



Resolution to Expand Medicaid

United Church of Chapel Hill

United Church of Christ

Introduction:

The United Church of Chapel Hill, a congregation of the **United Church of Christ**, urges the State of North Carolina to accept available federal money to expand Medicaid coverage to 500,000 of the poorest citizens of our State.

In 2012 the North Carolina General Assembly and North Carolina's Governor, Pat McCrory did not accept available federal Medicaid money that would have provided health insurance to more than 500,000 poor families. Our State can reverse this decision and accept this federal money at any time. An estimated 2,800 people will die prematurely as a result of this decision. Almost one-fourth of working North Carolinians earn less than poverty wages for a family of four. Medicaid would help them stay healthy.

Christians are called -- to feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, and comfort the sick and imprisoned. (Matthew 25:31)

The **United Church of Christ**, including congregations in North Carolina such as United Church of Chapel Hill, seeks to continue Jesus' ministries of compassion, justice and wholeness for all God's people thus *Health Care for All* has been a denominational priority. Our faith tradition understands Jesus' ministries of healing and justice in this day as a witness that health care is a basic human right and that our health care system must provide *health care for all* that is comprehensive, quality, affordable, accessible and available.

The **United Church of Christ** is one of this nation's oldest denominations as our roots stretch back to the Pilgrims arriving in 1620. In North Carolina, **Catawba College** and **Elon University**, were founded by the **United Church of Christ**. African American institutions as the Palmer Institute and Franklinton Center were founded by the American Missionary Association an early mission movement of the **United Church of Christ**.

The **United Church of Christ** gathers biennially for discernment and to establish denominational priorities at a national General Synod. In addition to a history of establishing hospitals, schools of nursing, assisted living facilities, parish nurses as well as the care congregations organize for its members and others, the commitment of the **United Church of Christ** to health care may be seen in General Synod Resolutions over the decades:

In 1975, **General Synod 10** issued a Resolution, *National Health Care Policy*, calling for a health policy in the United States which emphasized universal access, comprehensive

benefits, governmental financing, and reform of health care delivery; stating that this policy should include elements which build health and prevent illness.

In 1977 **General Synod 11** further expanded on the previous Synod action by calling on the Church "*to actively work toward the creation of a national health care system in the United States.*"

In 1991 **General Synod 18** adopted a Pronouncement that affirmed the moral and justice imperatives of equal access for all people in the United States to high quality and affordable health care and called for the establishment of a universal health care system. In addition, a companion Resolution was also approved establishing a *Health Care For All Priority Goal Statement* enlisting members of the UCC in study an action to work for the establishment of health care for all.

A **General Synod 21** Resolution, *Reclaiming the Church's Ministry of Health and Healing*, called upon UCC churches to establish a designate body for addressing health and human service issues confronting members and their communities. The spirit of this resolution proclaims *diakonia* -- the ministry of healing, service, care, compassion and hospitality -- the love and grace God made visible in our mission in health and human service. Where the church is there is mission. Where the church is, are those who have been called to "*live for the sake of others.*"

As a congregation of the United Church of Christ, United Church of Chapel Hill urges the State of North Carolina through the votes of the General Assembly and Governor to expand Medicaid coverage so that the ministries of healing and justice and the goal of *Health Care for All* may be extended to the poorest citizens of the State.