WHEREAS, at the 2013 General Assembly in Orlando, Florida, GA-1328, called on the General Minister and President in consultation with the Minister of Reconciliation to form a task force charged with reviewing the governing documents of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada for instances of racist language; and

WHEREAS, said task force completed its work and reported its findings to the Administrative Committee (acting as the General Board) in April 2016¹; and

WHEREAS, the task force recommended changes to The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) which were submitted to the Governance Committee of the General Board; and

WHEREAS, the Governance Committee is charged with reviewing The Design and other governance documents for suggested changes and modifications;²

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2017 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting July 8-12, 2017, in Indianapolis, Indiana, approve the amendments to The Design as recommended by the Racist Language Audit Task Force and presented on the subsequent pages.

General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly APPROVE GA-1727. (Discussion time: 12 minutes)

¹ Recommendations of the Task Force on Eliminating Racist Language from Governing Documents
² General Board Standing Rules 6.2.5
12. Among the responsibilities by which congregations demonstrate their mutual concern for the mission and witness of the whole church are the responsibilities to proclaim the gospel and administer baptism and the Lord's Supper; to provide for the spiritual nurture of their members and families; to grow in understanding that the church is a universal fellowship, transcending all barriers within the human family, working for reconciliation across racial and ethnic lines; to engage in evangelism; to sustain their ministers in faithfulness and honor and, in matters pertaining to relationships with them, to seek counsel from the regional minister; to be faithful in Christian stewardship, striving to share proportionately in providing the resources for the total life, work, and witness of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); to choose voting representatives to the General and Regional Assemblies; to share with other ministries of the church in the establishment and nurture of new congregations; and to seek to realize the oneness of the church of Jesus Christ through cooperation with other congregations and with present and emerging ecumenical structures.

25. As an integral part of the whole church, regions witness to the unity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) by calling congregations to an awareness of their opportunities and responsibilities beyond local concerns. They also help to relate congregations to the total ministry of the whole church including working for reconciliation across racial and ethnic lines. By calling the general expression of the church to an awareness of the needs both of congregations and of regions, the regions help to relate the general expression to the life and work of congregations.

31. Regions call regional ministers as their spiritual and administrative leaders serving as the chief executive officers of the regions. Each region develops stated processes for nominating and electing its regional minister, including procedures for seeking counsel from the Office of the General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Regions are encouraged to use current Disciples search processes and safeguards, as established by the General Board, so that all qualified ministers might be considered. Regions employ other regional staff as required to meet their responsibilities in mission and nurture and so the whole church’s commitment to be a pro-reconciling/anti-racism body can be fully honored in each region.

38. All members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who register for the General Assembly shall have all privileges of the Assembly, except that voting privileges shall be limited to the following:

a. Voting representatives from congregations. Each congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall be entitled to have two voting representatives, plus one additional voting representative for each 100 participating members, or major fraction thereof, over the first 100. These voting representatives from congregations shall be in addition to persons holding standing in the Order of Ministry.

b. Voting representatives from regions. Each region shall be entitled to have a minimum of three voting representatives for the first 1,000 members, as stated in the most recent Yearbook. In addition, each region may have an additional representative for each 1,000 participating members, or major fraction thereof, within the region. These voting representatives from regions shall be in addition to persons holding standing in the Order of Ministry. The voting representatives from each region shall include women and
men, persons of varied racial or ethnic backgrounds, young adults ages 18 to 30, and youth under the age of 18.

c. Ministers. Persons holding standing in the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in accordance with the policies and criteria established by the General Assembly through its General Commission on Ministry.

d. Exceptions. Members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) not otherwise voting members, who are the chief administrative officers of institutions of higher education and general ministries that are recognized by the General Assembly; members of the General Board not otherwise voting members; and former Moderators and Vice Moderators not otherwise voting members.

