

1973

RESOLUTION: HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION

WHEREAS we value our cherished freedoms of speech and religious belief and practice in the United States, protected by the constitutional separation of church and state, and

WHEREAS we recognize that the constitution of the Soviet Union also guarantees to its citizens the rights of religious belief and practice under the concept of the separation of church and state. We recall that the Christian religion has been a central part of the heritage of Russian life. Yet, we are aware of many instances in which the rights of Soviet citizens seeking to witness to their Christian beliefs have not been protected.

WHEREAS we pray for Christians, and all religious believers, living in the midst of persecution and restriction in the Soviet Union. We pray that the Holy Spirit may work on behalf of their courage and endurance and on behalf of justice and mercy by the Soviet government.

AND WHEREAS in this period of increasing cooperation between the leaders and governments of the United States and the Soviet Union, we urge our leaders to strengthen forms of economic and cultural cooperation between our two nations as a means toward international peace.

THEREFORE we urge our leaders, through the United Nations and other channels, to advocate the protection of all basic Human Rights within the Soviet Union, including justice toward those who seek to practice their religious beliefs.

We urge our churches and our members to become aware of the ways that are available for increased cooperation and understanding between the people of the United States and the Soviet Union. We support the establishment and improvement of means for compassion, communication and better understanding among the religious representatives of our two nations.

We urge our churches to study the situation of religious freedom in the Soviet Union, seeking ways by which we can support our separated brothers and sisters in our common faith. We urge the development of ways by which we can speak and act on behalf of the protection of the Human Rights of the citizens of the Soviet Union.