

97-GS-53 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the resolution "A Compassionate Response To Substance Abuse."

RESOLUTION "COMPASSIONATE RESPONSE TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE"

WHEREAS, we are called to "loose the bonds of injustice" (Isaiah 58:6), to be "removers of the yoke amongst us, and "satisfiers of the needs of the afflicted" (Isaiah 58:9,10); for then the Lord will guide us and we will be "repairers of the breach" and "restorers of streets to live in" (Isaiah 58:11,12);

WHEREAS, our Teacher and Savior Jesus Christ has commanded us to "love our neighbors as ourselves" (Matthew 22:39); and

WHEREAS, our human family in cities, schools, prisons and homes, especially the poor, the children, and people of color, are coming to great harm, both through destructive alcohol and other drug abuse and through the costly war against alcohol and other drugs;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms that it is important to address the devastating impact of alcohol and other drug abuse in our society, and challenges our church and society to:

- C confront the root causes of abuse and dependency;
- C advocate a spiritual and theological approach to address these issues;
- C encourage a healing movement in the United Church of Christ at all settings: local churches, associations, conferences, and national;
- C support public policies that expand education, prevention, and treatment, in our prisons and in the wider community;
- C seek to reduce the punitive and harmful effects of various societal responses to substance abuse and abusers, including a reduction in the use of incarceration for minor offenses and an increase in the use of additional alternatives to incarceration; and advocate for adequate treatment resources available to all.

Subject to the availability of funds.