

## Guidelines on the use of Alcohol

Prepared by the Committee on Alcohol  
of the United Church of Christ

In our world today, we all know how easy it is to become dependent on things, such as alcohol. Co-dependency is a behavioral pattern that often is learned when growing up in a family where a relative is chemically dependent. However, the use of alcohol doesn't always have to result in it being abused. Many of us are able to attend different functions/parties and consume alcohol in control. Back in the days of Jesus Christ, wine--which itself is alcohol--was used constantly. In our committee's study, we have found at least ten different places in the Books of the Bible where wine is used by the First Christians. Jesus Christ, himself, introduced wine in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. St. Paul also provides guidance in the drinking of wine and the use of food. Many of the people of the Church have asked for guidance concerning the use of alcohol as Christians. Therefore, after careful study, it is our committee's recommendation that we recognize Christians can consume alcohol in a responsible Christian manner.

FOR PRESENTATION AND REVIEW BY THE COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 1, 1991

**GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE UNITED EVANGELICAL  
CHURCH ON THE USE OF ALCOHOL**

Prepared by the Committee on the Alcohol Policy of the United  
Evangelical Church of the United Church of Christ

In our world today, we all know how easy it is to become dependent on things such as alcohol. Co-dependency is a behavioral pattern that often is learned when growing up in a family where a relative is chemically dependent. However, the use of alcohol doesn't always have to result in it being abused. Most of us are able to attend different functions/parties and consume alcohol in control. Back in the days of Jesus Christ, wine - which itself is alcohol - was used constantly. In our committee's study, we have found at least ten different places in the Books of the Bible where wine is used by Jews and Christians. Jesus Christ, himself, introduced wine in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. St. Paul also provides guidance in the drinking of wine and the use of food. Many of the people of the Church have asked for guidance concerning the use of alcohol by Christians. Therefore, after careful study, it is our committee's recommendation that we recognize that Christians can consume alcohol in a responsible Christian manner.

PLAN FOR PRESENTATION TO THE CHURCH

Our plan is to have this guideline statement and the study outline reviewed by members of the church in accordance with the following:

1. Review and Approval of Guidelines by the Council at its next meeting on October 1, 1991.
2. Discussion with Groups of the Church  
Members of the Committee will make presentations at each discussion, lead the discussion as follows:
  - a). Bible Study: "What does the Bible say about using alcohol?" Using the biblical outline (see attached) members of the Committee will lead discussion.
  - b). Review for Approval and Discussion of the Guideline Statement by each group. Members of the Committee will lead discussion.
3. Presentation of Guidelines and Study Outline to members of the Church for study and review.
4. Open Meeting and Discussion of the Guidelines at two Churchwide "Community Forums" on Sundays in November at 9:30AM. Presentation will be made and discussion led by

members of the Committee in two parts:

a). Bible Study: "What does the Bible say about using alcohol?" Using the biblical outline (see attached) members of the Committee will lead discussion.

b). Review for Approval and Discussion of the Guideline Statement. Members of the Committee will lead discussion.

NOTE THAT THESE GUIDELINE STATEMENTS DO NOT CHANGE THE POLICY OF THE CHURCH REGARDING THE USE OF ALCOHOL IN OUR BUILDINGS. THAT HAS TO BE DEALT WITH AT SOME FUTURE TIME. THIS STATEMENT IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS IN THE USE OF ALCOHOL.

cc: F. Long, Chair  
C. Rowell, President  
Members of the Council  
Members of the Committee on Alcohol Policy

LEARNING ABOUT THE USE OF ALCOHOL IN THE BIBLE

SCRIPTURE

USE

REACTION

Genesis 19:32

To get someone drunk

Negative use of alcohol which we don't support

Leviticus 10:8

Drinking prior to ministry

Teaching applies to priests in the temple as they lead in worship of the Lord. We would support this position.

Psalms 60:3

Use of the term wine as an illustration of the power of God

Not relevant to our understanding of the use of wine as a beverage

Solomon 5:1

Use of wine in lovemaking in the Song of Solomon

Supports the use of wine in some social relationships.

Jeremiah 25:15-17

Use of "Wine of wrath" - to speak about the Lord's action in history. Obvious that Hebrews drank wine even perhaps Jeremiah

Artistic - poetic illustration of the use of wine.

Jeremiah 35:5-6

Hebrews use wine - but have also disagreements - Use of the control of wine as illustration of responsiveness to God

Wine used by Jeremiah as Biblical illustration

SCRIPTURE

USE

REACTION

John 2:1-11

Wedding Feast to announce  
the wine of the New  
Testament

Jesus did turn water into  
wine for a wedding

Matthew 26:26-29

Lord's Supper

Use of wine to celebrate work  
of the Lord.

Acts 2:14-16

Obvious use of wine by  
disciples

Peter's first sermon

1 Cor. 10:31

Guidance in drinking and  
use of food

"To The Glory Of God"

LEARNING ABOUT THE USE OF ALCOHOL IN THE BIBLE

<u>SCRIPTURE</u>	<u>USE</u>	<u>REACTION</u>
Genesis 19:32	To get someone drunk	Negative use of alcohol which we don't support
Leviticus 10:8	Drinking prior to ministry	Teaching applies to priests in the temple as they lead in worship of the Lord. We would support this position.
Psalms 60:3	Use of the term wine as an illustration of the power of God	Not relevant to our understanding of the use of wine as a beverage
Solomon 5:1	Use of wine in lovemaking in the Song of Solomon	Supports the use of wine in some social relationships.
Jeremiah 25:15-17	Use of "Wine of Wrath" - to speak about the Lord's action in history. Obvious that Hebrews drank wine even perhaps Jeremiah	Artistic - poetic illustration of the use of wine.
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