

1 **Resolution on affirmation of: CHARTER FOR COMPASSION.**

2 SUBMITTED BY: Vermont Conference Department of Mission

3 WHEREAS, the diverse religions and cultures of the world are often critical and unaccepting of
4 each other and sometimes even violent and destructive toward those different from
5 themselves, and

6 WHEREAS, religious leaders from around the world are highlighting this tragic impasse: for
7 example, Muslim leader Salman Ahmad states that business, government and other world leaders
8 need a guiding principle for working together, "...especially when the world is colliding into
9 each other every day." And Sister Joan Chittister states that "In a world where force is too often
10 the response to differences of opinion, culture, and ideas of the divine, compassion is its one
11 universal antidote." and,

12 WHEREAS we, as Christians, are called to "Love the Lord your God...Love your neighbor as
13 yourself." (Matthew 22:37-39), and to "...love your enemies and pray for those who persecute
14 you..." (Matthew 5: 43-44), and to "...clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility,
15 gentleness and patience." (Colossians 3: 12), and

16 WHEREAS, the recognized scholar and author on world religions and the nature of God, Karen
17 Armstrong, in 2008 called for a renewed emphasis on the principle of compassion which lies at
18 the heart of all religious, ethical, and spiritual traditions. and,

19 WHEREAS, world religious leaders, including Bishop Tutu, the Dalai Lama and many others,
20 joined with Karen Armstrong to develop the four paragraph CHARTER FOR COMPASSION
21 and launched it throughout the world for affirmation and adoption in November, 2009.

22 Armstrong describes the CHARTER FOR COMPASSION as a “grassroots movement of people
23 interested and involved in religion” so that “the voices of extremism can be drowned out by the
24 compassionate voices “ which treat others with respect as they work for justice. “It is a
25 cooperative effort to restore not only compassionate thinking, but COMPASSIONATE ACTION
26 to the center of our lives.”

27 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference affirm and accept
28 the CHARTER FOR COMPASSION as a guide for thoughts, prayers and action by individuals
29 and collectivities recognizing that this call is also that of Jesus Christ’s invitation to love our
30 neighbor as ourselves and to love our enemies.

31 AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that delegates will encourage their churches and church
32 members to also affirm and commit to the CHARTER FOR COMPASSION in their personal
33 and community living and action. Also, that the Department of Mission through its Global
34 Ministries Committee will develop resources and then follow up with churches to encourage
35 them to act and to learn about their implementation.