

1997

RESOLUTION: IN SUPPORT OF EQUITABLE PUBLIC EDUCATION

WHEREAS, From the Hebrew scriptures through the parable of the Great Banquet and the Sermon on the Mount, the importance of learning is lifted up, and our Lord insists and demonstrates that God's blessings and gifts of life are for ALL God's children regardless of their station, wealth, or poverty; and all people should have access to the means for life; and

WHEREAS, We believe that sufficient public funds must be allocated for public education and that these funds be used only for public education; and

WHEREAS, The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ is strong in support for public education, as witnessed in its support for public education in past resolutions; and

WHEREAS, In recent decades, public school districts throughout the State of Connecticut have become dramatically re-segregated and isolated and the State Supreme Court has declared, through the July 1 996 Sheff vs. O'Neill decision, that racial isolation is one of the causes of deficiencies in education; and

WHEREAS, Our state has been challenged by the State Supreme Court decision to redress this inequity and fulfill the promises of our State's constitution that every child have access to a suitable education;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates of the 1 30th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, urge every congregation and the Connecticut Conference to re-commit to the mission and ministry of quality, integrated education for every child by:

1. encouraging churches to observe American Education Week in a way that recognizes the special role of the public school teachers and educators in our democratic society;
2. exploring through our Conference's Public Education and Minority Empowerment Committees ways churches can encourage and support the preparation and employment of minority teachers, so that diverse role models for all children may become part of their growing experience; and
3. discerning ways in all our congregations:
 - a) to broaden our understanding of the diversities that have become reality in our society;
 - b) to overcome the fears of difference now dividing us;
 - c) to learn new ways to work together toward the reign of God which we all desire; and

4. asking our three new regions to identify significant public education initiatives within their regions that can be publicized, perhaps replicated, throughout the state, and honored at next year's Annual Meeting.