

## Worldwide Anglican Encounter: A Celebration of Hope

An International Conference at Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, March 29 to April 3, 1992

### Conference Statement

At this midpoint of the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women, we challenge the Church to take the Decade more seriously, and to recognize that the Decade is not just about Women's participation in the Church, but is about solidarity with all women in all aspects of their lives.

We challenge the Church to commit its resources (of money, personnel, and attention) to supporting the aims of the Decade.

We call upon the Church to affirm the alternative economic, political and relational models that women are offering to the world.

In particular, we call for commitment and action to the following:

**Society and cultural are patriarchal.** The church is complicit in this . The teaching of the Church often support the subordination and marginalization of women.

*We call upon the Church* to affirm the feminist theological and spiritual contributions of women.

*We call upon the Church* to affirm feminist theological scholarship (biblical, theological, ethical, historical ...)

*We call upon the Church* to make available resources for publishing the scholarship of women.

**Prostitution and the other problems which attend it:** street children, early pregnancy, AIDS, sex tourism trade, violence as entertainment.

*We challenge the Church* to take more seriously all forms of violence against women and to determine ways to respond locally, nationally, and internationally to this growing violence.

**The world economic situation.** The external debt crisis and the proliferation of transnational corporations, both of which have serious implications for the lives of women.

*We ask the Church* to engage in serious reflection on the possibility and ethical implications of debt reduction, restructuring, or cancellation.

*We call upon all our Churches* to work to empower Churches in the affected countries to influence debt policy within their own countries.

*We challenge the Church* to call for more governmental control of transnational corporations, particularly in reference to their exploitation of female labor.

**500 years of colonialism and neo-colonialism** have endangered the life and existence of indigenous peoples and of people of African descent brought to these lands as slaves. These years have seen the genocide of people and their cultures, of land stolen from the people and of people stolen from their lands.

*We challenge the Churches* to stand in solidarity with, and affirm the struggle of, indigenous peoples for their right to their lands and to lives of justice and dignity.

*We challenge the churches* to recognize the wealth of spiritual and cultural resources that indigenous people can offer. We challenge the church to learn from the sacramental relationship to creation which affirms the bond between humanity and the environment in which we live.

*We challenge the Church* to fight all forms of racism and to support Blacks in their struggle for human rights.

*We challenge the Church* to lay its body down between governments and the legitimate struggles of the poor and the marginalized.

*We challenge each Christian* to educate herself/himself about the situations of their sisters in different parts of the world, to pray for them, and to be prepared to act in solidarity with them. We recognize that this will often necessitate changes in life styles and will demand lives of risk.

### **The continued missionary structures of the Church.**

*We challenge the Church* to oppose these structures and to seek and teach ways to empower people and churches at a local level, and to respect all peoples' rights to self-determination.

**We have heard the challenge from the Church's youth** to an exclusive church which marginalizes the visions and perspectives of young people.

*We challenge the Church* to empower the youth, and we challenge the youth to use that power to act prophetically.

*We call upon the Church* to recognize the danger and hardship faced by youth throughout the world who struggle for justice and survival.

**Meeting in Brazil, we are very conscious of the issues of the damage to the environment,** and, consequently, the lives of people.

*We call upon the Church* to take a leadership role in the preservation of the environment.

*We call upon all governments, and particularly upon governments of countries which, like the United States, have a disproportionate share of power in the world, to attend and support the Environmental Conference scheduled for June in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.*

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### **Creed at the Closing Service**

**by The Rev. Karen Binding**

**We believe in God** who carries us in her womb and gives birth to us;

who cradles us in her arms and feeds us at her breast;  
and who teaches us to walk, and to walk together.

**We believe in God** who shows us in Jesus' life and death that she dances in a child and beats with a drummer;  
shines through the eyes of the youth;  
who wanders with the landless and lives in the favelas;  
who weeps with the children and suffers with the abused;  
and who stands in solidarity with the oppressed.

**We believe in God** who says "I am becoming who I am becoming";  
who shatters our false idols and our incomplete images of the Holy;  
who breaks the chains of our slavery to riches, consumerism, traditions, patriarchy, divisions, and fears;  
who breaks the chains of our slavery due to sexism, racism, classism, illiteracy, poverty, oppression, post-colonialism, exploitation, militarism, and violence;  
who challenges us to let go of the chains of slavery in our minds, and allows her transforming Spirit to flow freely;

**We believe in God** who calls us to celebrate and dance;  
to scatter to all corners of the earth to do justice for all peoples;

to respect and embrace the whole of her creation;  
to see ourselves in the other.

**We believe in God** who fills us with her power to do what is required of us!