

No. 9523**(Operational Business Item)****New Congregation Establishment (NCE)**

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

The challenge and the call to respond faithfully to the Great Commission in Matthew 28, "Go and make disciples," remains central to the mission of the Church Advance Now (CAN) program in assisting regions, areas and local congregations to establish new communities of faith. As of June 1995, sixty congregations have been started. These new congregations include 24 Hispanic, 15 European American, two multi cultural, five African American and 14 American Asian.

As we look to the 21st century, CAN will give its attention to local congregations as a catalyst for starting new communities of faith. While this is not a new method, over the past 20 years the initiative for starting new congregations has been focused primarily on the regional and general units of the church. There are many vital growing congregations that could become initiators of new congregations. However, a new sense of mission is needed by our existing congregations to become involved in establishing new churches in their communities.

Since the 1993 General Assembly, the CAN staff has been intentional about working and meeting with regional staff, regional New Congregation Establishment (NCE) committees, regional and congregational leaders to introduce, share and explore new models and new alternative methods for funding new churches. The CAN program continues to sponsor training events, clinics for assessing pastors for new church pastoral leadership and seminars for organizing pastors. CAN also continues to provide program funding grants to assist new churches with program needs. A new strategic planning manual is being written to help congregations explore options for establishing new communities of faith.

However, the focus of the last biennium has been to encourage regional and area leadership to work in partnership with local congregations in initiating these new communities of faith. The 1994 biennial event in Denton, Texas for regional ministers, staff persons and New Congregation Establishment chairpersons was focused on looking with ecumenical input at new methods for New Congregation Establishment and new church funding. A conference has been held with selected pastors and lay leaders in established congregations to provide the CAN staff with counsel on how the mission of New Congregation Establishment might best be shared with congregations.

A concern of the CAN program continues to be the lack of adequate funding and regional initiative for beginning racial ethnic churches. Of the 43 new racial ethnic congregations started, only three have been initiated by regions/areas.

In October 1993, a group of African-American persons involved in New Congregation Establishment in the 1980's and 1990's were called together by CAN to address the issues surrounding the limited number of African-American new congregations started in the 1990's. This group of committed Christians continues to develop strategies to challenge the African-American Disciples community, as well as the whole Church to address this most critical concern.

Board of Church Extension (BCE) continues its historic commitment to establishing new congregations. As the general unit providing primary administrative oversight and programmatic leadership for the New Congregation Establishment priority, BCE has responded assertively to the challenge of addressing the funding crisis facing the CAN program. BCE's strategic planning process includes an emphasis on New Congregation Establishment. Division of Homeland Ministries staff also remains available to provide resource assistance to new congregations.

CAN remains committed to empowering the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) through regions, areas, constituency groups and congregations in reaching out to the vast mission fields in the communities of our denomination and to "Catch the Vision. . . Christ for the World."

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, we, the members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), reaffirm our call to be ambassadors of the gospel and recognize that establishing new congregations remains an important, vital and necessary form of responding to that call and New Congregation Establishment has been identified as one of the Mission Imperatives by the General Board; and

WHEREAS, approximately one third of the U.S. population still remains unchurched; and

WHEREAS, the need for starting racial ethnic new congregations remains great due to the growing and changing demographics of our continent; and

WHEREAS, the New Congregation Establishment program of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) did not receive the expected level of funding from the churchwide capital campaign, Embrace the Future; and

WHEREAS, Embrace the Future is producing desperately needed funds, the current program needs for New Congregation Establishment far exceed the resources available for regions, areas and CAN to assist in the establishment of new congregations; and

WHEREAS, New Congregation Establishment is a Mission Imperative of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and will experience a shortfall of at least \$100,000 annually through the year 2000; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), meeting in Pittsburgh, October 20-24, 1995, celebrates and recognizes the following

congregations which have been established and/or received since the 1993 St. Louis General Assembly:

CAN	Montreal, Quebec, CAN	La Iglesia Cristiana Discípulos de Cristo Latino
CRMR	Ft. Collins, CO	Heart of the Rockies Christian Church
GA	Atlanta, GA Lawrenceville, GA Marietta, GA	First Atlanta Chinese Christian Church New Covenant Christian Church Church of Love
GRKC	Lee's Summit, MO	New Vision Christian Church
IL/WIS	Normal, IL	New Covenant Community Church
IN	Indianapolis, IN	Bethel Christian Church
KY	Paintsville, KY	Paintsville Christian Church
MI	Flint, MI	New Testament Christian Church
MID-AM	Springfield, MO	Gateway Christian Church
NE	Omaha, NE Lincoln, NE	Indian Community Church Indian Community Church
NOEAST	Brooklyn, NY	United Christian Church of Brooklyn
PA	Cranberry Township, PA Philadelphia, PA	Brush Creek Christian Church New Jerusalem Korean Christian Church
PSW	Alhambra, CA Baldwin Park, CA Downey, CA Fullerton, CA Fullerton, CA Gardena, CA Lennox, CA Los Angeles, CA Los Angeles, CA Los Angeles, CA Los Angeles, CA Los Angeles, CA San Diego, CA South Gate, CA Sun Valley, CA	First Chinese Christian Church Baldwin Park Hispanic Church Early Christian Church Christian World Mission Faith Mission Christian Church Gardena Korean Christian Church Iglesia Nuevas de Gozo Hanin New Life Christian Church Hollywood Korean Christian Church Iglesia Cristiana de Wilshire Torrance Korean American Christian Church Wilshire Korean Christian Church Casa de Oración South Gate Hispanic Church Iglesia Cristiana de Sun Valley
SW	Harlingen, TX Houston, TX	Iglesia Dios es Amor Community of Faith Church

	Angel Fire, NM	United Church of Angel Fire
	Keller, TX	WestWind Church
	San Antonio, TX	Spanish Christian Church
TN	Milan, TN	Milan Christian Church

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT we accept anew at this General Assembly the challenge and motivation for creating new congregations as a direct response to our faith and obedience to Jesus Christ.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) calls upon congregations in partnership with regions, areas and general units to take initiative in establishing new congregations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) calls upon the whole Church to financially support New Congregation Establishment by underwriting the immediate financial shortfall in the general level program through the year 2000 by all means possible while continuing to explore additional funding alternatives for New Congregation Establishment.