

**Redistributing Tax Rebates to the Poor**  
**A Resolution Approved By General Synod XXIII (2001)**

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ has sought to bring peace through justice extended to all human beings;

WHEREAS, the Scriptures call people of faith to be caring for the poor as God has done: “For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of Lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing” (Deuteronomy 10:17-18 NRSV);

WHEREAS, the Scriptures call people of faith to share in one’s harvest with the poor: “When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be left for the alien, the orphan, and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all your undertakings. When you beat your olive trees, do not strip what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this” (Deuteronomy 24:19-22 NRSV);

WHEREAS, the Scriptures record Jesus’ teaching of the righteous feeding the hungry, giving the thirsty a drink, clothing the naked, caring for the sick and visiting the imprisoned: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me’” (Matthew 25:35-40 NRSV);

WHEREAS, the delegates to the Twenty-third General Synod of the United Church of Christ are concerned about the forthcoming distribution of \$300 and \$600 tax rebate checks to relatively wealthy individuals and families, while up to 30 million of the poorest working Americans less endowed with material benefits than we will receive nothing;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-third General Synod, reaffirms its commitment to the poor by taking urgent action in this timely situation, acknowledging that the ever widening gap between rich and poor must be lessened in ways great and small that allow justice to help build peace;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-third General Synod affirms the June 2001 letter from the Collegium of Officers (attached) inviting all who can live without the tax rebate to share all or a portion of it with others;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-third General Synod invites the membership of the United Church of Christ and others who are able to join the Collegium of officers in

encouraging those who can live without this tax rebate to share all or a portion of it with others in one of the following ways:

- Neighbors In Need—meeting the needs of the poor in the United States,
- One Great Hour of Sharing—meeting the needs of the poor overseas,
- The Christmas Fund—meeting the financial needs of retired clergy and their spouses,
- A local or Conference mission program of your choosing, or
- Increased weekly or monthly giving to the church to support the United Church of Christ's year-round, ongoing work on behalf of the poor through Our Church's Wider Mission; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that we as delegates to the Twenty-third General Synod commit to return to our homes and churches sharing this call.