

family life in the cultural setting of a developing country, and brought a tremendous sense of identification with these our hosts in this beautiful land. So in these processes, we sought, in a place where change is coming so strikingly, so forcefully, to find the roots of Christian family conviction that can hold us steady and inform us in our pilgrimage toward family units and family life that has value and purpose and a future that is worth pursuing."

Dr. Doty then asked Dr. Philip Saunders, Family Life Vice-Chairperson, to bring recommendations on behalf of the committee. These recommendations are:

- (1) The idea of extended family be affirmed and that this be a major ministry of the church.
- (2) That there be consistency in the teaching of family life to youth in view of the high incidence of teenage pregnancies, that health education and family planning form an integral part of the syllabus. Further the church emphasize the need for premarital counseling and that this should be a core course in seminaries and other training institutions where counseling as a course does not exist or is an elective within the curriculum.
- (3) That the process of better understanding of marriages across race and cultural lines be developed.
- (4) That the local family life committee in the local church and national church be reactivated and that additional resources be provided in order to strengthen the family.
- (5) The church exercise pastoral care through programs of training for the required marketable skills and financial support in the interim for women whose marriages have ended in divorce.
- (6) That great efforts be created in encouraging men to invest themselves in all aspects of family life as opposed to traditional stereotype male roles in marriage and family.
- (7) Emphasis be placed on the importance of family devotion. Make it a worship time. Develop appropriate family worship materials and request "Upper Room" publishers to issue this devotional in Swahili.
- (8) A better way of communication be developed in order that even children may participate in family affairs.
- (9) The declaration of the purpose of marriage is in trying the fact of mutual companionship, helpfulness and care. The World Family Life Committee feels that this must be exercised more by those who are marriage officers, preachers, counselors and all the related roles including Christian groups and agencies better by furthering the concept of companionship in marriage.
- (10) As a result of the protracted civil war in the Central American area, inhabitants of this region have experienced a new development with the influence and presence of armed forces from outside the area with whom it has engaged, have brought in the killer disease AIDS, infecting the people of Central America. The committee voices deep concern and hopes appropriate action will be taken.

Dr. Doty MOVED the adoption of the recommendations.

The Council VOTED to ADOPT.

## **XV. REPORT OF THE WORSHIP AND LITURGY COMMITTEE**

Bishop Cannon then asked Dr. Geoffrey Wainwright, Chairperson, for the report of the Worship and Liturgy Committee. Dr. Wainwright's report follows:

The report from the Worship and Liturgy Committee will take the form of asking the Council and its member churches to take note of certain observations and recommendations. I emphasize that no strong legislative action is being called for but simply that you take note of what is coming from the consultation.

The Worship and Liturgy Committee organized a consultation here in Nairobi with some 75 participants on the theme "Liturgy in the Body of Christ". This consultation asks the World Methodist Council and its member churches to take note of the following observations and

(1) There is properly a strong and vital connection between the whole life of the Christian community and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper by which people are admitted to the church of Jesus Christ and find continuing nourishment in Christ's body. It is important that the celebration of these rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper engage the entire community which it itself maintained by them.

(2) In light with the Lima text on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, there is a growing acceptance that baptism is the basic sacrament of church membership. Deeper exploration is needed of this fact and its relevance to our understanding and practice in such matters as the following: (a) the traditional recognition of the necessity and unrepeatable of baptism; (b) the ecumenical dimensions of mutual recognition of baptism, membership and communicant status; (c) the question of admitting children and indeed infants to communion; (d) the meaning of confirmation and other renewals of baptism; (e) the place of the faith that baptism calls for as response to the gospel. The incoming Worship and Liturgy Committee might undertake the preparation and publication of a symposium on these questions and eventually a simple statement of Methodist and ecumenical basis might be drawn up.

(3) The Lord's Supper is being celebrated with increasing frequency in many Methodist churches which are thus recovering the eucharistic emphasis of the Wesleys. Careful attention is needed to several aspects of the Lord's Supper and the relations among them; (a) evangelistic; (b) liturgical; (c) devotional; (d) disciplinary; and (e) communitarian.

