

1987

RESOLUTION: CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE RESPONSE TO ECONOMIC INJUSTICE IN CONNECTICUT

WHEREAS, He believe that "God is a God of Justice" (Isaiah 30:18) and that God's grace and judgment are active in all life; and

WHEREAS, We, in the United Church of Christ, covenant to be a church responding to the acts-of God described in Scripture, especially God's acts in Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, We believe and read in Scripture that love of God is intimately related to love of neighbor (Mark 12:31), and that our love of neighbors, like God's love for humankind, is for their whole well-being, including their physical and economic needs; and

WHEREAS, We live in a state of great prosperity and abiding poverty witnessed to by the following statistics:

-Connecticut enjoys the highest per capita income of all states, \$19,000 being its average annual per capita income;

-Hartford is the fourth poorest city, and New Haven the seventh poorest city in the United States;

-\$6,060 is the annual Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) allotment for a family of three in Connecticut, or \$2,020per individual within the family

-there are currently 39,000 families requiring AFDC allotments in Connecticut;

-there is a 73,000 unit shortage of affordable housing for families whose annual income is less than 50 percent of renter median income; for example, for a family of four the median annual income would be \$8,100.00 or less;

-one in seven children in Connecticut under the age of six lives below the poverty level;

-the infant mortality rate in Hartford is among the highest in the nation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the 120th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, recognize the need to develop creative resources to meet our commitment to economic justice and peace, and to affirm the current commitment of all departments of the Connecticut Conference, and do hereby

I. Affirm current efforts through each Connecticut Conference department to educate, teach, and work with local congregations on issues of economic justice and peace by:

a) advocating the support of local projects through the Department of Mission and Stewardship; and

b) the development of training and immersion experiences through the Department of Church Life and Leadership; and

c) the development of teaching ministries through the Department of Christian Education and Youth; and

d) advocacy and education by the Department of Church and Society; and

2. Encourage current efforts and future plans of each Connecticut Conference department within its budget restraints; and

3. Encourage local congregations to use and to study the "Faith and Economic Life" study guide; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates to the 120th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference urge the Board of Directors to assert its prophetic voice, enfleshing the vision of justice and peace called forth at the 119th Annual meeting by the Rev. Dr. Carroll E. Kann, and give prayerful consideration to the following:

1. Exploring current utilization of the Conference's investment funds to identify ways in which those funds might be used to develop programs to assist the poor; and 2. Development of a plan which would:

a) reinstitute the full-time position of Minister to Business and Government which has historically been a part of the Connecticut Conference staffing; and

b) increase the hours of the current Justice and Peace Organizer to full-time, to work directly with local congregations on church-initiated projects on justice and peace issues; and

c) develop a Justice and Peace Campaign which would provide support for community-based and church-initiated projects, and be managed through the Department of Church and Society; and d) be implemented in the following manner:

Step 1 - the re-hiring of a full-time Minister to Business and Government and the increasing of the position of the Justice and Peace Organizer to full-time; establishing and initiating fund-raising for the Justice and Peace Campaign; and

Step 2-- the providing of continued funding for the additional staff members, and initial funding of a minimal number of community-based and church-initiated projects through the distribution of seed money from the Justice and Peace Campaign; and

Step 3 - continuing to fund the additional staff members and increase grants to projects; and

Step 4 - completion of the Justice and Peace Campaign to ensure Connecticut Conference funding of staff, and the beginning of full distribution of available funds to community based and church-initiated projects; and

3. Providing in written and oral presentations to the 121st Annual Meeting, and successive annual meetings, a progress report on the implementation of this plan; and

4. Development of specific goals, objectives, and action plans for implementation of this resolution, in consultation with the Department of Church and Society, to be considered for adoption at the June, 1988 Board of Directors meeting.