

## PROPOSAL FOR REFLECTION AND RESEARCH

It is proposed that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, July 15 - 20, 1993, place before the church the following for reflection and research:

(1) The proposition that an effective ministry by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to young adults [all persons post-high school to age 30, single or married, including college students] is an undebatable necessity for the church to be faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ, to be relevant to the spiritual needs of this age group, and to prepare intelligently for the church's future.

(2) The challenge for every local congregation, region, and general unit to embark upon a two year research of its opportunities for ministering to young adults. Specifically, every local congregation, region, and general unit is asked to engage in continual reflection on how best to minister to those young adults for whom they bear a spiritual responsibility. Such reflection should include programs of the church in those formative years prior to young adulthood that involve youth in such events as: Sunday church schools, youth groups, summer camps and conferences, mission trips and work camps. Studies have revealed consistently that without spiritually appealing and intellectually satisfying experiences of Christian education and worship in their grade and high school years, young adults are at an extreme disadvantage in developing a mature faith. These manifestations of the church are called to reflect on the adequacy of their present and projected ministries to young adults, including their programs for keeping in touch with and ministering to youth on college campuses, single young adults entering the job market, and married young adults beginning families. These manifestations are called to reflect on how well they are planning for and financing their ministries to young adults, including campus ministries.

(3) The request that the General Board, as well as the Commission on Finance, Office of Research, General Units and Regions, research and reflect upon ways of encouraging and helping all manifestations of the church to position themselves financially, including where necessary raising new funds or redirecting present expenditures, so as to assure that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will become a church that does appeal to younger adults.

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1. *Effective Christian Education: A National Study of Protestant Congregations - Report for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*. (Minneapolis: Search Institute). March, 1990.
  2. Williams, D. Newell. *A Case Study of Mainstream Protestantism*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company and St. Louis: Chalice Press). 1991.
  3. *Disciples Strategy for Campus Ministry in the 1990s and Beyond*. Report of the Task Force on Disciples Campus Ministry to the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). (St. Louis: The Division of Higher Education). 1991.
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## No. 9320

(Sense-of-the-Assembly Resolution)

### RESOLUTION FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

#### Theological Justification:

In Micah 6:8, the prophet calls us to "walk humbly with our God"; in Matthew 5:6 the Apostle tells us that Jesus proclaims that those who "thirst for righteousness" will be filled, and the author of Job has reminded us in Job 12:7-8 to "speak to the Earth and it shall teach". The ozone, our climate, our forests, yes, the whole earth and the people of Bosnia, Somalia, Sudan, and all of God's creatures are now crying out under a growing burden of "Koyaaniskatsi", which means life out of balance in the language of the Hopi people.

These are the most serious problems facing the world today and they arise from lifestyles of ever expanding consumption and production. These lifestyles create and perpetuate gross inequalities between and within peoples; they misuse our freedom and exploit other humans and other living and non-living creatures, violating the relationships of righteousness which sustain existence; and they

exhaust and contaminate the complex and beautiful web of life sustaining systems which our God has created. The compulsions to live such lifestyles arise from deep and abiding spiritual deficits.

As Christians, we can no longer tolerate a situation where twenty percent of the world's people consume eighty percent of the world's resources. To this end, representatives of the governments and peoples of the world gathered during 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and affirmed the desperate need to find sustainable and sustaining ways for humans to live and grow.

As Christians, we must also acknowledge that our God, our Christ, and our Church call us to find and live in righteousness: right relationships of equity, justice, and reverence with all that God's love has called into being.

WHEREAS, Micah calls us to "walk humbly with our God" (Micah 6:6-8), and Jesus proclaims that those who "thirst for righteousness" will be filled (Matthew 5:6), and Job has reminded us to "speak to the Earth and it shall teach" us (Job 12:7-8); and

WHEREAS, the whole earth and all of God's creatures are crying out under the burden of "Koyaanis-katsi" (life out of balance in the language of the Hopi people); and

WHEREAS, the most serious problems facing the world today arise from lifestyles of ever expanding consumption and production, which exhaust and contaminate God's life sustaining systems and create and perpetuate gross inequalities between and within peoples; and

WHEREAS, as Christians we can no longer tolerate a situation where twenty percent of the world's people consume eighty percent of the world's resources; and

WHEREAS representatives of the governments and peoples of the world gathered during 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and affirmed the desperate need to find sustainable and sustaining ways for humans to live and grow; and

WHEREAS, our God, our Christ, and our Church call us to find and live in right relationships of equity, justice, and reverence with all that God's love has called into being.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, July, 1993:

RECOGNIZES that the people of God have a special responsibility to develop new visions of lives which are sustaining and sustainable;

AFFIRMS that the quality of human life is not dependent upon increasing consumption of material goods but is based on those things which have permanence: the care of the spirit, relationships of justice and equity, creativity, cultural and artistic expression, reverence for all God's creation, and celebration of the gift of being; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the General Assembly:

1. calls upon all members, congregations, regions and units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to initiate programs of prayer, study and action to develop and live into a vision of sustainable and sustaining community;
2. calls upon all members, congregations, regions and units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to conduct prayerful assessments of the life of their communities and to develop plans for becoming models of sustainable life;
3. calls upon units and organizations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) such as the Division of Homeland Ministries; the Division of Overseas Ministries; and the Disciples Peace Fellowship to support these activities by:
  - a) developing and distributing a "Sustainable Church Life Inventory" to all regions for implementation in regions and congregations; and establishing a clearinghouse for sharing results and action plans developed in response to the inventory;
  - b) developing and distributing copies of a bibliography of books, articles and other materials supporting "Sustainable Community" to all regions;
  - c) assisting regions in identifying and maintaining a roster of individuals knowledgeable in the areas of sustainable living and church life who are willing and available to assist congregations in their efforts;
  - d) distributing copies to all regions of the documents prepared at the Earth Summit: Agenda 21, government treaties, and citizens action agreements;
  - e) encouraging the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to consider prayerfully commitments to the citizen's Earth Charter and agreement on Consumption and Lifestyle developed at the Global Forum meetings of the Earth Summit;
  - f) supporting and encouraging continued involvement by representatives of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in United Nations, government and citizen organizations' activities emerging from the Earth Summit.