RESOLUTIONS PACKET

includes the order of business and all resolutions to be presented to the 2015 General Assembly

All page numbers correspond to the page numbers in the 2015 General Assembly Program and Business Docket.

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
In the United States and Canada
ORDER OF BUSINESS

2015 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) IN THE
UNITED STATES AND CANADA
JULY 18-22, 2015
COLUMBUS, OHIO

Monday, July 20, 2015
12:45 PM Doors Open

1:00 PM

Devotions – “Call”
Gathering Music
Welcome Joan Bell-Haynes, First Vice Moderator
Scripture Isaiah 40:6-8
Reflection Statement Witnesses to Transformation
Song
Responsive Prayer

Preamble to The Design

Welcome and Introductions Glen Miles, Moderator
Business Session Procedures Bill Bailey, Parliamentarian
Plenary Reminders Glen Miles, Moderator
Approval of the Agenda and Presentation of Business Tony Rodriguez, Second Vice Moderator

“State of the Church”
Sharon E. Watkins
General Minister and President

Business Items
(Discussion time is 12 minutes unless otherwise indicated)

GA-1534 Amendment to the Design
GA-1516 Council of Colleges and Universities
GA-1508 Disciples Home Missions
GA-1520 Concerning Environmental Racism
GA-1509 Disciples Women
GA-1536 Study Document on Stewardship
Tuesday, July 21, 2015
12:45 PM   Doors Open

1:00 PM

**Devotions – “Challenge”**
Gathering Music
Welcome
Scripture
Reflection Statement
Witnesses to Transformation
Song
Prayer

Joan Bell-Haynes, First Vice Moderator
Isaiah 40: 9-11

**Welcome and Plenary Reminders**
Glen Miles, Moderator

**Presentation of Business**
Tony Rodriguez, Second Vice Moderator

**Business Items**
(Discussion time is 12 minutes unless otherwise indicated)

- GA-1503   Christian Board of Publication
- GA-1504   Christian Church Foundation
- GA-1521   Substitute Resolution on Gun Violence
- GA-1517   Council on Theological Education
- GA-1510   Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries

Commissioning of Missionaries

- GA-1519   Commemorating 100 Years Since the Armenian Genocide
  *(Discussion Time: 24 minutes)*
- GA-1501   General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Including the Office of General Minister and President
- GA-1511   Higher Education and Leadership Ministries
- GA-1523   Becoming a People of Welcome and Support to People with Mental Illness and/or Mental Health Disorders
- GA-1515   Pension Fund
- GA-1528   Change in Regional Boundaries: Great River and Alabama/NW Florida
- GA-1529   Change in Regional Boundaries: Mid-America and Greater Kansas City
- GA-1530   Change in Regional Boundaries: Kansas and Greater Kansas City
Wednesday, July 22, 2015
12:45 PM Doors Open

1:00 PM

Devotions: “SOAR!”
Gathering Music
Welcome Joan Bell-Haynes, First Vice Moderator
Scripture Isaiah 40:27-31
Reflection Statement Witnesses to Transformation
Song Prayer

Welcome and Plenary Reminders Glen Miles, Moderator

Presentation of Business Tony Rodriguez, Second Vice Moderator

Business Items (Discussion time is 12 minutes unless otherwise indicated)

GA-1531 Report of the General Assembly Committee of the General Board
GA-1532 Time and Place for 2019 General Assembly
GA-1537 Regarding the Future Location of General Assembly, General Board and Administrative Committee
GA-1506 Council on Christian Unity
GA-1514 North American Pacific/Asian Disciples
GA-1522 A Call for Peace, Justice and Reunification in the Korean Peninsula
GA-1512 National Benevolent Association
GA-1525 Item for Reflection and Research: A Call to End Solitary Confinement
GA-1505 Church Extension Financial and Missional Resources
GA-1526 Resolution to Celebrate and Reaffirm our Commitment Towards the Vision of Planting 1000 New Congregations by 2020
GA-1524 Task Force on General Assembly Resolutions
GA-1535 Ratification of Administrative Committee Action
GA-1533 Report of the General Nominating Committee

Installation of 2015-2017 Moderator Team
RESOLUTIONS

GA-1518

(Sense-of-the-Assembly)
BLACK LIVES MATTER: A MOVEMENT FOR ALL

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world, prioritizes becoming a pro-reconciling/anti-racist church that recognizes the systemic and symptomatic pathologies present in the United States since slavery, resulting in the fact that Black men are killed by police four times more than any other race and represent a disproportionate portion of the United States’ prison population by mass incarceration; and

WHEREAS, during the last biennium the church has been reminded of this reality by the police killing of unarmed Black men: Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO; Eric Garner in Staten Island, NY; Tamir Rice in Cleveland, OH; and Walter Scott in North Charleston, SC; among others; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) convened in Columbus, OH, July 18-22, 2015, acknowledges that this issue is not only domestic but has become a global concern which has produced protest marches and demonstrations in Paris, France; London, England; Israel/Palestine; Tokyo, Japan and Toronto, Canada; and

WHEREAS, the 2015 General Assembly, in its quest to embody Christian unity, led and empowered by the Holy Spirit, believes that God has called us to be a faithful, growing church that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice (Micah 6:8); and

WHEREAS, the 2015 General Assembly would be obedient to Jesus, who said, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:12) by declaring that Black Lives Matter: A Movement for All seeks to give value to the lives of Black men while acknowledging and remembering the murders of Officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos in the Bronx, New York; the staff members killed in the terrorist attack on the Charles Hebdo Satirical Paper and Jewish Market in Paris, France; the more than two thousand civilians killed in the Boko Haram massacre in Nigeria, Africa; and so many more lives that are threatened by the xenophobic rhetoric, racial and religious profiling of Asians, Hispanics and Middle Easterners;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 18-22, 2015, will support Black Lives Matter: A Movement for All by joining the cause; sharing awareness; supporting and encouraging our congregations to be safe spaces and sanctuary for peaceful protesters, participate in and host sacred conversations and dialogue on race relations and inclusion, and be spiritual allies in prayer, for God to enable the pursuit of justice through those who take a stand and lift their voices for justice; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly, immutably joined together in the woven cord of humanity, will not ignore this opportunity to embrace the new generation of peaceful protesters, non-violent demonstrators and young leaders who come from all races creating today’s cross-cultural movement, who are victimized, socially conscious and committed to change, enabling the world to become a better place for all to live; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly, joined to worship at Columbus, OH, thanks God for the mission revealed in Christ, who said, “I am come that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly” (John 10: 10b) will not sit idly by and be silent, but will give value and credence to Black Lives Matter: A Movement for All, which is alive, active, and ongoing for the sanctity of all human life; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will live into our mission imperative to “be and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving, and serving from our doorsteps ‘to the ends of the earth.’”

The National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Supported by:

Centennial Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) St. Louis, Missouri
The National Pastoral Office of Hispanic Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
The North American Pacific Asian Disciples of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Disciples Peace Fellowship

Quotations taken from the Mission Imperative of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT GA-1518. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
(Sense-of-the-Assembly)

COMMENORATING 100 YEARS SINCE THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

WHEREAS, Matthew 2:16-18 describes the massacre of all the first born males, ordered by Herod, after the Magi ignored his direction to report to him about the place of Jesus' birth:

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

‘A voice was heard in Ramah,
  wailing and loud lamentation,
  Rachel weeping for her children;
  she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.’;

and

WHEREAS, Rachel's weeping and lamentation was a recognition that her children had perished, and those whom Herod ordered killed would never have the chance to thrive. Even so, Jesus "came that they have life, and have it abundantly," with justice and with peace;

and

WHEREAS, history is replete with the tragedy of victimization of innocents by those in power;

WHEREAS, Raphael Lemkin, a Jewish author who introduced the term “genocide” in his 1944 book, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, had in mind the tragedy that befell the Armenians in 1915 and beyond, as well as the Holocaust of Jews in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s;

WHEREAS, 2015 marks the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in Anatolia (modern-day Turkey) in the Ottoman Empire, during which 1.5 million Armenians, Syrian Orthodox, and other minorities were killed, and more than 1 million displaced between 1915 and 1923 following the arrests on April 24, 1915 of Armenian intellectual leaders in Constantinople;

WHEREAS, missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, an historical component body of Global Ministries, already working primarily among the Armenian community in Anatolia for a century, witnessed, documented, raised funds for relief of those who were suffering and who managed to resettle—many in northern Syria—and advocated for an end to the massacres with local and international officials;

WHEREAS, Global Ministries continues to maintain close relationships with Armenians ecumenically and globally, most particularly with the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East and the Armenian Missionary Association of America—
relationships that have had mutual impact among Armenians and among members of our church; and

WHEREAS, surviving Armenians and their descendants who are still impacted by memory and consequences of the events, and many others, continue to seek recognition of the Genocide by Turkey, the US, and other governments of the world, such as the Canadian parliament did in 2004\(^1\) as a form of affirmation, of acknowledgement of truth, and of historical justice, asserting that time alone is not a remedy;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 18-22, 2015, mark the occasion of the centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide with lament for the lives that were lost, and for the lack of official recognition by many governments of the world, most notably Turkey and the US, of the historical event of the Genocide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) gives thanks for the faithful witness and presence of the Armenian Christian community, and offers prayers for its continued strength particularly as it is affected by the ongoing crisis in Syria, where many Genocide survivors resettled; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) expresses its abhorrence when peoples and communities are made victims of violence, particularly when based on race, ethnicity, creed, gender, religion or any other aspect of identity. Taken to the ultimate manifestation, such victimization constitutes genocide, a crime that should be prevented, halted, recognized, and acknowledged, in order to protect the communities, and recognizing of the injustice it represents.

