

## RESOLUTION: A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO SEPTEMBER 11

WHEREAS the horrific and unimaginable attacks of September 11th and the untold suffering have devastated our nation and the world, breaking our hearts, shattering our sense of security, and spreading fear, confusion, and anger; and

WHEREAS God sees the suffering of God's people and hears their cry [Exodus 3:7], and whereas our God is a God of peace [Philippians 4:9] who promises through the risen Christ to be with us "to the end of time" [Matthew 28:20]; and

WHEREAS Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem, saying; "If you... had only recognized the things that make for peace" [Luke 19:42]; and taught, "Love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you" [Matthew. 5:44]; and

WHEREAS Paul in the letter to the Church of Rome has written: "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay'"[Romans 12:19]; and exhorted Jesus' followers, "Do not repay evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all" [Romans 12:17]; and

WHEREAS Rowan Williams, the Anglican Archbishop of Wales, a survivor of the World Trade Center attack, has said "...the Christian is ...not free to echo calls for retaliation; the Christian above all others is supposed to know that understanding just where the "rage of the powerless" comes from is as necessary as air and water in a world that isn't to tear itself apart"; and

WHEREAS The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. preached on the eve of his assassination, "It is no longer a choice between violence and nonviolence in this world; it's nonviolence or nonexistence"; and

WHEREAS annual meetings of the Connecticut Conference, affirmed commitment to The Ministry of Peace and Justice in 1984 and in 1999; and committed ourselves to study in nonviolence in Christian Nonviolence and Gun Control in 1993; and to study economic justice voted in Christian, Riches, and Poverty in our Times in 1999; and

WHEREAS this decade has been declared by the United Nations the Decade of the Culture of Peace; and

WHEREAS at the heart of our faith is the conviction that we are all children of God and that we are called to love one another, our neighbor, and our enemy and to care for the "widow, the orphan, and the sojourner" [Deuteronomy 14:29]; and

### THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

that we the delegates to the 134<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ request The Board of Directors, on behalf of this 134th Annual Meeting, communicate with President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and the members of the Connecticut Congressional Delegation urging them to continue to follow the force of law not the law of force, to continue to pursue all diplomatic channels, and to use the instruments of the United Nations, the International Criminal Court, and our own nation's criminal

justice system to bring the perpetrators of this crime to justice rather than resorting to war and the perpetrating of violence; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**

that the Justice and Witness Ministry Team contact the congregations of the Connecticut Conference, encouraging them to contact President George Bush to sign the Convention on the International Criminal Court and to contact Senators Dodd and Lieberman urging them to vote for the ratification of the Convention on the International Criminal Court which tries parties accused of terrorism and international crimes against humanity (139 countries have already signed this convention); and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

that we recommend the Rev. Dr. Davida Foy Crabtree, Conference Minister, speak a prophetic word, to be disseminated through statewide and local media, communicating our strong opposition to the statements of religious extremists and our strong stand against discrimination and hatred of any people, including Arabs, Pakistanis, Afghans, Indians, and Muslims, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**

that congregations of the Connecticut Conference, make a commitment to learn more about Islam, drawing on the resources and expertise resident at Hartford Seminary, and to pursue dialogue with local Muslim congregations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**

that we urge the congregations to hold special offerings for two separate appeals, namely the United Church of Christ's "Hope from the Rubble" and Church World Service's "Afghanistan Emergency Fund" in recognition of the many needs of those numbers of victims, additional to the casualties on the day of the attack, specifically families of those who have been killed, those who are now without work and homes, as well as refugees and displaced persons in Central Asia; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**

that the Justice and Witness Team, the Ruth Dudley Resource Center, and the Associate Conference Minister of Justice and Witness to provide congregations with educational materials on nonviolence; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**

that we request the clergy in the Connecticut Conference commit to study nonviolence and issues of economic justice to be better equipped to help their parishioners to understand and be faithful in dealing with the complex issues we face in developing a just and peaceful world.