

1990

RESOLUTION: THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN DRUG EDUCATION

WHEREAS, We believe that we are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), that we are instructed by Jesus in his reiteration of the Great Commandment to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-39) and that raised with Christ, we may now participate in a new life with Christ (Colossians 3:1-7); and

WHEREAS, Increasing numbers of American men, women, and children are substance abusers or addicts, with Connecticut residents no exception; and

WHEREAS, Substance abuse and addiction are great "levelers" in that the incidence of substance abuse knows no racial, cultural, or socio-economic boundaries, makes no exception for gender or sexual orientation, for believer or non-believer, urban or rural resident, child or retiree; and

WHEREAS, Chemical dependence affects not only the abuser or addict, but also that person's family, friends, employer/employees, the stranger met on the road or over a needle; and .

WHEREAS, The nature of alcohol and drug addiction includes denial, despair, and the fear of stigma, deterring abusers and their families from seeking help; and

WHEREAS, The church has a unique call to exercise its prophetic and pastoral roles in our stewardship of life; and

WHEREAS, When the church is a nurturing, supportive community addressing spiritual needs, then education about alcohol and drug problems can occur;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the 123rd Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, in order to initiate and promote programs of drug education and outreach in our churches:

- (a) Call upon the Department of Christian Education and Youth, in consultation with the Youth Council of the Connecticut Conference, to gather and make available materials of particular relevance to today's youth; and
- (b) Urge the Department of Church Life and Leadership to make available resources for intergenerational study and to promote training programs for clergy and lay persons in prevention, education, and intervention strategies; and
- (c) Ask the Department of Church in Society to advocate in the Connecticut Legislature the need for comprehensive drug education in the state, and its necessary funding; and
- (d) Encourage the departments to work together in these efforts, and, If necessary, that a committee of assistance be formed; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we encourage our churches to:

- (a) Place a high priority on drug education, seeing it not only as a means for our own learning but also as a way in which we may affirm the worth and dignity of each of God's children; and
- (b) Collect educational materials on substance abuse and make them available to members of the congregation; and
- (c) Identify and work with community resources, such as Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous, AlAnon, alcohol and drug counseling services, treatment facilities; and
- (d) Provide ongoing educational opportunities for youth and adults, using community resources as well as church curriculum.