Division of Overseas Ministries

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT GA-1519. (Discussion time: 24 minutes)

\(^1\) http://bit.ly/1O5Jjm
WHEREAS, environmental racism is an affliction where communities comprised of predominantly persons of color and/or low-income people are adversely affected by governmental, institutional, or industrial practices or policies that either negatively affect or withhold the benefits of clean air, water, soil, or natural spaces; and

WHEREAS, environmental justice has been researched since the 1980’s, and contemporary studies show that it is easy to predict the placement of hazardous waste facilities, the creation of food deserts, and the lack of natural space by looking at the concentration of minority and low-income areas across the country; and

WHEREAS, the afflicted communities, primarily those of racial minorities, lack local representation or national protection; and

WHEREAS, these communities are made victims of environmental racism’s various forms, including: greater probability of exposure to environmental hazards, uneven negative impacts from environmental procedures and policies, targeting and zoning of toxic facilities, segregation of minority workers in hazardous jobs, little access to or insufficient maintenance of natural spaces, and disproportionate access to environmental services; and

WHEREAS, Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, refers to the entire cosmos as God’s sacred creation and calls followers of Christ to care for creation and care for neighbors; and

WHEREAS, Jesus preached compassion to all people, and tasked us, his followers, with ministering to and caring for all persons in all communities (Acts 10:15); and

WHEREAS, General Assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) since the 1969 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Seattle, WA, have adopted resolutions and reports affirming the responsibility of the followers of Christ to pro-reconciliation/anti-racism; and

WHEREAS, General Assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) since the 1971 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in Louisville, KY have adopted resolutions and reports affirming the responsibility of the followers of Christ to care for God's creation7; and

WHEREAS, in the Spring of 2012, a number of ministry leaders8, along with our church-wide pro-reconciliation/anti-racism initiative, agreed that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) should focus collaborative efforts around four major areas including care for creation; and

WHEREAS, environmental racism brings together matters that concern the people of God: the stewardship of God's earthly creation, the dignity of the human person, God's preferential option for the poor, the affirmation of community and the desire for the common good, and fairness and equitable treatment for all children of God;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 18-22, 2015, invites and encourages all Disciples' congregations, organizations, ministries and institutions to address environmental racism in their communities through research and education,9 thoughtful engagement and prayerful action; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada are encouraged to support national, state or provincial legislation which prevents the further marginalization of people from their community; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that congregations, ministries, organizations and institutions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will diligently strive to faithfully care for all of God's creation and work for justice for all of God's people.

Green Chalice, A Partnership Ministry of Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky and Disciples Home Missions

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism Team

Supported by:
Disciples Justice Action Network

7 http://bit.ly/1IStR5n
8 Justice Table Participants: Mark Anderson, Ken Brooker Langston, Julia Brown Karimu, Jinsuk Chun, Ron Degges, Patricia Donahoo, Timothy James, April Johnson, Huberto Pimentel, Sharon Watkins, And Robert Welsh.
9 To research the location of dirty energy and waste facilities in your area, visit the Energy Justice Network at http://www.energyjustice.net/map. To connect with your state affiliate, visit the Interfaith Power and Light at http://www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/about/state. Learn more about environmental justice from National Resources Defense Council at http://on.nrdc.org/1yC6LNh
Additional Information

Environmental racism has been the subject of a growing number of academic studies. In one such study, commissioned by the United Church of Christ in 2007, it is reported that racial disparities in the distribution of hazardous wastes are greater now than ever before. The study’s analysis of census data from the year 2000 revealed that most people who live within three kilometers of one of our nation’s 413 commercial hazardous waste facilities are identified as racial and ethnic minorities. While studies such as these report that three out of five African Americans and Hispanics and approximately 50 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders and Native Americans live in communities containing at least one uncontrolled toxic waste site, the adverse effects of environmental racism are not limited to the placement of these facilities. This affliction is felt in the dearth of affordable grocery stores with healthy foods and fresh produce. It is felt by children who grow up without access to parks and natural spaces, vital for physical, public, emotional and spiritual health.

While this is a cause for the concern and action of all compassionate citizens, it is a particularly powerful issue for those of the Christian faith. Since the work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1960's, the Christian Church has dedicated itself to addressing racism wherever it exists in our society and our institutions. This is in keeping with our faithful mission, as Jesus taught in the Parable of the Good Samaritan and elsewhere, to care for all our neighbors, regardless of race, income, or life circumstances. It is becoming clear that, in caring for our neighbor, we must repair creation on which we all depend for life.

Given the systemic reality of environmental racism in the United States, taking action to address it will have widespread effects. It will empower disadvantaged people to take back their communities. It will improve physical, emotional and spiritual health and the financial burdens that come with such hardships. It will help keep families in their homes and neighborhoods. Congregations across the United States and Canada can take action by:

- researching the pervasiveness of environmental racism in their area;
- joining creation, racial and economic justice movements;
- funding and supporting creation, racial and economic justice work in organizations and academic institutions;
- lobbying state/provincial and federal elected officials for stronger enforcement of environmental standards and petitioning for new

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11 Checker, Melissa. "Race-ing the Environment." 
V O L E Z ! ¡ E L É V A T E !  손 아 오 르 라

legislation designed to address the affliction of affected communities;
and
• supporting and voting for candidates sensitive to and supportive of
creation, racial, and economic justice.

United Church of Christ: http://bit.ly/1CUwSel
Other resources include:
Energy Justice Network: http://www.ejnet.org/egj
Environmental Justice and Environmental Racism: An Annotated Bibliography
http://bit.ly/1PYnAai

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT GA-1520. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
GA-1521

(Sense-of-the-Assembly)
SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION FROM THE GENERAL BOARD ON GUN VIOLENCE

Two resolutions were submitted on the topic of gun violence. According to 2.5.3 of the Special Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly (rev. 2011) which state: “The General Board shall submit a substitute Sense-of-the-Assembly Resolution to replace multiple resolutions on the same subject;” a substitute resolution is being brought to the plenary in place of the two submitted resolutions.

Should the General Assembly vote to not adopt the substitute resolution, the original resolutions will be brought to the Assembly in the order they were received in accordance with 7.5.4 of the Special Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly which states: “If a substitute business item is replacing multiple business items on the same subject and fails, the originals come before the General Assembly in the order in which they were received by the Office of the General Minister and President.”

WHEREAS the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada seeks to follow Jesus’ way of peace making and has committed to become a Pro-Reconciling/ Anti-Racist Church; and

WHEREAS scripture tells us God is our refuge and strength (Psalm 46:1), Jesus commands us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matthew 5:44), and the Church is called to be one body, making no distinction (Galatians 3:28); and

WHEREAS the United States is suffering from an epidemic of gun violence, with nearly 100,000 people shot and 32,000 dying each year, including more than 17,500 children and teens shot and 2,500 dying; and

WHEREAS a litany of tragedy reverberates in our hearts – the names of schools and communities where gun violence has taken innocent lives in numbers hard to comprehend – Columbine, Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook, Aurora, Tucson, while shootings in lesser numbers barely make the headlines in our violence-numbed culture; and

WHEREAS there is a clear, racialized difference in the ways white Americans and Americans of color have been granted the right to bear arms, and communities of color are much more likely to become victims of gun violence, too often at the hands of law enforcement, in communities large and small, urban and rural; and

WHEREAS there has been a significant increase in gun violence related deaths of law enforcement officers; and

WHEREAS current cultural divides – between geographic regions, across political affiliations, and between racial groups – help perpetuate cultural perceptions of distrust and insecurity, in which a need for physical protection is assumed and guns are promoted as a source of security; and

WHEREAS
WHEREAS we recognize that a culture of violence, individual exceptionalism and easy access to guns elevate the threat and reality of homicide and suicide, affecting men, women, youth, children and families; and

WHEREAS we understand that the right to own a gun includes social responsibility and is subject to reasonable constraints; and

WHEREAS the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has not explicitly addressed gun violence in a General Assembly within the past 25 years, during which the cultural views on gun control and ownership have grown increasingly polarized:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, OH, July 18-22, 2015, urge the many expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to prayerfully examine our collective and individual relationships to a pervasive culture of gun violence, and commit to reconciling the cultural divides that perpetuate it through mutual respect and forgiveness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this General Assembly calls on Disciples to model and teach grace-filled, love-based action and non-violent conflict resolution to each other and to our communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this General Assembly calls on Disciples to collaborate and engage with individuals and groups, including law enforcement, working to reduce gun violence in the United States and Canada; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this General Assembly calls on Disciples to promote emergency response plans in the event of an active shooter in our communities, and to assist in response to mass shootings cooperating with local emergency management agencies; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that congregations within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), along with the other expressions of the church, be encouraged to promote dialogue, cooperation, advocacy, and action that moves toward a reduction of gun violence and promotes anti-racist, pro-reconciling education in our communities and nations, and to consider making clear their commitment by openly declaring their properties gun-free zones where state and local laws do not already do so.

General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT GA-1521. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
i Brady Campaign, http://bit.ly/1IF2rQq
ii The history of gun control of guns has historically had a racial component. This includes pre Constitutional, pre Civil War, and Jim Crow era laws; actions by unregulated militia in Reconstruction South who, under a number of names, put a priority on seizing guns held by recently free slaves; and a more recent history of open carry demonstrations employed by both Black Panther Party and TEA Party activists to demonstrate their objection to government intrusion into private lives with racially different responses by legislatures, judges, and law enforcement. See Winkler, Adam, Gun Fight: The Battle over the Right to Bear Arms in America. iii Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence, with data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, http://1.usa.gov/1Dan1Dz
iv http://wapo.st/1DABXMO
v http://nbcnews.to/1CGSuJx
vi Open carry and concealed carry laws are often introduced, supported, and celebrated by politicians and advocates based on a presumption that guns are important and appropriate as protection against undefined dangers. See for example (http://bit.ly/1PBSc1c and http://bit.ly/1FBI0a).
WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada seeks to follow Jesus’ way of peace making while surrounded with violence in our homes, in our schools and churches, and in our towns and cities, making no place safe; and

WHEREAS, a litany of tragedy reverberates in our hearts – the names of schools and communities where gun violence has taken innocent lives in numbers hard to comprehend – Columbine, Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook, Aurora, Tucson, and in less-publicized individual acts of violence; and

WHEREAS, intimidation, distrust and fear across our great diversity (especially between racial and ethnic groups, and those with differing sexual orientations and gender identities) promote guns as an ultimate source of security, while scripture tells us God is our refuge and strength (Psalm 46:1), Jesus commands us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matthew 5:44), and the Church is called to be one body, making no distinction (Galatians 3:28); and

WHEREAS, we recognize that a culture of violence, individual exceptionalism and easy access to guns elevate the threat and reality of homicide and suicide, affecting men, women, youth, and families as a health issue; and

WHEREAS, we understand that the right to own a gun includes social responsibility and is subject to reasonable constraints; and

WHEREAS, Disciples of Christ have not explicitly addressed gun violence in a General Assembly within the past 25 years, while the National Council of Churches, the United Church of Christ, and other communions have called for action to end gun violence;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, OH, July 18-22, 2015, urge the many expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to prayerfully examine our collective and individual relationships to a pervasive culture of gun violence, and commit to reconciling the cultural divides that perpetuate it through mutual respect and forgiveness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this General Assembly calls on Disciples to model and teach grace-filled, love-based action and non-violent conflict resolution to each other and to our communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this General Assembly calls on Disciples to collaborate selectively with individuals and groups working to reduce gun violence in America; and
FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that this General Assembly calls on Disciples to promote emergency response plans in the event of an active shooter on our properties, and to assist in response to mass shootings cooperating with local emergency management agencies.

