

## RESOLUTION ON THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

1 WHEREAS, Jesus said, "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God  
2 the things that are God's"(Mark 12:17, NRSV), which we interpret to mean  
3 that: human beings do not owe religious obligation to the state but only to God; and  
4 that therefore, religious beliefs and practices should not be mandated by the state;  
5 and that religious beliefs can and should inform our analysis and stance on state  
6 policies and mandates as they relate to God's will of freedom and justice for all  
7 people; and  
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9 WHEREAS, God through the Hebrew prophets called the rulers to create a just government; and  
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11 WHEREAS, protecting freedom of choice of religious belief and practice requires a separation of  
12 the jurisdiction of state and church; and  
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14 WHEREAS, public schools may not provide religious instruction or advocate religious practice;  
15 and  
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17 WHEREAS, school officials may not mandate or organize prayer at school or school events; and  
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19 WHEREAS, the delegates to the 132<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference passed  
20 the resolution "Public Funds for Public Education" which resolved that public funds  
21 be used for public education at both elementary and secondary level.  
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23 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the 133<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the  
24 Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ urge every congregation  
25 and ask the Connecticut Conference to commit to preserving religious freedom in  
26 the realm of public education; and  
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge congregations to support the stance that school  
29 officials may not mandate or organize prayer at school or school events, while  
30 recognizing the right of every student to pray in a non-disruptive manner; and  
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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we instruct the Connecticut Conference to distribute, and  
33 urge congregations to study, the present guidelines in the booklet "Religious  
34 Expression in Public Schools: A Statement of Principles" developed by the U.S.  
35 Secretary of Education and distributed to all public schools; and  
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge congregations and ask the Connecticut Conference  
38 to stand firm on the policy of separation of church and state if or when legislative  
39 proposals seek to change present public policy.

***The Public Education Advocacy Group***