No. 9315
(Operational Business Item)

A RESOLUTION TO REVIEW THE CHURCH'S STRUCTURE
FOR THE PURPOSES OF REVISION AND RENEWAL
ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, the current organization of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada was developed in the 1960's for a church of nearly two million members;

AND WHEREAS, the mission needs of our world have grown and changed along with the vitality and strength of our congregations, regions and general administrative units;

AND WHEREAS, the funds available for doing mission beyond the congregation have diminished in buying power so that the ability to sustain past patterns of ministry has declined;

AND WHEREAS, the church must exercise the best possible stewardship of its resources so that the gospel can be proclaimed throughout our nations and the world;

AND WHEREAS, the church should always seek to structure itself in ways that represent the best stewardship of the resources entrusted to it;

AND WHEREAS, in the twenty-five years since "Restructure," there have been substantial changes in the patterns of ministry and mission by the various manifestations of the church;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 1993 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) directs the Task Force on Renewal and Structural Reform, working in cooperation with all manifestations of the church, to undertake a complete examination of the current structure and mission of the church and bring a report and recommendations for action to the 1995 General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that as part of this examination, the Task Force on Renewal and Structural Reform will seek input from congregations, regions, and general units, will offer interim reports to the General Board, and will devise a feedback mechanism to help resource its work.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly commends to the Task Force on Renewal and Structural Reform the following working principles, which are hereby affirmed and are to guide the Task Force's work:

1. There is a need for wholesale, “zero-based” imagining of what sort of structures our church should have to most faithfully fulfill its mission and ministry. This discussion must take place with all current structural arrangements "on the table." Some specific kinds of examples for study and possible action must include:

   Should the Regions somehow be divided or merged where appropriate if it appears that that would enable a more faithful ministry or save in overhead and administrative costs? Likewise, does the current set of general units still make the most sense in terms of stewardship of resources and effectiveness of ministry? (These questions must be raised and seriously considered concomitant with any future funding allocation proposal.)

2. We must seek to trust one another enough to put all of the structural issues—regional and general—up for consideration. Our current funding crisis could even thereby become the occasion for some creative imagining as we seek to live out our covenant with one another. Faithful structural changes may well stimulate increases to Basic Mission Finance by enhancing the trust of those in positions to influence those who give.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in order for the Task Force to carry out this work, guided by these principles, the General Assembly hereby requests $40,000 as funding for this work.