No. 8525

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE LEADERSHIP OF WOMEN IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, the strength of leadership among women in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has been a source of support throughout the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); and

WHEREAS, 1985 marks the close of the United Nation's Decade for Women; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 7342 which was adopted at the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1973 included the statement which read in part: "there exists an obvious inadequate representation of women among executive positions of the regional and general levels of the church"; and

WHEREAS, there has been a slight increase in the representation of women in executive positions of the regional and general manifestations of the church,

- In 1973 one woman was the chief administrative officer of a region and in 1985 one woman is serving as a regional co-minister
- Between 1973 and 1985 two women have been added to the executive staff of the Division of Homeland Ministries and three women have been added to the executive staff of the Division of Overseas Ministries for a total of three in each
- In 1985, as in 1973, no general unit is headed by a woman, (a woman having served as president of Church Finance Council from 1976 to 1982); and

WHEREAS, professional church women listed in the Year Book of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), have increased from 4% to 12% over the past 12 years and women seminarians have increased from 9% to approximately 37% in the past 12 years; and

WHEREAS, congregations within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have made significant progress in affirming the value of women's leadership as measured by the number of women who serve as elders, deacons, congregational moderators and pastors, although in most congregations, women in these ministries continue to be in the minority; and

WHEREAS, while the representation of women on boards of general units, regions and congregations is increasing, it continues to be inadequate, seldom exceeding one-third of the total membership; and

WHEREAS, the New Testament affirms the value of the women serving in leadership within the church; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) continues to have a prophetic and pastoral imperative to support the leadership of women,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, August 2-7, 1985 commends the general units, regions and congregations for their openness to the professional leadership of clergy and lay women and for the increased participation of women in their boards; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that it commends those congregations which have contributed to the dramatic increase in the number of the inclusive diaconate and inclusive elderships; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the spirit and intent of Resolution 7342 the Assembly encourages all manifestations of the church to practice inclusive leadership as they call to service and employment clergywomen and laywomen; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that it call upon all general units, regions and congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to have equal representation of men and women on their boards; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that it call upon congregations to continue study and implementation of an inclusive diaconate and an inclusive eldership. Suggested study materials include One of Publication, St. Louis, Missouri.