41. The General Assembly shall: plan and conduct Assembly programs for worship, education of its members, and transaction of business; receive and act upon proposed policy and program, reports and resolutions, and other items of business duly referred to it as hereinafter provided; elect officers of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); elect the General Board members for which it is responsible; make provision and approve procedures for the financial support of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), including its regions, general ministries, and institutions of higher education; be a place of accountability for the church’s work toward racial justice and inclusion; determine the basis of cooperative relationships of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with other religious bodies, organizations, and agencies; be responsible for authorizing unity and union conversations, consultations, and negotiations with other Christian communions; and maintain appropriate national ecumenical relationships in both Canada and the United States. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada, which is related to the General Assembly both through congregations and through the All-Canada Committee, shall be responsible for matters pertaining to the ecumenical and Christian unity concerns of national bodies in Canada, and may take the initiative in relating itself to any and all Canadian and world ecumenical bodies.

48. Non-salaried officers of the General Assembly. The non-salaried officers of the General Assembly shall be a Moderator, a Moderator-Elect, a First Vice Moderator, a Second Vice Moderator, and such other officers as the General Assembly may from time to time determine. These officers shall be nominated by the General Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly for terms of two years, unless otherwise noted.

a. The Moderator shall preside at the sessions of the General Assembly, the General Board, and the Administrative Committee, and shall assume such other responsibilities as may be assigned by these bodies.

b. The Vice Moderators shall assist the Moderator in presiding at the sessions of the General Assembly, the General Board, and the Administrative Committee, and shall assume such other responsibilities as may be assigned by these bodies.

c. The Moderator-Elect shall serve for two years and then serve as Moderator for two years. The Moderator-Elect shall assume other responsibilities as may be assigned by the General Board or Administrative Committee.
d. The **Moderator and ViceModerator, Vice** Moderators and **Moderator-Elect** shall be active members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and shall include at least one woman, one man, one lay leader and one minister with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). **The moderators shall include persons from different racial or ethnic backgrounds.** These officers shall take office upon the adjournment of the regular meeting of the General Assembly in which they are elected, and shall hold office through the next regular meeting or until their successors have been elected and installed.

e. A Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Moderator with the approval of the Administrative Committee. The Parliamentarian shall serve during the business sessions of the General Assembly, the General Board, and the Administrative Committee, advising on parliamentary questions that may arise. Unless otherwise provided, all proceedings shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*.

51. As pastor to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the roles for the General Minister and President are to:

a. Provide spiritual leadership to the church in all of its **diverse expressions** manifestations and to all its racial and ethnic communities, and exercise pastoral authority over concerns of the church in times of crisis.

b. Embody the spirit of *The Design*.

c. Articulate and interpret *The Design*.

d. Serve as the primary ecumenical representative for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

e. Lead and give oversight to the continual discernment of God’s vision for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ),

f. Give oversight to mutual accountability among all expressions of the church.

g. Represent the whole church in collegial leadership in gatherings of regional, general, and congregational ministries.

h. Offer advice and counsel to commissions, committees, and task groups of General Board and regional bodies.

i. Convene various congregational, regional, educational, and general church executives and pastors for dialogue and reflection on the whole life of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

79. The General Board shall maintain procedures for continual renewal and structural reform under policies approved by the General Assembly, **taking into account implications for racial and ethnic congregations and clergy.** To further the process, existing general ministries may
be called upon to reassign staff, budget, and functions for this purpose. In any inter-unit adjustment, as well as in development of any new general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), existing organizations remain intact, subject to modification by mutual consent of the organizations involved in light of the corporate judgment of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as expressed through the General Assembly. Full protection shall be given to all legal and contractual relationships, including trust funds and pension funds.

80. There shall be a General Nominating Committee consisting of 10 members elected by the General Assembly. The General Nominating Committee shall be widely representative by gender, age, race and ethnicity, and not more than one member shall be from any one region except as may be necessary to ensure representation from National Convocation, National Hispanic and Bilingual Fellowship, North American Pacific-Asian Disciples and other such ministries that may be recommended by the General Board and recognized by the General Assembly. One-half of the members at the time of their election shall be from the membership of the General Board, and not more than one-half nor less than one-third shall be ministers. Each biennium the Administrative Committee shall nominate five persons for election by the General Assembly to a term of four years on the General Nominating Committee. A member of the General Nominating Committee may serve only one full term.