

03-GS-20 VOTED: The Twenty-fourth General Synod adopts the resolution “Advocating Peace and Reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula”

ADVOCATING PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA

WHEREAS, Jesus’ prayer in John’s Gospel implores God, “That they all may be one” (John. 17:21 NRSV); and

WHEREAS, the psalmist writes, “How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!” (Psalms 133:1); and

WHEREAS, Matthew says, “Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive.” (Matthew 21:22); and

WHEREAS, Jesus states in the Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are the peacemakers,” (Matthew 5:9); and

WHEREAS, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 says, “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us;” and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ maintains a partnership with the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea; and

WHEREAS, the Korean people suffered under Japanese occupation for fifty years and the Korean Peninsula was divided at the thirty- eighth parallel by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and the United States following the defeat of Japan at the end of World War II and that in the ensuing Cold War environment, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and the United States each supported the development of a government and a separate country of the divided peninsula, a division that has continued beyond the truce of the Korean War in 1953; and

WHEREAS, many families were divided when some members migrated across the border to escape communism; and

WHEREAS, isolation, embargoes, floods, and drought have undermined the economy of North Korea; and

WHEREAS, the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea has maintained work for the reunification of the Korean Peninsula as a justice priority and has requested that we include this concern in our prayers; and

WHEREAS, the Kyung-ki Presbytery has adopted a resolution calling for the reunification of Korea; and

WHEREAS, at the 213th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Korean Presbyterian leaders appealed for peace and reconciliation in their divided country and the General Assembly pledged to join in earnest prayer for peace.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that we the delegates to the Twenty-fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ call on the members of the churches, Associations, and the Conferences as a whole to express our solidarity with our partners in Korea; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that we join with the 213th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in earnest prayer, “which seeks the face of God’s wisdom in the hope that God transforms our lives from anger to love, from destruction to construction;” and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commend President Bush for his measured response to North Korea’s disclosure of its secret nuclear weapons program and for his public commitment to pursue diplomatic solutions in consultation with the Republic of Korea, Japan, and China; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that we request our national policy advocate to communicate to our policy makers, including our President and the Congress, our recommendation that the United States pursue policies that will end tension, decrease armaments and weapons of mass destruction, and seek the peace and security of all the people of Korea; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call on the Conferences, Associations, and members of local congregations to contact President Bush and urge a continuation of the basic tenets of the “sunshine policy” practiced by the government of the Republic of Korea, including helping North Korea economically, ending the Cold War legacy, reuniting families, and exchanging special envoys to fulfill the 1991 Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchange and Cooperation between the North and South; and

LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED, that we urge local congregations to study and become familiar with the problems of our partners in the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea.

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