Christian Church in Pennsylvania

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly does NOT ADOPT. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
WHEREAS, the United States is suffering from an epidemic of gun violence, with nearly 100,000 people shot and 32,000 dying each year, including more than 17,500 children and teens shot and 2,500 dying; and

WHEREAS, among developed countries the US ranks second behind Estonia in per capita homicides; Finland, ranked third, has a rate less than half of that in the US; and the overall rate in other developed countries is less than a quarter of that in the US; and

WHEREAS, a litany of tragedy reverberates in our hearts – the names of schools and communities where gun violence has taken innocent lives in numbers hard to comprehend – Columbine, Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook, Aurora, Tucson – while shootings in lesser numbers barely make the headlines in our violence-numbed culture; and

WHEREAS, there is a clear, racialized difference in the ways white Americans and Americans of color have been granted the right to bear arms, and communities of color are much more likely to become victims of gun violence, often at the hands of law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, current cultural divides – between geographic regions, across political affiliations, and between racial groups – help perpetuate cultural perceptions of distrust and insecurity, in which a need for physical protection is assumed and guns are promoted as a source of security; and

WHEREAS, scripture tells us that God is our refuge and strength (Psalm 46:1); and

WHEREAS, Jesus commands us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matthew 5:44); and

WHEREAS, the Church is called to be one body, making no distinction of race, nationality, legal status, or gender (Galatians 3:28); and

WHEREAS, the National Council of Churches and other communions have called for action in ending gun violence; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has committed to become a pro-reconciling, anti-racist church;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, OH, July 18-22, 2015, urge the many manifestations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to prayerfully examine the
pervasiveness of gun violence within our communities; to commit to resisting the cultural perceptions of insecurity that intensify it and to reconciling the divides that perpetuate it; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that congregations within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and all other manifestations, be encouraged to promote dialogue, cooperation, and action that moves toward a reduction of gun violence in our communities and nation, and to consider making clear their commitment by openly declaring their properties gun-free zones, especially where state and local laws do not already do so.

Disciples Peace Fellowship

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)

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iii The history of gun control of guns has historically had a racial component. This includes pre-Constitutional, pre-Civil War, and Jim Crow era laws; actions by unregulated militia in Reconstruction South who, under a number of names, put a priority on seizing guns held by recently free slaves; and a more recent history of open carry demonstrations employed by both Black Panther Party and TEA Party activists to demonstrate their objection to government intrusion into private lives with racially different responses by legislatures, judges, and law enforcement. See Winkler, Adam, Gun Fight: The Battle over the Right to Bear Arms in America.


v Open carry and concealed carry laws are often introduced, supported, and celebrated by politicians and advocates based on a presumption that guns are important and appropriate as protection against undefined dangers. See for example (www.harryreid.com/ee/index.php/sportsmen/rights and www.sfgate.com/news/article/Guns-will-be-allowed-in-national-parks-3259298.php).

WHEREAS, St. Paul assures us “For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us” (Eph. 2:14). Since Jesus Christ broke down the walls of hostility that divide God’s people, as Disciples of Christ desiring Christian unity as our Polar Star, we too are called to seek reconciliation and peace, not only here in North America but in the Korean Peninsula; and

WHEREAS, Koreans attained freedom from Japanese occupation on August 15, 1945, upon Japan’s defeat in World War II, and the Korean peninsula was subsequently divided into North and South at the 38th parallel by U.S. and Soviet troops as a military expediency, which did not lead to a unified peninsula but a war in June 1950; and the Korean War, which claimed 4 million lives and divided 10 million families, ended on July 27, 1953, with the signing of an Armistice Agreement and creation of a demilitarized zone between North and South Korea, and yet after sixty years a formal Peace Treaty has never been reached, leaving the peninsula and its people divided by fear and hostility, and subject to recurring incidents of violence; and

WHEREAS, communities and families separated by the Korean War and subsequent division between the North and South desire reunion and reconciliation before generations pass without ever seeing or knowing the fate of loved ones; and separated families have rarely been able to communicate or visit across the border, but rather have been kept distant, disconnected, and often are used as leverage in political negotiations; and

WHEREAS, 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of Korea’s liberation from Japanese occupation (1910-1945), yet the Korean people are still not free from the occupation of extensive militarization and from Cold War international politics that have been often viewed as antagonistic and intensified in recent years as North Korea has conducted nuclear weapons tests and South Korea has been the apex of a U.S. policy to “pivot” or reposition arms and forces into the Pacific; and

WHEREAS, for more than 60 years the U.S. has led sustained economic sanctions on North Korea, continues to wield wartime operational control of South Korea’s military, and has considered deploying the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) anti-ballistic missile system in the country to intercept missiles from North Korea, China and
Russia, further threatening the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) maintains a close partnership with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK), which is lived out through the shared ministry and fellowship of numerous Disciples members and congregations, as well as through the programmatic work of the Council on Christian Unity, the North American Pacific/Asian Disciples (NAPAD), and the Common Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ; and which together with the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK), the Korean Christian Federation of North Korea (KCF), and the World Council of Churches 10th Assembly meeting in 2013 in Busan, Korea, have called on the international community to advance a new era of commitment to work for peace and reunification in the Korean peninsula;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Columbus, OH, July 18-22, 2015, faithfully joins our ecumenical partners, especially the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea and the National Council of Churches in Korea, (1) in affirming the “Statement on Peace and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula” that was adopted by the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches; (2) in supporting the communique that was issued by the WCC International Consultation on Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula at the Ecumenical Institute in 2014; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly, recognizing that 2015 is the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Korea from occupation at the end of Second World War, even as the Korean peninsula remains occupied by militarization and nuclear weapons, calls upon the General Minister and President and other leaders of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada to challenge the U.S. and Canadian governments and international community (1) to commence a new process of peace-building across the Korean peninsula that includes a commitment by all parties to replace the Armistice Agreement of 1953 with a permanent Peace Treaty, finally bringing an end to the state of war, and (2) to express their commitment to end provocative military exercises on the peninsula, to reduce military expenditures, and to eliminate nuclear weapons on the peninsula, establishing a model for peace and demilitarization in North East Asia; and

1 Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, the commander of United States Forces Korea (USFK) confirmed the fact that there was consideration to deploy the THAAD system by US military authorities. For further information, cf. a CBS News article on June 3, 2014 at http://www.cbsnews.com/news/u-s-proposes-advanced-missile-defense-system-in-south-korea; National Council of Churches in Korea issued its public statement to object any attempt to deploy the THAAD in South Korea on September 4th, 2014. (http://www.kncc.or.kr/)


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls upon our church to dedicate itself to accompany our Korean partners, the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) and the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK) in South Korea, and the Korean Christian Federation of North Korea (KCF), in their efforts to seek the reconciliation and restoration of families and communities long divided by conflict and hostility, so that social, spiritual and psychological healing can occur between the people of Korea; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada continue to support ecumenical engagements toward peace and reconciliation of the Korean Peninsula. These actions include promoting the campaign to finally replace the Armistice Agreement of 1953 with a Peace Treaty, joining with Christians around the globe in recognizing and providing worship resources through Global Ministries for the Sunday before August 15, Korean Independence Day, as the “Sunday of Prayer for the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula,” and actively raising these initiatives at the National Council of Churches and Canadian Council of Churches for immediate action and engagement.

Council on Christian Unity
North American Pacific/Asian Disciples

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT GA-1522. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
WHEREAS, Scripture affirms that all people are created in the image of God and share with all others in the worth that comes from being unique individuals (Genesis 1:26-7); and

WHEREAS, Scripture affirms that as Christians we are many members, but are one body in Christ each with different gifts, called by Jesus to love neighbors as ourselves and called to the ministry of reconciliation and wholeness within the world and within the church (2 Corinthians 5:18); and

WHEREAS, Scripture affirms that as Christians we are called to be compassionate, rejoice in hope, care for the needs of others, weep with those who weep… (Romans 12:9-15); and

WHEREAS, according to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), 20% of adults experience a mental illness in a given year and 20% of teenagers experience a severe mental illness in the United States,1 and, according to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, 20% of adults experience a mental illness and 10-20% of teenagers experience a mental illness in Canada; and

WHEREAS, according to the Canadian Mental Health Association, suicide accounts for 24% of all deaths among 15-24 year olds and is one of the leading causes of death in both men and women from adolescence to middle age in Canada, and, according to National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI), mood disorders are the third most common cause of hospitalization for adults ages 18 to 44, suicide is the tenth leading cause of death and the second leading cause of death for ages 15 to 24 years in the United States; and

WHEREAS, loved ones and caregivers of people who have a mental illness are also affected and need support; and

WHEREAS, recovery is not a cure; but “a deeply personal, unique process…, a way of living a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life even with limitations caused by the illness and involves the development of new meaning and purpose in one’s life as one grows beyond the catastrophic effects of mental illness”; and

1 http://1.usa.gov/1b4VkCw
2 http://strategy.mentalhealthcommission.ca/the-facts/
3 http://bit.ly/1GUf3Cz
4 http://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers
5 http://www.mhrecovery.com/definition.htm
WHEREAS, according to NAMI, recovery is not only possible but probably for people\(^6\) because, with a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments and support, 70-90% of people with a serious mental illness have significant reduction of symptoms and improved quality of life\(^7\); and

WHEREAS, people who have a mental illness often do not seek help because they fear the associated stigma,\(^8\) do not know how to access services and/or can’t afford services (especially therapy); and

WHEREAS, a recent study from Baylor University, concluded, “clergy, not mental health professionals, are the most common source of help sought in times of psychological distress”\(^9\);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 18-22, 2015, calls upon all expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada to strive to become a people of welcome and support to all God’s children despite their mental health status; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that church leaders become more knowledgeable so they can fight stigma, be supportive of recovery, and provide information about mental health, recovery and available resources for treatment; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 18-22, 2015, calls upon the Disciples Home Missions to encourage and help enable the education of church leaders (lay and clergy) by putting on its website and in print information to enable regions and congregational leaders to fight stigma, be supportive of recovery, educate church members about mental health, and provide information on available resources in order that people affected by a mental illness, their loved ones, and caregivers will experience welcome, support and recovery.

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona

The General Board recommends the General Assembly ADOPTS GA-1523. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)

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\(^6\) http://bit.ly/1HANTQc
\(^7\) http://bit.ly/1aDP4kM
\(^8\) http://bit.ly/1EagufN
\(^9\) http://bit.ly/1PYs0xQ
GA-1524

(Sense-of-the-Assembly)
CALL FOR A CHURCH-WIDE TASK FORCE ON THE
SENSE-OF-THE-ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION PROCESS

WHEREAS, being and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ includes prayerful consideration and faithful action regarding contemporary issues in the light of Scripture, faith, reason, and experience; and

WHEREAS, moral, ethical or religious matters confronting the church, our two nations, and/or the world are important in the life of the church, requiring spiritual discernment and informed engagement; and

WHEREAS, the current Sense of the Assembly Resolution process provides few, if any, resources to congregations and pastors and few opportunities for meaningful dialogue by the majority of those who attend General Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, the exact status and purpose of Sense of the Assembly resolutions are often misunderstood by the media and by our own members to be official doctrine, stances or statements; and

WHEREAS, this misunderstanding can cause unnecessary confusion and dissension among and within our congregations; and

WHEREAS, our church, as it endeavors to be a movement for wholeness in a broken and fragmented world, has an opportunity to model alternative ways of talking about important issues with one another, ways that are inclusive, holistic and theologically grounded; and

WHEREAS congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada and a Task Force of the denomination’s Administrative Committee have faithfully worked over the past biennium on an alternative approach to how the church might engage in moral, ethical or religious matters confronting the church, our two nations, and/or the world; and

WHEREAS, our ecumenical partners, in addition to a number of our denominational ministries, have expressed concern about the ways in which some of the changes under consideration by this Task Force might negatively impact our ecumenical work, including but not limited to our partnership with the United Church of Christ through our combined Global Ministries; and

WHEREAS, Business Resolution 9522 ("Our Common Social Witness"), adopted by the 1995 General Assembly meeting in Pittsburgh, PA (see attached), affirms social witness as an expression of "the whole church," and locates "the important functions of advocacy, information, and action in matters of peace and justice" in the Office of the General Minister and President, Disciples Home Missions, and the Division of Overseas Ministries;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada meeting in Columbus, OH, on July 18 - 22, 2015, reaffirms Business Resolution GA 9522 and its authorization of the use of pastoral judgement by the Division of Overseas Ministries, Disciples Home Missions, and the Office of the General Minister and President in representing the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada in matters of justice and witness; and

FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED that this same General Assembly calls for the Office of General Minister and President, Disciples Home Missions, Division of Overseas Ministries, to convene a balanced broad-based and inclusive task force that shall include representatives of, but not limited to, these three ministries, the Council on Christian Unity, the General Board, historic justice and peace advocacy groups in the church, the three racial / ethnic ministries, and diverse congregations throughout our two nations for the purpose of bringing to the 2017 General Assembly, meeting in Indianapolis, IN, a jointly sponsored process for discussion of and education about important religious, ethical and social issues.

First Christian Church, Edmond, Oklahoma
Supported by:
Disciples Justice Action Network

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT GA-1524. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
No. 9522

(Operational Business Item)

SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION
OUR COMMON SOCIAL WITNESS

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, our Christian living is both personal and social, calling for discipline in our private lives and in our life together; and

WHEREAS, the church has the responsibility to carry on the tradition of the Biblical prophets who denounced sin whether in the religious community or in public life, who called out for justice, and who promised hope on the other side of judgment; and

WHEREAS, we as members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are called upon to speak clearly about God's justice and to live into God's promised hope, and to do this in all of our manifestations: congregational, regional, and general; and

WHEREAS, we have historically understood that the Office of General Minister and President, the Division of Homeland Ministries, and the Division of Overseas Ministries have been the primary voices of the social conscience of the general manifestation of the church regarding advocacy for the oppressed, working for peace and justice at home and around the world, and effectively providing avenues for the witness of the whole church;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), meeting in Pittsburgh October 2024, 1995, reaffirms the crucial importance of our Christian social witness, and that in concert with the whole church there be lodged in the Office of General Minister and President, the Division of Homeland Ministries, and the Division of Overseas Ministries the important functions of advocacy, information and action in matters of peace and justice, so that prophetic voices of the church might continue to find expression;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of General Minister and President, the Division of Homeland Ministries, and the Division of Overseas Ministries be requested to:

1. Identify staff persons and resources to fulfill this role,

2. Encourage and resource congregations, regions and other general units and institutions of the
church to bear prophetic witness,

3. And share in social witness with ecumenical and interfaith partners and people of common concern.
(Item for Reflection and Research)
A CALL TO END SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

Proposal for Reflection and Research:

That the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting July 18-22, 2015 in Columbus, Ohio, accept "A Call to End Solitary Confinement" as an item for Reflection and Research during the 2015-2017 biennium. This reflection and research process would be accountable by report to the Administrative Committee, the General Board, and the 2017 General Assembly.

This process would encourage the church to engage in reflection, prayer, education, and possible action around the practice of solitary confinement of incarcerated youth and adults. Disciples’ congregations and prison and jail ministries will serve as venues where discussion, discourse and discernment can occur as we examine and explore the issue of solitary confinement.

Such a process may include:

1) The development of a Study Document for use by the entire church to discern a response to solitary confinement of our sisters and brothers who are incarcerated; and
2) The exploration of possible actions by congregations and ministries to end prolonged solitary confinement in our criminal justice system.

Background:

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, on any given day, roughly 80,000 incarcerated adults and youth are held in solitary confinement in the United States. However, this figure likely fails to capture the breadth of the use of prolonged solitary confinement in U.S. prisons and jails, and does not include those held in solitary confinement in immigrant detention. Given the lack of data made publicly available by state Departments of Correction and the Federal Bureau of Prisons about the use of prolonged isolation, including the total numbers of those held in Administrative Segregation and protective custody, the numbers are likely much higher. For instance, in California, the American Friends Service Committee found in 2008, on any given day, there were more than 14,600 people in solitary confinement units when totals included women and men held in Administrative Segregation and protective custody. In addition, whole institutions are locked down for months at a time, in which inmates are confined to their cells for 22 to 23 hours per day. Most recently, in North Carolina, at the Scotland Correctional Institution, nearly 800 men had been on indefinite lockdown for over eight months.

According to the British Columbia Civil Liberties Union, "Over the last five years, the number of federal prisoners in solitary confinement in Canada has increased by 6 percent." The Ombudsman for federal offenders in Canada says, “There were 8,221
federal inmates in segregation (solitary confinement) across Canada in 2012-2013. Many suffer mental health problems, and a third of them, according to the Ombudsman’s same statistics, are aboriginal. In addition, annual reports on conditions of confinement in Canada by the Office of the Correctional Investigator note growing issues with solitary confinement across the federal prison system.

While in isolation, individuals are locked in a cell for 22 to 24 hours a day with no meaningful human contact—an hour alone in a cage or dog run may be permitted. Prisoners face these conditions for months, years, even decades. Cells are small, often windowless and without access to natural light, typically between 48 and 80 square feet. Access to books, phone calls, visitation and programs are often severely limited. Food is pushed through a slot in the solid steel door.

Many studies have documented the detrimental psychological and physiological effects of long-term isolation. According to several state and national studies, at least half of all prison suicides occur in solitary confinement. Recognized expert Dr. Stuart Grassian documented that nearly a third of the prisoners he evaluated experienced perceptual distortions, in which objects appear to change size or form. This is particularly alarming since this symptom is more commonly associated with neurological illnesses, such as brain tumors, than with primary psychiatric illness.

People of color in the United States face incarceration at profoundly disproportionate rates. A recent report from The Sentencing Project states that “African-American males are six times more likely to be incarcerated than white males and Hispanic males are 2.5 times more likely.” According to a 2011 survey sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, “nationwide, the residential placement rate for black youth was more than 4.5 times the rate for white youth, and the rate for Hispanic youth was 1.8 times the rate for white youth.” Limited data reported on racial ethnic identity and solitary confinement suggests that solitary confinement disproportionately impacts people of color. Data from 2011 from New York suggests “non-white prisoners are substantially overrepresented in the highlighted facilities; statistical testing confirms that the difference is statistically significant.”

In Canada experts find the growing solitary confinement trend “especially worrisome because female, aboriginal and black inmates are disproportionately represented in segregation, according to the Office of the Correctional Investigator, an oversight body for the federal prison system. Many mentally ill prisoners also tend to end up in segregation cells rather than receiving treatment.”

In the United States, solitary confinement is used in public and privately contracted local, state, and federal facilities. Regardless of the facilities’ classification, the United States federal government is responsible for ensuring compliance with CAT (Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment) at all facilities in the territory. From 1996 to 2001, sociologists Daniel Mears and William Bales examined the length of time Florida prisoners spent in
their study found a notably higher rate for supermax placement of people of 
color. Data from the New York State Department of Corrections and Community 
Supervision about its use of solitary confinement reveals that African Americans are 
more likely to receive SHU (special housing unit) sentences, and to receive longer SHU 
sentences, as compared to individuals of other racial and ethnic groups. For example, in 
June 2011, African Americans accounted for approximately 62% of the prisoners held at 
Upstate and Southport correctional facilities, where inmates with the longest SHU 
sentences are generally incarcerated. In contrast, approximately 49% of the general 
prison population is African American.

State departments of correction utilize “Security Threat Group” and gang validation 
processes that drive dramatically disproportionate placement of prisoners of color into 
supermax units, calling into question the legitimacy of these policies. Inherent racial bias 
in security classification is a significant driver in the disproportionate placement of 
prisoners of color in solitary confinement. In 2012, the American Friends Service 
Committee found that two supermax facilities for men in Arizona, SMU I and Browning 
Unit, had a disproportionate prevalence of people of color in solitary confinement most 
pronounced for Latino and Native American prisoners. 51% of the supermax prisoners 
were Latino compared with 41% of the general prison population in Arizona.

In some supermax units these percentages were especially high. Excluding the death 
row population from the Browning Unit population (decided judicially and not by the 
discretion of the ADC), the Latino population jumped to over 59%. In stark contrast, 
the white male prisoner population in supermax facilities constituted only 25%, and in 
the general prison population, it was 39%.

Because youth are still developing mentally and physically, traumatic experiences like 
solitary confinement can exacerbate, or create for the first time, short and long-term 
mental health problems and severely heighten risk of suicide. Though several states 
have issued an outright ban on the punitive solitary confinement of youth, including 
Alaska, Connecticut, Maine, Oklahoma and West Virginia, the placement of youth in 
solitary confinement is not subject to a prohibition in most states and the federal system, 
and the practice persists widely. Federal and state legislation to address the practice 
has been introduced in recent years, indicating widespread national concern to see this 
practice brought to an end.

There are realistic and reasonable alternatives to prolonged solitary confinement. 
Shifting from a punitive approach to one that prioritizes restorative and rehabilitative 
ends is critical to ending the widespread use of solitary confinement in U.S. prisons, jails 
and detention centers. A matrix of punishment without access to meaningful social 
interaction, job training, and education must be replaced by opportunity for access to 
such necessary resources for human flourishing. Alternative strategies for staff training 
in violence reduction, pro-social behavior, and alternative responses rooted in de-
escalation techniques are being adopted by some departments of correction 
accompanied by reductions in isolation, use of force, and incidence of violence. Rather
than placement in solitary confinement, the creation of alternative treatments and community settings for incarcerated people with mental illness are also critical.\textsuperscript{24}

The demonstrated success of ending the use of prolonged solitary confinement is evident among several states that have proven there are safe, humane alternatives.\textsuperscript{25} Mississippi experienced a decline in violence within its prisons after it drastically reduced its use of solitary confinement by 85% in one supermax unit; Mississippi eventually closed the facility altogether.\textsuperscript{26} Maine and Colorado have made significant reductions in the use of solitary confinement without jeopardizing prison safety.\textsuperscript{27} Former Maine Department of Corrections Commissioner Joseph Ponte explained in a 2011 interview about Maine, “Over time, the more data we’re pulling is showing that what we’re doing now [through greatly reducing the use of solitary confinement] is safer than what we were doing before.”\textsuperscript{28}

In the United States, the continued widespread practice of holding prisoners, disproportionately people of color,\textsuperscript{29} in prolonged solitary confinement in U.S. prisons constitutes torture, in violation of CAT; article 1 prohibits policies and practices that “constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment.” Article 2 states that “no exceptional circumstances whatsoever” may be used to justify the use of torture. Article 4 requires that each State Party “ensure that all acts of torture are offenses under its criminal law” and be “punishable by appropriate penalties which take into account their grave nature,” yet the prevalent use of torture persists in United States prisons with impunity. In May 2006, the UN Committee Against Torture instructed the United States to “review the regimen imposed on detainees in super maximum prisons, in particular, the practice of prolonged isolation.”

In May 2013, a U.S. Government Accountability Office report, “Improvements Needed in Bureau of Prisons’ Monitoring and Evaluation of Impact of Segregated Housing,” found that the United States Federal Bureau of Prisons “has not assessed the impact of segregated housing on institutional safety or the impacts of long-term segregation on inmates,” despite a 17% increase in its use of solitary confinement between 2008 and 2013. The Federal Bureau of Prisons confines about 7% of its 217,000 inmates in segregated housing units for about 23 hours a day.\textsuperscript{30} According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, on any given day, roughly 80,000 incarcerated adults and youth are held in solitary confinement in the United States.\textsuperscript{31} This figure likely fails to capture the breadth of the use of prolonged solitary confinement in U.S. prisons and jails, and does not include those held in solitary confinement in immigrant detention. In Canada, it is reported that one out of every four prisoners in the federal prison system has spent some time in solitary confinement. At any given time, there are as many as 1800 people in solitary confinement in federal or provincial prisons.\textsuperscript{32}

For these reasons, we call the Administrative Committee to explore ways for the church to (1) engage in a study about the effects of prolonged solitary confinement upon individuals; (2) explore alternative restorative justice practices which seek rehabilitative outcomes instead of the widespread, punitive use of solitary confinement in U.S. and Canadian prisons, jails and detention centers; (3) educate the church on
ways to bring awareness of this human rights concern and avenues for relief in their communities, and (4) explore avenues whereby the Disciples of Christ join its sister faith-based partners in calling for an end to the widespread use of prolonged solitary confinement in the United States and Canada.

New Life in Christ Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Mission Behind Bars and Beyond  
Sugarbush Christian Church DOC, Guelph, Ontario, Canada  
National Benevolent Association

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ACCEPT GA-1525 as an Item for Reflection and Research for the 2015-2017 biennium.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

11. Id. at 338.
13. Id. at 1.
15. Schlanger 2013, supra note 1, at 241.
16. Schlanger 2013, supra note 1, at 245.
21. Id. at 15-16.
22. Id. at 15-16.
29. Schlanger 2013, supra note 1, at 241.
(Operational, Policy and Organizational)

RESOLUTION TO CELEBRATE AND REAFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TOWARDS THE VISION OF PLANTING 1,000 NEW CONGREGATIONS BY 2020

WHEREAS, God has called Disciples to start 1,000 Disciples congregations in 1,000 different ways by the year 2020; and

WHEREAS, since 2001, courageous Disciples leaders are answering this call by planting more than 850 new churches in North America, congregations that worship in 27 languages, bringing more than 60,000 new people to Christ; and

WHEREAS, Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation partners with Disciples Regions and Areas to recruit, equip and nurture new church leaders as they guide new congregations into God’s mission; and

WHEREAS, it is through this partnership and the mighty courage and commitment of new church planters and their families that the new church movement serves as a primary source of growth in the denomination and as a major contributor to the racial/ethnic diversity of our congregations; and

WHEREAS, to those who believe the new church movement is waning, Hope Partnership offers the following:

We Remember the Birth of the Church

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting July 18-22, 2015 in Columbus, Ohio, will encourage Disciples congregations, Regions, Areas and the wider Church to recommit to the critical mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to start new congregations through our financial support, church-initiated projects, the recruitment and training of gifted planters and with prayerful support for the courageous leaders who plant vital new faith communities.

Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation
Historical Rationale for New Church Resolutions in the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

- There is a recorded tradition of New Church Resolutions proposed and approved from at least as far back as 1978. (see attached copy of Resolution No. 69)
- Anecdotal evidence also indicates that New Church Resolutions may go back as far as 1968.
- Since 2001, New Church Ministry (now Hope Partnership) has submitted to every General Assembly a New Church Resolution that encourages the establishment of new churches, along with a list of new churches formed since the last General Assembly.
- Many Regional assemblies also approve a New Church Resolution celebrating new churches started since their last Regional assembly.
- All Regional Ministers approve the list of new churches that accompany the resolution put before the General Assembly.
- The New Church Resolution is in keeping with the 2020 vision.
- Our New Church Planters deserve this kind of recognition of their sacrifice and hard work.
- The developing of new congregations is an important expression of evangelism by the General Assembly, and that this resolution requires participants to recommit themselves to the task of starting churches.
Concerning the Establishment of New Congregations

Approved by the General Assembly

Background Information:

Biblically and theologically speaking the community of Christians called congregation or church is truest to its nature when it is interracial and intercultural. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is committed to encouraging the development of these kinds of congregations.

Reports from congregations indicate low growth in the integration of congregations. One very practical aspect in the current scene is that congregations tend to reflect the racial and cultural characteristics of the surrounding community. The life style developed by the congregation tends to appeal to certain individuals resident nearby as well as others within a reasonable commuting distance. It is equally beside the point to refuse to consider new congregational establishment in certain areas simply because the area residents are of one predominant race or culture. The unchurched in those areas need church relatedness just as badly as any other persons.

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)—like most mainline Protestant bodies—has yet to mount an effective evangelistic thrust toward the masses of Blacks in the urbanized areas. The main all-Black Protestant bodies have proven that the most effective evangelistic efforts among Black people have been through Black leadership. This is also true within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This usually means the development of a predominantly Black congregation. While the resolution is concerned with the overall need for establishment of new congregations, Hispanic, Anglo, as well as Black, this exhibit would point out, specifically the need for new congregations among, with and for Blacks.

WHEREAS, it is a matter of historic record that the establishment of new congregations is a primary cause of growth in the life of church; and
WHEREAS, over the past fifteen year the record of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada in the establishment of new congregations, especially in the establishment of Black or Hispanic congregations, has been inadequate; and
WHEREAS, even in those metropolitan areas where there is a high concentration of Blacks, there have been only eight Black congregations established since 1955; and
WHEREAS, even in those rural and less populated areas where many Blacks reside, there have been only six new Black congregations established since 1960; and
WHEREAS, over the last (1971-75) Quadrennium the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada has not activated a strategy for the establishment of new congregations with particular attention to Black or Hispanic congregations; and
WHEREAS, the present demographic studies indicate the need for the establishment of new Black, Hispanic and Anglo congregations, in such numbers as to require joint efforts of local, regional and the General Church in research, in site location, and in finance; and
WHEREAS, any joint effort will require financial support of the evangelistic concern reflected in the establishment of new congregations; and
WHEREAS, financial resources from each region are distributed in accordance with agreements reached in the negotiating conferences within each region; and
WHEREAS, regions, the Board of Church Extension, the Division of Homeland Ministries and local communities have responsibility for helping fund new congregations; and
WHEREAS, the establishment of new congregations is the work of the whole Church, regions without immediate opportunity to establish new congregations within their own region could by agreement, channel funds through general units for such a purpose;

Therefore be it resolved, that the General Assembly call upon the regions, the Board of Church Extension, and the Division of Homeland Ministries, to engage in a consultation concerning a strategy, including needed financial support, for establishing new congregations in the United States and Canada, especially among the Blacks and Hispanics; and that the General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be asked to convene the first meeting of the consultation letting units involved pay their own expenses to the consultation.

Be it further resolved, that a report of the actions and progress in the development and efforts at carrying out of the strategy shall be reported at the 1976 meeting of the General Board.

Be it further resolved, that in the negotiating conferences in the years 1977, 1979, 1981 that the establishment of new congregations shall have clear and definite consideration.
WHEREAS, First Christian Church, Meridian, Mississippi, is geographically closer to congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Alabama / Northwest Florida region; and

WHEREAS, The Design states:

22. Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) perform within their established boundaries the function of the church related to their two-fold purpose of mission and nurture:

27. Identifiable geographic, cultural, sociological, and political factors provide boundaries, which the church may use to establish its own regional structures
   (1) by which the church carries out regionally its ministry of mission and nurture;
   (2) in which congregations and ministers find their primary relationships of mutual support and encouragement;
   3) which provide opportunities for regional fellowship, worship, and assembly for the consideration of matters of mutual concern;
   (4) which help to relate the three expressions of the church – congregational, regional, and general – to one another in the functioning of the whole church; and

WHEREAS, the official board and congregation of First Christian voted to affiliate with the Alabama/Northwest Florida Region; and

WHEREAS, the regions of Great River and Alabama/Northwest Florida have voted in agreement with the congregation to release and accept the congregation; and

WHEREAS, The Design also states:

29. In the development of any new regional boundaries, existing regional organizations shall remain intact, subject to modification by mutual consent of the regions involved, in the light of the corporate judgment of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as expressed through the General Assembly. The process of reshaping regional boundaries (even if only one congregation is affected) includes the participation and approval of the parties involved, the Administrative Committee, the General Board, and the General Assembly; and
WHEREAS, this request was presented to and affirmed by the Governance Committee of the General Board at its meeting on April 12, 2015;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the regional boundaries of the Great River Region and the Alabama/Northwest Florida Region shift such that Meridian Mississippi, be included in the Alabama/Northwest Florida Region.

The Governance Committee of the General Board in consultation with First Christian Church, Meridian, Mississippi, the Great River Region and the Alabama/Northwest Florida Region

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPTS GA-1528. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
GA-1529

(Operational, Policy and Organizational)
CHANGE IN REGIONAL BOUNDARIES:
MID-AMERICA AND GREATER KANSAS CITY

WHEREAS, Cleveland, Missouri and Pleasant Hill, Missouri, relate to Kansas City, Missouri, in terms of culture, commerce, education and recreation; and

WHEREAS, The Design states:

22. Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) perform within their established boundaries the function of the church related to their two-fold purpose of mission and nurture:

27. Identifiable geographic, cultural, sociological, and political factors provide boundaries, which the church may use to establish its own regional structures
   (1) by which the church carries out regionally its ministry of mission and nurture;
   (2) in which congregations and ministers find their primary relationships of mutual support and encouragement;
   3) which provide opportunities for regional fellowship, worship, and assembly for the consideration of matters of mutual concern;
   (4) which help to relate the three expressions of the church – congregational, regional, and general – to one another in the functioning of the whole church; and

WHEREAS, the official boards and congregations of First Christian Church, Cleveland, Missouri and First Christian Church, Pleasant Hill, Missouri have voted to affiliate with the Greater Kansas City Region; and

WHEREAS, the regions of Mid-America and Greater Kansas City have voted in agreement with the congregations to release and accept the congregations; and

WHEREAS, The Design also states:

29. In the development of any new regional boundaries, existing regional organizations shall remain intact, subject to modification by mutual consent of the regions involved, in the light of the corporate judgment of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as expressed through the General Assembly. The process of reshaping regional boundaries (even if only one congregation is affected) includes the participation and approval of the parties involved, the Administrative Committee, the General Board, and the General Assembly; and
WHEREAS, this request was presented to and affirmed by the Governance Committee of the General Board at its meeting on April 12, 2015;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the regional boundaries of the Greater Kansas City Region and the Mid-America Region shift such that First Christian Church, Cleveland, Missouri and First Christian Church, Pleasant Hill, Missouri, as well as future new congregations in Cass County\(^1\), be included in the Greater Kansas City Region.

The Governance Committee of the General Board in consultation with First Christian Church, Cleveland, Missouri
First Christian Church, Pleasant Hill, Missouri
the Mid-America Region and the Greater Kansas City Region

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT GA-1529. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)

\(^1\) First Christian Church, Harrisonville, MO is also located in Cass County. At this time FCC remains with the Mid-America region.
WHEREAS, Second Christian Church, Atchison, Kansas relates to MOKAN Fellowship of African-American Churches, which is part of the Greater Kansas City Region; and

WHEREAS, the congregation found a greater connection to the region through the MOKAN Fellowship; and

WHEREAS, The Design states:

22. Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) perform within their established boundaries the function of the church related to their two-fold purpose of mission and nurture:

27. Identifiable geographic, cultural, sociological, and political factors provide boundaries, which the church may use to establish its own regional structures:
   (1) by which the church carries out regionally its ministry of mission and nurture;
   (2) in which congregations and ministers find their primary relationships of mutual support and encouragement;
   (3) which provide opportunities for regional fellowship, worship, and assembly for the consideration of matters of mutual concern;
   (4) which help to relate the three expressions of the church – congregational, regional, and general – to one another in the functioning of the whole church; and

WHEREAS, the official board and congregation of Second Christian Church voted to affiliate with the Greater Kansas City Region; and

WHEREAS, the regions of Kansas and Greater Kansas City have voted in agreement with the congregation to release and accept the congregation; and

WHEREAS, The Design also states:

29. In the development of any new regional boundaries, existing regional organizations shall remain intact, subject to modification by mutual consent of the regions involved, in the light of the corporate judgment of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as expressed through the General Assembly. The process of reshaping regional boundaries (even if only one congregation is affected) includes the participation and approval
of the parties involved, the Administrative Committee, the General Board, and the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, this request was presented to and affirmed by the Governance Committee of the General Board at its meeting on April 12, 2015;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the regional boundaries of the Christian Church in Kansas and the Greater Kansas City Region shift such that Second Christian Church, Atchison, Kansas be included in the Greater Kansas City Region.

The Governance Committee of the General Board in consultation with Second Christian Church, Atchison, Kansas Greater Kansas City Region and the Christian Church in Kansas

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT GA-1530. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)

1 First Christian Church, Atchison, KS remains part of the Christian Church in Kansas as would any new church starts in Atchison County.
REPORT FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE
OF THE GENERAL BOARD

The General Assembly Committee of the General Board has a two-fold responsibility. First – the General Assembly Committee replaced the former Time and Place Committee and thus will be bringing a separate business item to approve the location and date of the 2019 General Assembly. The second responsibility is to follow up on approved or referred resolutions which contained actionable items from the previous General Assembly and report back to the current General Assembly.

From the General Assembly which met in Orlando, Florida, July 13-17, 2013, the General Assembly Committee of the General Board has the following updates.

GA-1322 Hearing Accessibility for Participants
In response to this resolution calling on the General Assembly to make a commitment to equip our Assembly gatherings with hearing assistive technology, the plenary hall at the 2015 General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio will be equipped with both a looping system and a Communication Action Real-Time or CART system.

With the looping system, a wire “loop” connected to our sound system transmits the feed to a telecoil or T-coil receiver which is common in hearing aids and cochlear implants. This allows those with these devices to hear all aspects of our business sessions and worship. The CART system will live-caption everything that is being said in the plenary hall and broadcast it onto a designated screen for those who are deaf and hard of hearing.

In local congregations where looping systems have been installed, the overwhelming anecdotal response from those with hearing loss is that it has been the first time in years (if not their lives) that they have been able to be fully participatory in the worship experience.

GA-1323 Item for Reflection and Research: Incarceration Justice and Restoration in the United States
Since the acceptance of this item for reflection and research two years ago, the issue of mass incarceration in the United States has been a topic of study and advocacy across all three expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Just as one example, mass incarceration has been the focus of several Reconciliation Ministry programs, including their 2014 Reconcilication Offering campaign, “School Yards Not Prison Yards.”

Mass incarceration will also be the subject of a working section of the Justice Learning track at this General Assembly.
GA-1324 Reflection on Christian Theology, Polity, the Christian Doctrine of Discovery and the Indigenous Voice
Since the acceptance of this item for reflection and research two years ago, the interest in engaging in an understanding of what the Christian Doctrine of Discovery has meant over the years and in particularly in relation to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has increased. Because of that increased interest, the working group decided on a shorter identifying name, Landscape Mending.

Landscape Mending or LM has worked to develop a structure for itself which honors the indigenous voice and gives leadership that other expressions of the church can work with. They have developed a website Landscape Mending: Restoring Harmony, Terminating the Doctrine of Discovery which houses resources and study materials, both historical and current, for the study of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery. LM has reached into the seminaries establishing an annual Winter Talk at Philips Theological Seminary. LM has also offered worships at various regional gatherings across the country.

At the 2015 General Assembly, LM will present a Working Group as part of the Justice Learning Track, providing a brief history of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery, its impact on indigenous peoples, its influence on church structure, and its bearing on race relations.

GA-1328 Removal of Any Racist Language in Governing Documents
The Task Force which was created in response to this resolution has begun its work. They have been trained in how to recognize racist language in documents and have begun the review of documents from that perspective. This will be an ongoing process and the Task Force will make periodic reports to the General Board and General Assembly.

GA-1329 Supporting a Treaty for Prevention of Torture
Since the 2013 General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, General Minister and President, Sharon Watkins has joined with the National Religious Campaign Against Torture and other faith community leaders as signatories on letters sent to members of Congress and the White House which have called for the end of torture in military detention centers and in some cases the complete closure of said detention centers.

In addition, at the 2015 General Assembly, an Item for Reflection and Research will be presented to the Assembly for acceptance calling for the end of the torture of solitary confinement for prolonged periods of time being used by prison systems in both the United States and Canada.

GA-1331 Resolution Condemning Drone Warfare
On October 14, 2014, General Minister and President Sharon Watkins, sent a letter to the President of the United States, informing him of our action at the 2013 General Assembly regarding drone warfare. The letter included an explanation of our Sense-of-
the-Assembly resolution process and a copy of GA-1331 Resolution Condemning Drone Warfare.

The General Board has reviewed GA-1531, Report of the General Assembly Committee of the General Board. The report is submitted to the General Assembly for consideration and discussion. No action is required. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
GA-1532

GA-1532
(Operational, Policy and Organizational)

REPORT OF THE TIME AND PLACE COMMITTEE

The 2019 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will be held in Des Moines, Iowa, July 20-24, 2019.

General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in the United States and Canada

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT GA-1532. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
REPORT OF THE GENERAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE
For Officers of the General Assembly

For First Vice Moderator

Tom Perrin, PhD is Professor of Entomology at the University of California, Riverside (UCR), where he studies and teaches about insects in agriculture. In addition to research and teaching, he has held various leadership positions over his 31-year tenure at UCR. These include Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences, Associate Vice-Provost of Undergraduate Education, Director of University Honors, and Director of Off-Campus Academic Experiences (including Education Abroad and the Washington DC Internship program). He has worked closely with students in all of these positions in addition to serving as the undergraduate and graduate faculty advisor for the Entomology Department.

Tom is an active member in the Pacific Southwest Region (PSWR), coming to the region via a winding path of spiritual, educational, and musical growth. He was raised in the Catholic Church in Enid Oklahoma, where his love of singing became a driving force for learning to play the guitar. He worshipped at various churches during his undergraduate years at Oklahoma State University, and graduate school in Lubbock Texas. He headed to Lincoln, Nebraska for his Ph.D., and became a member of the Lincoln United Methodist Church where he was called into youth ministry, particularly song leadership. In 1983 he moved to California to take a faculty position at UCR. He joined the First Christian Church Orange (FCCO), where he met and married Cathy McDaneld, a life-long member. Tom and Cathy, who have been married for 28 years, are still active in the life of FCCO, serving over the years as Vice Moderators, Chairs of the Board of Elders, and as members of the Diaconate. Their children Kimberly and Mark, and their spouses live nearby in LA and Santa Ana and they maintain close ties to FCCO as well.

Since moving to California, Tom has participated in numerous youth and adult spiritual events. He has directed and counseled numerous summer camps for high school students, led music at youth, women’s and men’s weekend retreats, and coordinated and led music at regional assemblies. He has participated in the Chapman University Disciples on Campus retreats and been involved in the music program at the annual Founder's Day celebration. He loves playing and singing songs with important messages, but his real passion is to get others to sing along, since “there is nothing better than good harmony.” In addition, Tom has held several leadership positions in the PSWR, serving on the Camp and Conference Committee, and as the chair of the Outdoor Ministry Committee. Perhaps his most cherished position is being elected as an “Honorary Disciple Woman” by the women of the PSWR.
For Second Vice Moderator

Mary Lou Kegler resides in Kansas City Missouri, and is a member of Swope Parkway United Christian Church in Kansas City. She retired several years ago as a manager from the Department of Health and Human Services. Mary Lou has held several leadership positions in the church, Evangelism Committee, Elder Board, Disciples Women Chair, and sings in the choir.

A breast cancer over comer, she loves to speak publically about her “mountain top experience.” She insists -- “Having a very positive attitude saved me, my faith sustained me, and positive influences in my life keeps me.” Her passion is advocating for those that cannot advocate for themselves.

An ordained minister, she currently serves on the Ordination & Standing Committee of the Greater Kansas City Region. She also serves on the Black Disciples Endowment Fund, National Benevolent Association boards, and was recently asked to serve on the Disciples of Christ Historical Society board, as an Administrative Committee Representative. She has previously served on the board of the Disciples Home Missions. During her time on the Disciples Home Mission’s Board, she served as its chair. She received her training at Central Baptist School of Theology in Kansas City.

She is the proud mother of two adult children, three grandchildren and one grand dog. She loves to dance and enjoys discussing current events.

For Moderator-Elect

Susan Morris is a proud fourth generation member whose father was the Reverend Donald Hogan. Hogan served pastorates in Butler, Pennsylvania, Abingdon, Illinois and Kearney, Nebraska. Morris is active in a three expressions of the church.

Susan currently is a member of the Mission First taskforce and is a past Board member and Chairman of the Pension Fund, overseeing retirement and investment funds for clergy and lay personnel. Morris also served as a member of the Board of Trustees for Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Oklahoma, as well as a Board member for Church Extension, the planning and financial unit of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Locally, she is a past Moderator of the First Christian Church, Omaha, Nebraska congregation, where she has held numerous other leadership positions.
Susan, President of Heritage Services, has been involved with numerous capital campaigns, totaling over $550 million, including the $107 million capital campaign to build the Holland Performing Arts Center in Omaha, Nebraska. In addition, she led the campaign for the TD Ameritrade Stadium home of College World Series as well as funds to support Joslyn Art Museum and the Durham Museum.

Morris also implemented new educational programs, unique to the fund-raising community, providing training to over one hundred fund raising professionals, as well as assisting Boards of Directors to recognize and appreciate the challenges of not-for-profit leadership. She has consistently validated the need for cooperation among not-for-profits demonstrated by a work philosophy of counseling and guiding many diverse organizations, locally and nationally.

Prior to coming to Heritage Services, Morris was the Foundation Manager for Clarkson Foundation and Director of Development for Children’s Hospital Foundation and College of Saint Mary. She is a graduate of Wayne State College, with a degree in Music Education.
For membership on the General Board
July 2015 to July 2019
(Nominated from the General Nominating Committee)

Jackie Bunch (AA, L, F 60+) Ohio
Janetta Cottner (AA, C, F, 60+) Michigan
Alison Enari (API, C, F, 30-39) Indiana
Sarah Himaya (API, L, F, 18-22) Canada
Angela Kaufman (W, C, F 40-49) Southwest
Fernando Morales (H, C, M 50-59) Florida
Bernice Rivera-Martinez (H, L, F 50-59) Oregon
Lori Tapia (H, C, F 30-39) Arizona

Of the persons being nominated:
4 laywomen
3 are clergywomen
1 clergyman
7 are racial ethnic persons
(2 African American, 3 Hispanic, 2 Asians/Pacific Islander,)
1 is 22 or younger

The Continuing Class of 2017:
3 laywomen
1 layman
3 are clergywomen
2 clergyman
5 are racial ethnic persons
(2 African American, 1 Hispanic, 2 Asians,)
3 are 22 or younger

NEW MEMBERS FOR THE GENERAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE
Nominated from the Administrative Committee of the General Board

For election through the 2017 General Assembly
Kyung Min Daniel Lee (NCAL/N) A, C, M 50-59
Vera Burton (OH) B, L, F 60+
Cheryl Jackson (IL/WI) B, L, F 40-49
Danny Gulden (GA) W, C, M 40-49
Andrea Brownlee (UMW) W, C, F, 30-39

Of the five-person class of 2019:
2 laywomen
2 clergyman
1 clergywomen
3 are racial ethnic persons (2 African American, 1 Asian/Pacific Islander)
Continuing members of the General Nominating Committee through the 2015 General Assembly include:

Kelli Driscoll (OK) W, C, F, 30-39
Xose Escamilla (PSW) H, C, M 30-39
Sylvia Tiznado (AZ) H, C, F, 40-49
James Campbell (CAP) B, L, M 50-59
Nathan Higginbotham (CCSW) W, L, M 70-79

Of the five-person class of 2017:
2 laymen
1 clergyman
2 are clergywomen
3 are racial ethnic persons (1 African American, 2 Hispanics)

In keeping with The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the members of the Corporation of the Division of Disciples Home Missions and the Corporation of the Division of Overseas Ministries were elected by the General Board at its April 2015 meeting. They are reported here to comply with the Bylaws of the two divisions:

DISCIPLES HOME MISSIONS
The General Board elected the following persons

Katherine Raley
Central Rocky Mountain
Caucasian
2021

Charles “Chuck” Tooley
Caucasian
2021

Tom Cooley
Southwest Montana
Caucasian
2021

Sandy Messik
Northwest
Caucasian
2021

Juan Rodriguez
Florida
Hispanic
2021

Continuing Class
Rhonda Cole
South Carolina
African American
2019

Mayon Marcelino
Canada
Asian American
2019

Jeremy Skaggs
Oklahoma
Caucasian
2019

Xochitl Alvizo
Northeastern
Hispanic
2019

Candyce Black
South Carolina
African American
2019

Donna Davis
Great River
Caucasian
2017

Valerie Melvin
North Carolina
African American
2017

Dale Richmond
Kansas
Caucasian
2017

Derrick Perkins
Mid-America
African American
2017

Reuben Sancken
Indiana
Caucasian
2017
The General Board elected the following persons:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>State/Region</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phyllis Ann Hallman</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>John R. Kleinschmidt, III.</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zenobia Mayo</td>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn Whittaker</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana Brown</td>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Buckhannon</td>
<td>Illinois and Wisconsin</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ismael Sanchez</td>
<td>Northeastern</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Cullumber</td>
<td>Pacific Southwest</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy Lear</td>
<td>Kansas City, Greater</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
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<td>Esther Lee</td>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>Asian American</td>
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<td>Donald Sherman</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheryl Diane Smith</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dale Braxton Sr</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deborah Swift-DeWitt</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2015</td>
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<td>Rick Spleth</td>
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<td>2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The General Board recommends that the General Assembly adopt GA-1533. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
GA-1534

(Operational, Policy and Organizational)

AMENDMENT TO THE DESIGN
FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

WHEREAS, the Governance Committee of the General Board shall submit recommendations useful for the development of the life, mission, work and organization of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);¹ and

WHEREAS, the Governance Committee shall review The Design and other governance documents for suggested changes and modifications;² and

WHEREAS, the Governance Committee met during the 2015 General Board to fulfill these duties and responsibilities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada meeting in Columbus, OH, July 18-22, 2015, adopt the following amendment to The Design.³

AMENDMENT:

Paragraph 82: add Moderator-Elect to the list of Moderator, First-Vice Moderator and Second Vice-Moderator.

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT GA-1534. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)

¹ General Board Standing Rules 6.2
² General Board Standing Rules 6.2.5
³ Paragraph 48c shall be filled in accordance with paragraph 64 of The Design. A further explanation is available in the additional background section.
WHEREAS, the 2013 General Assembly in Orlando, Florida, approved an amendment to *The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*, creating the Moderator-Elect position when it adopted GA-1336, *Amendments to The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*; and

WHEREAS, paragraph 64 of *The Design* states “The Administrative Committee shall fill vacancies in offices elected by the General Assembly, subject to ratification by the General Assembly at its next regular meeting.”; and

WHEREAS, the General Nominating Committee forwarded the name of Paul Tche as Moderator-Elect for the 2013-2015 biennium to the Fall 2013 Administrative Committee meeting to fill the vacancy created by the General Assembly action in Orlando;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 18-22, 2015, ratify the decision of the fall 2013 Administrative Committee to name Paul Tche Moderator-Elect for the 2013-2015 biennium; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that this General Assembly affirm Paul Tche as Moderator of the General Assembly for the 2015-2017 biennium.

Administrative Committee

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly 
ADOPT GA-1535. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
For Moderator

Rev. Seung (Paul) Tche serves as the pastor at White Oak Pond Christian Church, Richmond, Kentucky, which is a historic congregation that was established in 1790 as a Baptist congregation and later joined other “Campbellites” of the frontier in the Campbell-Stone movement. In the summer of 2012, this seasoned congregation extended their radical call to Paul, a first generation immigrant and a native of South Korea. Before he became a solo pastor, Paul also served churches as a student associate minister for Korean-American congregations in California and as an associate minister for American congregations in Kentucky. The transition between two ethnically different bodies of the church was possible thanks to the Residency Program at Central Christian Church, Lexington, KY, which was a 2-year program designed to nurture pastoral leaders through intense engagement in a flourishing congregation and fully funded by the Lilly Foundation.

Ever since becoming a member of the Disciples of Christ, he has been actively involved in ministries of the general church. He has served on the board of the Council of Christian Unity (CCU), including chair of the Board. He has been a member of the North American Pacific Asian Disciples (NAPAD) and Week of Compassion Committee. He is part of the Korean Disciples Convocation. Paul grew up in the independent Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, witnessing struggles for unity among the Stone-Campbell movement churches in South Korea.

After his study of Catholic social philosophy at graduate school, Paul developed a strong desire to deepen the understanding of his own faith tradition. As he was seeking an opportunity for the theological education in the US, he was accepted to the “co-operating program” between Disciples Seminary Foundation, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Brite Divinity School, and the NAPAD, which was a Master of Divinity program designed to educate Korean-American ministers for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In 2006, he successfully finished the program and received his M. Div. degree from Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, TX. Before he came to the US, he earned a Master of Art degree in Philosophy from Sogang University, and a Bachelor of Art degree in French and Philosophy from Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, in Seoul, Korea. While he was at the college, he completed his mandatory military service and was discharged as a sergeant from the Republic of Korea Army. He has translated several books into Korean, and they were published in Korea or the US.

Paul is married to Yeon-Sun Lim, who is a Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy, and they have an infant son, Brandon, whom Paul hopes to take on hiking and camping trips when he is older.
RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A STUDY DOCUMENT ON UNDERSTANDING STEWARDSHIP AS A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE AND ITS PRACTICAL APPLICATION IN THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY

Preface: In a time when issues related to stewardship face the human family in ways ranging from the care of our planet in the face of the growing evidence of climate change to the economic impact of 50% of the global population now owning less than 1% of the earth’s resources, we believe a critical moment is before us. How will the church speak to stewardship and faithfulness in the 21st Century? The Special Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly provides for the creation of Study Documents (2.3.1) which serve as a means of analysis for subjects that involve ethical, moral or religious elements and on which it is deemed important that members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be more thoroughly informed as an aid to the formation of Christian opinions and judgments, or on which the judgment of individuals or groups is desired.

WHEREAS, the Biblical stories about creation speak to our unique existence, purpose, identity and relationship with God; and

WHEREAS, these stories infer a distinctive human role as caretakers of the created order and likewise reveal characteristics of the Divine that include generosity; and

WHEREAS, the biblical witness addresses the nature of possessions and money as possible barriers to faithfulness; and

WHEREAS, the faithful management (stewardship) of our resources (financial and otherwise), can lower anxiety, personal insecurity, and produce the capacity for greater generosity; and

WHEREAS, the financial resources necessary for the effective mission and witness of the Church in all of its expressions is dependent on the generosity of God’s people; and,

WHEREAS, the church understands and accepts both the obligation and necessity to teach the faith and encourage the marks of faithful discipleship, and in particular that of stewardship;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 18-22, 2015; calls upon the Center for Faith and Giving to create a study document for use across the life of the whole church that: 1) broadly defines a biblical, theological,
and holistic perspective for understanding stewardship as a spiritual discipline, and that;
2) provides for a means of engaging members of (and recognized organizations within)
the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in thoughtful discussion about, and the
practical application of, methods for living as a faithful steward in the early 21st century;
and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the document will be completed during the next
biennium and presented for report and consideration at the 2017 General Assembly.

General Board of the Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

1 Credit Suiess Report, October 14, 2014
2 (Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Genesis 2:4b-25)
3(Mark 10:17-27; Matthew 6:19-21)
4 (Matthew 6:24; 1 Timothy 6:10)
5 In one metastudy on Christian giving in North America, it was estimated that from
those Christians living in North America, who are defined as “committed” (by virtue of
attending worship services an average of more than twice per month) there exists the
capacity to generate over 133 billion additional dollars annually in charitable giving.
Image the impact this could have on the ministry and mission of the church if generosity
and stewardship were embraced within our own membership. See chapter one (pp
11-27) of Passing the Plate: Why American Christians Don’t Give Away More Money;
(Smith, Emerson and Snell; Oxford Press, New York; 2008) for more information. It
should be noted that figure (133 billion) this does not address the impact of legacy
giving or other types of religious philanthropy. The potential is staggering.

The General Board recommends the General Assembly
ADOPT GA-1536. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada has adopted the identity statement, “We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord’s table, as God has first welcomed us;” and

WHEREAS, the General Minister and President has stated, “As a Christian church, we are particularly sensitive to the values of the One we follow – one who sat at table with people from all walks of life, and loved them all”; and

WHEREAS, our church is diverse in point of view and we share a value for an open Lord’s Table; and

WHEREAS, our members and attendees are different in many ways including race, ethnicity, age, gender, and sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, we have in common a love for Jesus and seek to follow Him; and

WHEREAS, General Assembly of the Christian Church is a place where all members of the church are welcome and should experience a safe and hospitable environment; and

WHEREAS, the economic impact for a host city of the General Assembly gives the church a voice into the local community’s justice concerns; and

WHEREAS, the current site selection process is focused on host region, space, cost, environmental sustainability and availability; the church currently lacks guidelines for site selection based on welcome, hospitality and justice;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Columbus, OH July 18-22, 2015 calls for the Administrative Committee to appoint a task force of 4-7 people funded by the General Assembly budget to develop site selection guidelines that add to the current process a review of matters of faith to which the church has spoken or is currently speaking, such as mass incarceration, religious freedom, immigration, and the welcome of all at the table; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force will include representatives of historically underrepresented groups; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force will address the balance between local concerns and general church concerns; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these guidelines guide meetings of the General Church where twenty-five (25) or more members are anticipated, recommending the guidelines to each General and Racial / Ethnic ministry; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the Task Force will report to the Administrative Committee in the Spring of 2016 with the Administrative Committee acting on behalf of the General Assembly and as the board for the Office of the General Minister and President to finalize the criteria.

General Assembly Committee of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT GA-1537. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)
REPORT ON ACTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE, GENERAL BOARD
CONCERNING THE LOCATION OF 2017 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On March 26, 2015, Governor Mike Pence signed into law Indiana SEA101, known as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. SEA101 created an environment in which attendees of the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) could be denied services based on a business owner’s religious beliefs.

The Administrative Committee, acting as the board of the Office of General Minister and President (OGMP) met via conference call on March 29, 2015. The Committee recommended that in accordance with Paragraph 55 of *The Design*, the General Board authorize OGMP staff to cancel the contracts with the City of Indianapolis and associated hotels for the 2017 General Assembly and that the OGMP begin the search process for alternative host cities.

The General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) met via conference call on March 31, 2015 in accordance with Paragraph 58 of *The Design*. It voted unanimously to relocate the 2017 General Assembly then scheduled for Indianapolis and to select the new host city.

- On April 2, 2015, Governor Pence, in response to the groundswell of public opposition to the law, signed amendments to SEA 101, addressing the concerns raised by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and others.
  - The amendments add protections for all persons listed in the Indiana civil rights code and include, for the first time in Indiana state history, sexual orientation and gender identity. The amendment also reinstated recognition of local municipalities’ nondiscrimination laws, where the previous legislation had been read to override these laws.

- Since the amendment was signed, municipalities in Indiana are realizing the need to amend their local laws to include anti-discrimination legislation providing protection to persons based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- The next Indiana legislative session will include discussion of amendments to the Civil rights Code to include sexual orientation and gender identity along with other protected groups. This discussion was not imagined possible prior to the furor over SEA101.

The decision of the General Board to move the 2017 assembly made a difference. It was a powerful witness for wholeness to be celebrated.
At the scheduled Administrative Committee and General Board meetings which took place April 10-14, 2015, in Kansas City, MO, both bodies took the following actions in response to Governor Pence having signed the amendments to SEA101:

• The Administrative Committee, believing another powerful witness for wholeness can be made in the new selection of a city for 2017, recommended Indianapolis. With a newly invigorated statewide understanding of the need for laws and ordinances which protect all people from discrimination, and with the moral voice Disciples provided in the amending of SEA101, we can now be part of a movement for wholeness by locating our assembly there.

• Since the concerns raised by the General Board were addressed with the amendments to SEA101, the Board selected Indianapolis as the host city for 2017, saying the decision gives Disciples an opportunity to witness to wholeness and dignity for all in the city where many of our offices have been located for nearly 100 years.