

1993

RESOLUTION: CHRISTIAN NON-VIOLENCE AND GUN CONTROL

WHEREAS, The sixth commandment teaches us that "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13); and

WHEREAS, Jesus lived a nonviolent life, teaching us that as citizens of God's Realm we are to love our enemies; and

WHEREAS, The writer of Ephesians exhorts us to arm ourselves not with weapons of violence, but weapons of faith, the "breastplate of righteousness" and the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (6:14,17); and

WHEREAS, As citizens of the United States we live in "the most heavily armed nation on earth;" with a population of 247 million possessing more than 200 million guns (Osha Gray Davidson, Under Fire The NRA and the Battle for Gun Control); and

WHEREAS, More than 135,000 students in the United States carry handguns to school every day, according to the National School Safety Center; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut's urban centers in New Haven, Hartford, and Bridgeport are like war zones with increasing numbers of young people becoming victims of violent, gun-related crimes; and

WHEREAS, At the One Hundred and First Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference (1968) delegates passed a resolution calling upon the United States Congress and the Connecticut General Assembly to enact strong gun control laws; and

WHEREAS, Such strong laws have still not been passed:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the One Hundred and Twenty-Sixth-Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, urge the Department of Church in Society to witness boldly to the need for stricter gun control legislation, including but not limited to:

- 1) A ban on assault weapons; and
- 2) A ban on Saturday night specials; and
- 3) A mandatory two week waiting period, for background checks for every gun purchase; and
- 4) A mandatory registration of all handgun sales, including "secondary sales"; and
- 5) A prohibition on all sales of handguns to those under 21 years of age, with penalties for those who sell to minors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the Departments of Christian Education and Youth and of Church Life and Leadership, in addition to the Department of Church in Society, and in consultation with the Peace and Justice Community of the Department of Church in Society:

- 1) To recommend curricula and study guides on Christian non-violence and to promote these among local congregations; and
- 2) To sponsor workshops and training sessions on Christian non-violence and conflict resolution.