

**A MINNESOTA WITHOUT POVERTY**  
Resolution Passed June 8, 2008  
by the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference  
United Church of Christ

*Only the “Be It Resolved” statements were voted upon by the Annual Meeting.  
The Summary and Whereas sections were neither voted upon nor approved.*

SUBMITTED BY: Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ Board of Directors

SUMMARY OF INTENT: At its May 13, 2008 meeting, the Program Commission of the Minnesota Council of Churches gave final approval to the documents developed for *A Minnesota Without Poverty* initiative and approved by the Council Board. Judicatories of the Minnesota Council of Churches are asked to lend support to this focus as parallel religious and legislative efforts give new urgency to addressing poverty in Minnesota.

FUNDING IMPLICATIONS: None.

WHEREAS Scripture begins with the assurance that God provides us with a world of abundance and calls it good, (Gen. 1:31) and that our calling is to care for God’s creation. This calling of God emerges again and again throughout the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament as a particular concern of justice for the poor, the marginalized and any left out of the abundance God provides. Psalm 146: reminds us “Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob whose hope is in the Lord their God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed and gives food to the hungry.” With words of judgment and hope the prophets insist faithfulness to God means faithfulness to the poor and marginalized. “If you offer food to the hungry and satisfy the need of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like noonday.” Isaiah 58:6,10. Jesus, the one who for Christians, is the incarnation of God, comes offering good news to the poor (Lk 4:18-19), promising that in the fullness of God’s Reign they will be blessed (Lk 6:20). This witness and calling has remained central to the identity of God’s people throughout the ages so that in the breaking of the bread and sharing the cup we proclaim, “We bless you for the bounty of the earth and for the vision of the day when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none.” (UCC Service of Word and Sacrament 1); and

WHEREAS the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ at its 2008 Annual Meeting in adapting this resolution embraces the goals of *A Minnesota Without Poverty*; and

WHEREAS the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ, along with 35 other religious leaders, signed the document entitled *A Common Foundation – Shared Principles for Overcoming Poverty*; and

WHEREAS the 2006 Minnesota State Legislature adopted the language of *A Common Foundation* in a bill that created a Legislative Commission to End Poverty in Minnesota by 2020; and

WHEREAS *A Minnesota Without Poverty* is a program of the Minnesota Council of Churches, working in partnership with its member judicatories, Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, and Lutheran Coalition for public Policy in Minnesota to encourage and support Minnesota congregations in strengthening ministries to overcome poverty; and

WHEREAS encouraging the legislature to support the work of the Legislative Commission to End Poverty is consistent with the above actions:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that everyone present at the 2008 Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ Annual Meeting be invited to review *A Common Foundation* and consider signing a petition to be presented to Minnesota's elected leaders urging them to follow the principles of *A Common Foundation* as they develop public policy and as they respond to the Legislative Commission and its recommendations to end poverty in Minnesota by 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all such signed petitions be collected by Conference staff at the close of the Minnesota Conference of the United Christ Annual Meeting and forwarded to *A Minnesota Without Poverty* in care of the Minnesota Council of Churches; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that every congregation represented at this annual meeting be encouraged to provide opportunities for their congregation members to sign the petition for *A Common Foundation*; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that our Conference Minister send a mailing to each congregation in the Conference including:

- A letter with theological/Biblical interpretation for *A Common Foundation: Shared Principles for Overcoming Poverty*, the vision for *A Minnesota Without Poverty*, and encouragement for pastors and congregations to participate
- A copy of the Declaration of Support document
- Reference to website: [www.mnwithoutpoverty.org](http://www.mnwithoutpoverty.org)
- A copy of a sample article for congregational newsletter authored by the Statewide Organizing Team of *A Minnesota Without Poverty*
- Directions that all copies of signed documents be mailed to *A Minnesota Without Poverty*, c/o the Minnesota Council of Churches; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the petitions be presented by the Statewide Organizing Team of *A Minnesota Without Poverty* to Minnesota's Governor and Legislators with all signatures from the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ, along with those gathered by all other judicatories with congregations in Minnesota, and those generated from other faith communities in Minnesota.