

## FOCUS ON SOCIAL ISSUES, 1913 – 2007

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

February 11, 2008

- 1913** State Council established in San Francisco: Initial concerns were women's suffrage, temperance, gambling and prostitution.
- 1914-18** advocated for peace through a "department of international justice and good will."
- 1930's** concern for migrant farm families, soup kitchens, shelters, migrant child care.
- 1940's** peace efforts, care for interned Japanese citizens of the USA. California Council of Churches divided north and south in 1943 and set up Office for State Affairs in Sacramento; we re-named ourselves the Southern California Ecumenical Council in 1982.
- 1950's** migrant work and organizing which has led to the National Farm Worker Ministry.
- 1960's** civil rights, Vietnam, Interfaith Hunger Coalition, head start, anti-poverty programs.
- 1970's** Ecology Task Force (which raised issues like population growth, urban planning, toxic waste, endangered species, climate change), 1976 resolution on nuclear energy in connection with Proposition 15, Vietnam refugees, Nestles Boycott, People's Guide.
- 1980's** We had programs caring for Central American refugees, El Rescate, the sanctuary movement, Hope Publishing House (whose book list includes social change topics). Adopted the Preamble to SCEC Bylaws on 10/30/87 which says in part, "*we are* to struggle together against racism, poverty, environmental blight, war and other problems of humanity."
- 1992** Accredited NGO at the United Nations, attending conferences in Stockholm and RiodeJaneiro.
- 1997** "Religious Institutions and the Living Wage" adopted 9/11/97.
- 1998** "On Workplace Organizing" adopted 11/19/98.
- 1999** "A Faithful Response to Suffering Humanity", a symposium on 5/22/99 at St. James Armenian Church in Los Angeles, in celebration of the millennium, focused on immigration rights, environmental stewardship, hate crimes, welfare reform and prison reform.
- 2000** Peacekeeping at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, 8/14-17/01
- 2001** "The California Energy Crisis: symposium on 5/5/01 at Seaside UCC Church, Torrance.
- 2002** Resolution calling for the peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestine confrontation adopted 3/21/02.
- 2003** Ecumenical Symposium at Fuller Seminary on 11/4/03 which lifted among other concerns our obligation to work among the poor...on community problems..."seeking the welfare of the city"
- 2004** Visioning Work Plan adopted 11/4/04 connecting theology with the ethical issues such as peace, land and labor justice and the environment...with particular concern for the younger generations.
- 2005** Faith & Order Word to the Churches, "Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth", study document from World Alliance of Reformed Churches.
- 2006** We give to NFWM, CLUE, and the Interfaith Committee for Immigrant Rights. "Separation of Church and State", resolution adopted to support All Saints Church on 1/12/06. "Social Services for Undocumented Immigrants", statement adopted 5/11/06.
- 2007** Primary concern, among the issues, for global warming, immigration and poverty as lifted up by the SCEC planning retreat at First Congregational Church, Pasadena, on 11/15/07. Among official observers on the Board we count the National Farm Worker Ministry and Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice.