

No. 9126

(Sense-of-the-Assembly Resolution)

**SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION CONCERNING MINISTRY TO CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES****ADOPTED by the General Assembly****Background Information:**

Resolution No. 8524, "Resolution Concerning Rights of Handicapped Infants," was "Committed to the General Board for further consideration" by the Des Moines General Assembly. That action was overlooked in the process following the General Assembly until the summer of 1987. Called to attention at that time, it was assigned to the Task Force on Health Care for consideration and recommendation to the General Board. It was presented at the Indianapolis Assembly as Resolution No. 8951. It was again referred to the General Board for further consideration, with the request for several persons to develop a substitute resolution. This was done. As the substitute came to the General Board in 1990, another substitute was written by the General Board and is forwarded to the General Assembly.

WHEREAS, children are committed in trust to the care of adults; and

WHEREAS, many children, due to birth anomalies, illness or injury, require special care;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma, October 25-30, 1991, call upon its congregations, regions, and general units to:

- 1) Re-examine their ministries to families of these children and, where necessary, educate, sensitize, and reaffirm such a ministry to the end that mothers and fathers (as well as other family members) who are experiencing life with a child requiring specialized care may do so in the context of a loving, caring and understanding faith community; and
- 2) Minister to families as they make decisions about the care of these children; and
- 3) Teach that both life and death are set within the structure of a good creation and loving God, and that after reasonable and responsible attempts to restore and save life have run their course, that death be allowed to complete its course and we not confuse acknowledgment of death with the taking of life or a failing to provide appropriate care; and
- 4) Work for changes where necessary in legislation that will protect the rights of these children; and
- 5) Work with governmental and social agencies to insure that families with children requiring specialized care have the broadest possible access to services essential to the care, raising, and education of such children.