



Office of General Ministries

A Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ

John H. Thomas, General Minister and President
Edith A. Guffey, Associate General Minister

MEMO

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TO: Council of Conference Ministers
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries
Collegium of Officers
UCC Pension Boards
United Church Foundation

FROM: John H. Thomas, General Minister and President

DATE: October 21, 2002

RE: Executive Council Policy on Covenantal Inclusion of Health and Human Service Ministry Institutions within the United Church of Christ

On October 14, 2002 the Executive Council took three actions related to the adoption of a new policy that provides guidance to Conferences and Health and Human Service institutions concerning the inclusion of such institutions in the mission and ministry of the UCC. The actions were as follows:

1. The Executive Council adopts the documents entitled "Executive Council Policy on Covenantal Inclusion of Health and Human Service Institutions Within the United Church of Christ" and the "Mission Statement on Health and Human Service, United Church of Christ."
2. The Executive Council requests that the Office of General Ministries communicate this policy to UCC Conferences, the Board of Directors of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, and the Covenanted, Affiliated and Associated Ministries of the United Church of Christ.
3. The Executive Council requests that the Office of General Ministries and the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries assist UCC Conferences and health and human service ministry institutions in implementing this policy as appropriate in their local settings by June 30, 2003.

(cont.)

This new policy (enclosed/attached) consolidates and replaces three previous policies on Conference Recognition of Health and Human Service Institutions, Special Mission Relationships (aka "Authorization") and Capital Campaigns. The intent of this Executive Council policy is to encourage the broadest possible level of consistency of policy and practice across the UCC concerning our covenantal inclusion of health and human service institutions within the UCC. In the time between now and June 30, 2003, Conferences and institutions are encouraged to take two steps toward this goal:

1. Conference governing bodies are asked to review the Executive Council Policy and adopt a policy of their own that conforms as closely as possible to the "template" for Conference policies that is provided as a part of the Executive Council document.
2. Conferences will then need to inform those health and human service institutions with which they are currently in covenant of their new policy and determine that all institutions meet its criteria.

You will note that the Executive Council has asked the Office of General Ministries and CHHSM to provide assistance and support to Conferences as they undertake this process. Given the significant number of health and human service institutions involved and the fact that many of these relationships will involve multiple Conferences, it will be very important that Conferences and institutions work closely with these national settings. For this reason, I have asked Bryan Sickbert, Executive Director of CHHSM, to take primary responsibility for coordinating and managing this process. Bryan will keep my office informed as this moves along and OGM will take final responsibility for monitoring this process and reporting to the Executive Council. You may expect to hear from Bryan in the near future concerning more details and supportive resources. In the meantime, feel free to contact him with any questions at 216-736-2253 or sickberb@ucc.org.

The work of our health and human service institutions represent one of the most significant ministries of our church. They enrich our life and faithfulness as the church of Jesus Christ. I urge all of us to live into a time of more faithful inclusion of these ministries in the family of the United Church of Christ.