

## No. 8554

### RESOLUTION CONCERNING OPPOSITION TO THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY

#### ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, there is currently a significant rise in the number of executions of convicted murderers throughout the United States, and

WHEREAS, public opinion polls suggest that a majority of the American public favor capital punishment for the purpose of deterring crime or for the purpose of retribution for violent acts, and

WHEREAS, the Holy Scriptures clearly mandate that we are not to kill, we are not to render evil for evil, and that we are not to seek retribution with vengeance for the evil done to us, and

WHEREAS, the use of execution to punish criminal acts does not allow for repentance or restitution of the criminal, and

WHEREAS, well documented research clearly shows that capital punishment does not deter violent crime but may even give sanction to a climate of violence in our society, and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in conventions and General Assemblies has consistently approved resolutions that oppose capital punishment (1957 - F11, 1962 - #43, 1973 - #44, and 1975 - #34);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in General Assembly at Des Moines, Iowa, express its opposition to the use of the death penalty in the criminal justice system of the United States of America and its various states, and calls for the repeal of all laws and statutes to permit its usage,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that every congregation of the Christian Church be encouraged to utilize educational materials at every possible occasion to facilitate thoughtful discussion regarding the use of capital punishment,

that each congregation in those states which have capital punishment statutes contact any elected Legislator who is a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) making them aware of the action of the General Assembly to ask for the repeal of the current statutes that permit the use of the death penalty, that, those congregations communicate to their own Governor their encouragement and personal support of the Governor's use of his/her constitutionally assigned power to commute a death sentence to life imprisonment should an execution become imminent;

and that all appropriate systems of influence be utilized to repeal all federal statutes which permit capital punishment.