

## **FIDELITY AND INTEGRITY IN ALL COVENANTED RELATIONSHIPS**

[Voted by the Twenty-first General Synod, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 3 to 8, 1997]

*WHEREAS*, the Eighteenth General Synod established the responsibility of the church's recognized leaders "to embody the good news of the gospel," and "to be above reproach, blameless, of unimpeachable character;" and

*WHEREAS*, the *Manual on Ministry* specifies in the Ordained Minister's Code, "I will not use my position, power, or authority to exploit any person," and "I will live a life which honors my commitments to my family;" and

*WHEREAS*, we live in an age in which commitment to relationships within work, church, family, and community are essential to our life as a society; and

*WHEREAS*, we live in a world often characterized by adultery, promiscuity, sexual violence and pornography that have compromised our journey toward human wholeness and human responsibility, contributing to and perpetuating a culture in which children, women and men are demeaned and sexually abused; and

*WHEREAS*, we are all made in God's image, as persons loved by God, and are called to accept ourselves and our sexuality fully; and

*WHEREAS*, as Christians we live by the teachings of Jesus Christ and our Christian faith is the foundation of our values in human relationships;

*THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED* that we, delegates to the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 3-8, 1997, reaffirm that the standard for sexual and relational behavior for members of the United Church of Christ is fidelity and integrity in marriage and other covenanted relationships, in singleness, and in all relationships of life; and

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED* that the Twenty-first General Synod refers the Resolution “Fidelity and Integrity in All Covenanted Relationships” to the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, the Office for Church Life and Leadership, the Office for Church in Society, and the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, and encourages the development of a church-wide dialogue on these matters, with a report to the Twenty-second General Synod in 1999.

Subject to availability of funds.