to the leadership, gifts, potential, and love of all people, and go forth in living God's commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves.