

No. 8133

RESOLUTION CONCERNING A POLICY STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Anaheim, California July 31-August 5, 1981 is deeply concerned about events in the Middle East because of our mandate to work for justice and peace in the world, and the Middle East exerts a special hold on our attention because it is the cradle of our faith, and of the two other great monotheistic religions, and events in the Middle East profoundly affect our national life, and

WHEREAS, the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America has unanimously approved a comprehensive Policy Statement examining Middle East issues from a Christian perspective, and

WHEREAS, the aforesaid Policy Statement affirms that "the Basic principle guiding relations between the churches of the Middle East and the churches of the United States of America is that the Middle East churches provide the essential witness to Christ in the Middle East," and tourism can provide an important link between peoples of different cultures and has the potential to promote understanding between peoples of different cultures, and every year thousands of Christians, including members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), undertake travel to the Holy Land, and such travel could provide Christians in the United States and Canada with better insight into the continuing witness of Middle East churches and into the concerns of our brothers and sisters in the area, and

WHEREAS, in a world where religious identification remains a powerful force, it is essential that inter-faith dialogue take place, and inter-faith dialogue promotes not only understanding of the religions of others but also of one's own religion, and the aforesaid Policy Statement urges that "people of different faiths seek new contacts, relationships and ways of working together,"

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Anaheim, California, July 31-August 5, 1981, affirm the Policy Statement on the Middle East of the National Council of Churches of Christ Governing Board, and commend it to the congregations, regions, and general administrative units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for guidance in addressing the problems of peace, reconciliation, and justice in the Middle East.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pastors and lay members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) traveling in the Middle East be encouraged to include in their itineraries visits with Middle Eastern church representatives in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, and that the Department of the Middle East of the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) provide information about Disciples relationships in that area and suggest contacts with Christians in the Middle East who desire dialogue with North American Christians, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that local congregations, regions, and general units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be encouraged to open dialogue with Jews and Muslims in their midst, and that the various manifestations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) seek better understanding of Islam and Judaism through educational programs for all ages.

(Note: The text of the Middle East Policy Statement adopted by the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. on November 6, 1980, follows.)