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2 **RESOLUTION FOR MINDFUL AND FAITHFUL EATING**
3 **A Resolution of Witness**

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5 **Submitted by the Southern California-Nevada Conference**
6

7 **SUMMARY**
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9 Our dietary choices can have profound implications for the environment, human well-
10 being, and animal welfare. Therefore, we encourage Christians to explore and discuss
11 how food choices can accord with Christian values and beliefs. To this end, we seek the
12 development and utilization of an Adult Education curriculum addressing issues related
13 to food choices.
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15 **BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE**
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17 The Bible affirms that humans have a sacred responsibility to care for the earth (Genesis
18 2:15) and our own bodies (1 Corinthians 6:19); prohibits cruelty to animals
19 (Deuteronomy 22:10, 25:4); expresses concerns for workers (James 5:4), proclaims our
20 Christian unity despite our dietary differences (Romans 14:20-21), and describes the
21 peaceful, harmonious coexistence among all God’s creatures as an ideal. St. Francis of
22 Assisi and Albert Schweitzer both recognized God’s concern for animals.
23

24 Previous General Synod actions have expressed concern for God’s creation and called for
25 responsible stewardship (“A Perspective on Christian Life Style and Ecology,” 10th
26 General Synod, 1975; “Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace Proposed Priority, 17th
27 General Synod 1989; “Global Warming,” 22nd General Synod, 1999; and “A Resolution
28 on Climate Change,” 26th General Synod, 2007); for the rights of workers (“A Resolution
29 on Worker Justice at Smithfield,” 26th General Synod, 2007); and for the humane
30 treatment of animals (“Respect for Animals,” 19th General Synod, 1993).
31

32 **RESOLUTION**
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34 WHEREAS, our dietary choices reflect many of these social, environmental, and
35 economic justice issues, and
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37 WHEREAS, modern intensive farming is a leading cause of land, water, and energy
38 consumption; worldwide animal agriculture contributes more to global warming (18% of
39 greenhouse gases) than all forms of transportation combined (14%) (“Livestock’s Long
40 Shadow,” UN Food and Agriculture, 2006); and long-distance transport of food further
41 increases the impact of our diets on the environment; and
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43 WHEREAS, the high injury rates and mistreatment of slaughterhouse workers has been
44 well-documented (*Slaughterhouse* by Gail Eisnitz), and
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46 WHEREAS, the intensive crowding and unhealthy living conditions that typify
47 concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) do not show respect for animals, and
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49 WHEREAS, animal and human welfare issues are intricately linked in numerous other
50 ways, such as 1) pollution problems caused by CAFOs, particularly in Iowa and North
51 Carolina; 2) bacterial resistance to antibiotics caused by the routine feeding of antibiotics
52 to animals; 3) “Mad Cow Disease,” bird flu, and other human health risks associated with
53 intensive animal agricultural practices; 4) a wide range of medical disorders linked to the
54 typical American diet, including heart disease, obesity, diabetes, arthritis, and certain
55 cancers (*Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 2003;103:748-765); and 5) the
56 negative impact of CAFOs on small family farms and thus on rural life, culture, and
57 community, and
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59 WHEREAS, people have different nutritional needs, financial situations, and degrees of
60 access to food, such that a mindful and faithful diet for one person at one location might
61 be very different from a mindful and faithful diet for another person at another location.
62 For some people, animal agriculture may be an essential component of mindful and
63 faithful eating, and
64

65 WHEREAS, Christians are called to make God-centered choices in every aspect of life;
66 and our church communities are most vibrant when we respect the diversity of views,
67 values, beliefs, and ways to address a given social justice concern; and our church
68 communities can help us discern such God-centered living amidst this diversity; and
69 consequently, faithful Christians will make different consumption choices in response to
70 the call for mindful and faithful eating.
71

72 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-eighth General Synod encourages
73 Conferences, Associations, congregations and individuals to explore ways in which our
74 food choices can be mindful and faithful, so that, to the best of our abilities, what we eat
75 reflects our values and beliefs; and
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77 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UCC Covenanted Ministries identify and/or
78 | develop curricula for all ages that compassionately and respectfully explores the ways in
79 | which our diets impact our ecological “footprint” on the earth, human and animal
80 welfare concerns, healthy nourishment for our bodies, and the needs and concerns of
81 workers. These curricula would further explore ways that our food choices affect food
82 security and the equitable availability of food for all God’s children.
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84 **FUNDING**

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86 Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the
87 overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.
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89 **IMPLEMENTATION**

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91 Justice and Witness Ministries is requested to implement this resolution.