



Church of the Brethren General Board

Resolution on Modern-Day Slavery: A Call to Awareness, Education, and Action

October 22, 2007

WHEREAS Jesus began his public ministry with words from the prophet Isaiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:18-19); and

WHEREAS, the gospel mandates our action on behalf of the oppressed, and whereas throughout its history the Church of the Brethren has spoken out strongly and repeatedly in opposition to slavery and the slave trade, passing antislavery resolutions in 1797, 1812, 1813, 1837, 1845, 1853, 1854, and 1857; and

WHEREAS 2008 is the 300th anniversary of the founding of the Church of the Brethren and a time for us to celebrate and recommit ourselves to our historical understandings of the gospel of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, slavery is illegal in every nation in the world, but many forms of slavery continue to exist today, such as child labor, sexual slavery, and debt bondage; and currently it is estimated that 27 million people worldwide, adults and children, are victims of human trafficking and enslavement;

Resolved:

We the General Board of the Church of the Brethren reaffirm our denomination’s historic opposition to slavery. We understand the scriptures to reveal that God abhors slavery and that the gospel of Jesus Christ mandates our unwavering resistance to and action against all forms of slavery.

We confess our complicity in the global network of slavery through consumption of goods and services that have been produced by slave labor.

We commit to educating ourselves and others about modern-day slavery and initiating and supporting antislavery action at home and abroad. This includes measures to prevent enslavement, to end slavery, and to care for those who have been victimized by slavery.

We invite all Church of the Brethren agencies, educational institutions, districts, congregations, and members to partner in this work.

We seek cooperation with other faith communions and ecumenical partners including the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, and interfaith organizations.

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Approved by the General Board Monday, October 22, 2007 at the General Board meeting in Elgin, Illinois.*