(4) The general cultural crisis of our times affects also the rights by which the church and the churches express Christian values and transmit the Christian vision. The rich symbolic resources of the Christian tradition need to be rediscovered and revitalized in the contemporary context.

(5) The concerns of evangelism, liturgy, Christian education, and spiritual nurture are often handled separately. There is need to bring them together. Christian formation unites Methodism's traditional vocations of saving souls and making saints.

These, then are essential observations that the Consultation on Membership in the Body of Christ came to and the kind of recommendations that they will make for consideration by the Council and the member churches. It is, if you like, a program of work that we ask the incoming Committee on Liturgy and Worship to make a start on and that we commend to each one of you in your various churches.

Bishop Cannon thanked Dr. Wainwright and noted that it asked for no action other than it be received and that we encourage the churches to follow the suggestion as the spirit directs them. The group VOTED to RECEIVE the report.

## **XVI. REPORT OF THE WMC YOUTH COMMITTEE**

Bishop Cannon recognized Mr. Charles Boayue (Liberia), Chairman of the WMC Youth Committee who asked the young people in the meeting to stand. He said Council member churches will need to work hard toward making the presence of youth visible in Council meetings.

He then introduced current members of the Youth Committee: Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Paul Graham (South Africa), Secretary Ms. Debbie Hewitt-Kerry (England), Mr. Aristote Moevi (Benin), Mr. Willie Fleming (CME, USA), Mr. Tom Sundar (EMYC, Norway), Miss Tanya Martin (Panama), youth Presidium member, the Rev. Marta Burke; Consultants, Dr. Maxie Dunnam and the Rev. Taylor Thompson. He then asked the Rev. Marta Burke to present the report which follows:

As the Youth Committee reports on its activities, it is aware that the worldwide situation of youth seems more desperate and less hopeful than at the beginning of the quinquennium. Unemployment, poverty, the nuclear threat and countless violent conflicts have drained the resources and faith of many young persons: The need to build up the self esteem and faith of many young people has never been greater.

In the midst of this, the Youth Committee has met in conjunction with the Executive Committee

meetings and members have also participated in the various other committees of the Council. A measure of continuity between meetings has been achieved and the Youth Committee members have grown together in love and service. While at meetings, we have attempted to be aware and sensitive to the fact that our business is church business and our motivation is the concern for the well being of others. Thus, when we give our report we do so collectively and creatively. We take pride in the traditions of the past yet we realize that we are part of the church today and should serve as active role models for the Methodist youth of the world.

We have worked with the World Evangelism Committee in the planning and executing of the Second International Christian Youth Conference in Nassau, Bahamas in 1983. Reaching more than 1,000 young people from 47 nations, new commitments were made, witnesses were raised to Christ and a statement of faith was made to the world. Much has been added to the ministry of the church universal as these young persons now bring the Good News of Christ to a broken world.

We look forward to joining in the Third International Christian Youth Conference in Brisbane, Australia June 30 to July 6, 1987. We trust that many young people will be able to share in this unique opportunity.

Another task of the Youth Committee has been to exchange ideas and share the experience of youth around the world. We recognize that "World Parish" can be a means of sharing these ministries and opportunities of the worldwide fellowship of youth.

During the past quinquennium we have been glad to join hands with the European Methodist Youth Council, through the cooperation of a representative of that body to our committee.

As the work of the present Youth Committee draws to a close two long-term goals remain as our agenda:

1. To form a federation of World Methodist Youth comprising all youth organizations of member churches of the World Methodist Council.
2. To encourage the formation of regional youth councils as the European Methodist Youth Council and the African Methodist Youth Council and to work with these bodies.
3. Finally as a Youth Committee, all would like to urge the members of the World Methodist Council to place a special emphasis on the role of the youth as active, educated laypersons of the church. The committee is aware of the need to address the issue of youth attendance at the local level and ways in which we can encourage youth to stay and take an active role in the church.

The words of Lana Fowler captures the reflection of five years of the Youth Committee task:

"And is our middle-time, of wondering and waiting, hurrying and hesitating, regretting and revising, we who have begun many things . . . and seen but few completed — we who are becoming more . . . and less — through the evidence of God's middle-times have a stabilizing hint that we are not mistakes, that we are irreplaceable, and that our being is of interest and our doing is of purpose, that our being and doing are surrounded by Amen. Jesus Christ is the completer of unfinished people with unfinished work in unfinished times."

We have worked, lived and played and prayed together. Together we have felt the presence of the Holy Spirit as we each pledged to be God's instruments of peace and serve as God's yes in the world. We have grown closer to one another, across the barriers of language and culture, acknowledging that sometimes it is hard to celebrate unity in diversity. In our struggles we rejoice, we rejoice that we attest that we are truly one in the Spirit.

The Council VOTED to RECEIVE the report.

## **XVII. SOCIAL AFFIRMATION**

Bishop Cannon then asked Dr. Norman E. Dewire, Chairperson of the Social and International Affairs Committee, to report on the Social Affirmation, which had been previously sent to all persons registered.

In introducing the Social Affirmation, Dr. Dewire said, "As Methodist people we believe in a concept of holiness, which has something to do with one's personal relationship with God and upon social responsibility as a faithful disciple. The gospel is written for those who live in community not those who live in isolation. As Methodist people we believe that everyone in all the earth is created in the image of God. We are called as disciples to be good stewards of that creation. As Methodist people we gave formulation in 1908 to the first social creed to be adopted in the United States and as a result of that a number of ecumenical bodies and a number of ecumenical creeds were written and came into being as a result of the pioneer work done by the Methodists.

The Social and International Affairs Committee decided during its quinquennium to ask the member churches to submit copies of their social creeds or social principles or statements on social issues. We gathered quite a collection of those documents, went through them, and invited a number of participants representing each region of the globe to a consultation in Bossey in July 1984. During that consultation those persons reviewed all statements of social issues and social principles and social creeds by the member churches, developed a list of six significant issues which we felt cut across all of Methodist and Methodist-related bodies, developed a Biblical basis for a social affirmation and gave formulation to the first draft of the social affirmation. The first draft of that consultation has gone through three additional steps. The Social and International Affairs Committee received the work of that consultation in Bossey, presented it to the Executive when we met in Frankfurt. The Executive discussed the draft of the affirmation, made several revisions and then sent it to every member church. We also sent it to the members of the Worship and Liturgy Committee. Then we received a number of comments from those consultations and from that draft being used in a variety of settings. In October of last year, all the comments were received and reviewed and further discussions held and finally the draft of the Social Affirmation was developed which was printed by Dr. Hale and sent to all members of the Council.

The Social and International Affairs Committee presents one amendment to the printed form: In the section on confession, the SIAC proposal asks the word "through" at the end of the section, be deleted and moved to the beginning of each of the five following phrases. Dr. Dewire then read this section as it would read if amended, and concluded, "We believe this affirmation gives expression to our belief, our experience, our tradition, and our hope as Methodist people." He then MOVED to adopt as amended.

Discussion included comments from Dr. Daniel Brewer (Liberia) that the affirmation should state that Jesus is Savior, his dying cleanses us from our debt, and his rising guarantees our resurrection. Bishop Cannon asked that Dr. Cragg's motion (which came during the theological statement discussion) prevail on this too, and that suggestions be made in writing to Dr. Dewire. Bishop Lance (India) questioned how to put the Affirmation into practice.

The group then VOTED and ADOPTED.

Dr. Dewire indicated that the Social and International Affairs Committee would bring recommendations on Saturday which would speak to Bishop Lance's concern. The text of the affirmation as approved, follows:

### **World Methodist Social Affirmation**

We believe in God, Creator of the world and of all people;  
and in Jesus Christ, incarnate among us, who died and rose again;  
and in the Holy Spirit, present with us to guide, strengthen and comfort.  
**WE BELIEVE; GOD, HELP OUR UNBELIEF.\***

We rejoice in every sign of God's Kingdom:

- in the upholding of human dignity and community
- in every expression of love, justice and reconciliation;
- in each act of self-giving on behalf of others;
- in the abundance of God's gifts entrusted to us that all may have enough;
- in all responsible use of the earth's resources.

**GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH; AND ON EARTH, PEACE.\***