

79-GS-32 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the Resolution on the Death Penalty as amended:

RESOLUTION ON THE DEATH PENALTY

WHEREAS the Seventh, Ninth and Eleventh General Synods of the United Church of Christ have declared their opposition to the death penalty as a means of restorative justice; and

WHEREAS such opposition is based on our understanding of the Christian Faith and the New Testament call to redemptive love, mercy, and sanctity of life; and

WHEREAS the death penalty has now been reinstated in thirty-five states resulting in 520 people being confined to death row-132 of whom reside in the Florida State Prison; and

WHEREAS it has been demonstrated that the death penalty is applied discriminately toward Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans; and

WHEREAS ninety percent of men and women on death row could not afford an attorney; and

WHEREAS executions have been resumed recently in Florida; and

WHEREAS we are concerned about possible executions of hundreds of persons in this nation over the next few years; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED: The Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirms its opposition to the death penalty, and calls upon the *Governor* of Florida and other appropriate authorities to cease the authorization of additional executions in Florida, and further calls upon governors of all states to refrain from the authorization of executions;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Twelfth General Synod requests its President to continue to try to communicate directly with our brother-in-Christ and UCC member, Robert Graham, Governor of Florida, on our behalf expressing deep pastoral concern and moral anguish over the Governor's role in inspiring the resumption of executions in this country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED all General Synod delegates and visitors from those states wherein the death penalty currently exists are encouraged to petition their governors and state legislators to reconsider and review those existing statutes which legalize the killing of human beings; and

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED the Twelfth General Synod recognize the failure of the Church to affect the moral climate of this nation on this matter where polls

indicate a majority of the people both endorse and support capital punishment; and that it enable its instrumentalities and agencies to develop additional resources needed to educate and organize the U.C.C. constituency on this issue; and that the Conferences be encouraged to assist local churches and individual members of the United Church of Christ to engage in serious ethical reflection and prayer-guided action toward the eradication of legalized execution and the creation of a more just and humane society. We will continue to offer our prayers on behalf of our brothers and sisters on death row and those who enact and enforce the laws which legalize killing.