

SUNDAY EVENING

97-GS-19 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Campaign Finance Reform."

RESOLUTION ACAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM®

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches us: "You shall not pervert justice, you shall not show partiality, and you shall not take a bribe ... justice, and only justice, you shall follow ..." (Deuteronomy 16:19-20), and we are reminded in the parable of the lost sheep of the importance of every person (Matthew 18:12, Luke 15:4); and Jesus reminds us that "if anyone wants to be first, he must make himself last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35);

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ Constitution states: "The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls the whole church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel in church and society;"

WHEREAS, trust in our democratic process is threatened by the present system of financing campaigns for public office which allows businesses and political action committees to contribute at least twice as much as individuals and allows for the appearance of improper influence in the legislative process by large contributors, and correspondingly discourages participation by persons of lesser means;

WHEREAS, candidates spend an inordinate amount of time raising increasing amounts of money rather than speaking with the people about issues that affect our common life; and

WHEREAS, over 20 states have public financing legislation, and recent studies have shown that campaign finance reform legislation enjoys broad bipartisan support and that such legislation would enable qualified persons of limited means to be candidates for public office;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ is in support of legislation which seeks more equitable campaign financing, through, but not limited to, the establishment of a voluntary fund from which candidates for public office may equally receive campaign and media funding, and through a significantly reduced cap on contributions which applies equally to businesses, PACs and individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod encourages individual church members to study the issue and to support the passage of campaign finance reform legislation congruent with this resolution.

Subject to the availability of funds.