

19 05-GS-16 VOTED: The Twenty-fifth General Synod adopts the resolution “Hope in a Time of Terror.”

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21 **HOPE IN A TIME OF TERROR**

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23 WHEREAS on August 1 through 7, 2004, a delegation from Penn Central Conference of the United Church of
24 Christ met in joint colloquy with delegations from the Synods of the Rhineland and Berlin-Brandenburg of the
25 United Evangelical Church in Germany to discuss the impact of post-modern thinking on their understandings of
26 Christian theology; and

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28 WHEREAS the participants in the colloquy included discussion of terrorism, security, freedom, justice and peace in
29 the wake of the tragic use of airplanes as weapons on 11 September 2001; and

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31 WHEREAS the colloquy participants were moved to draft a joint statement on “Hope in a Time of Terror,” in
32 response to the current world situation and offer that statement to their respective church bodies, including the Penn
33 Central Conference of the United Church of Christ;

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35 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ receives with thanksgiving and endorses the
36 joint statement, “Hope in a Time of Terror,” the text of which follows:

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UEK / UCC Penn Central Conference Colloquy

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August 6, 2004

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Precious Blood Spiritual Center, Lancaster, Pennsylvania;

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“Hope in a Time of Terror”

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We are meeting in a time troubled by the threat of terrorism and war, resulting in strains in the relationship between

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our governments. Taking up these issues we have discussed the following points:

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44 *The generous, open-society practices of the United States following World War II developed a worldwide trust in the*
45 *U. S. as a model democratic nation. More recently, the horror of the terrorist attacks on 9/11 rekindled sympathy*
46 *for America among the peoples of the world. However the United States by starting a preemptive war, rejecting the*
47 *admonitions of allies and the U. S., and disregarding international covenants and treaties, has turned that sympathy*
48 *into widespread concern and even fear.*

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50 *In Germany, church demonstrators against the war in Iraq are uncomfortable because they are grateful for the role*
51 *of the U. S. in the past but now are accused of being anti-American. Many weekly candlelight vigils, such as those*
52 *in Neuruppin, always include the reading of greeting from American friends. On a personal level, German*
53 *participants in this colloquy were not sure whether friends they had met before had also changed, and whether the*
54 *UCC statements opposing the war represent the general opinion of UCC congregations. The fear of division in our*
55 *churches due to polarization has deterred many from openly discussing these questions.*

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1 *In this situation we feel the need to clarify and reclaim the values we share. War, even when it is undertaken as a*
2 *last resort, is never a solution to economic or political problems. We especially believe that there is no military*
3 *solution to the problem of international terrorism.*

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5 *We asked ourselves what our churches can do to further peace. These are some of our answers: We can*

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- 7 • *explore our own traditions of war and peace. Are there “just wars? What is a “just peace church?”*
- 8 • *enter into dialogue with people of different cultures.*
- 9 • *resist extremism in our own culture and others by seeking to develop understanding and trust.*
- 10 • *discuss the whole topic of war and peace in our congregations.*
- 11 • *pray and preach for peace, questioning the use of force and praising people who serve reconciliation.*
- 12 • *inform ourselves about the suffering of individual victims and other costs of war.*
- 13 • *reconsider our way of life and how our extraction of resources affects other nations.*
- 14 • *keep up the hope of changing policies through information, boycotts, and other forms of public action.*
- 15 • *joyfully celebrate our community on the way.*

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17 *We commit ourselves to continuing our conversation, to deepening our understanding of our faith and enjoying each*
18 *other's friendship bonding our two churches as a gift of God.*

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20 THEREFORE LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that The Twenty-fifth General Synod calls upon Justice and
21 Witness Ministries to develop the strategy and program to implement this resolution.

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23 Funding for this action will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds
24 available.