

No. 8927

**RESOLUTION ON THE COCU CONSENSUS:  
IN QUEST OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST UNITING**

**ADOPTED by the General Assembly**

WHEREAS, the gospel of Jesus Christ unites Christ's followers in a single community of faith and claims us in making this given oneness more visible so "that the world may believe." (John 17:21; See Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Cor. 12:12-26); and

WHEREAS, the history and identity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) draws us into the search for greater faithfulness to the visible unity of the church; and

WHEREAS, visible unity will come to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) only as we open our life to the newness in all things that is the Holy Spirit's gift and promise; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has been an active member church of the Consultation on Church Union since 1963 and has contributed through its official representatives and the responses of its congregation toward the development of all of COCU's documents and proposals, and has repeatedly, through General Assembly resolutions, affirmed its commitment to COCU as an instrument of the visible unity of Christ's church; and

WHEREAS, the nine COCU churches have developed over the past 27 years, an emerging theological consensus, known as *The COCU Consensus*, which seeks to articulate agreement among the churches upon the essential elements of the faith, and to contribute to the healing of the divisions of humankind; and

WHEREAS, *The COCU Consensus*, approved by the 16th Plenary of COCU at Baltimore, in 1984, was sent in 1986 by the Council on Christian Unity to all congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with the request that they study it carefully; and

WHEREAS, the responses to *The COCU Consensus* from Disciples congregations and regions were encouragingly positive; and

WHEREAS, the New Orleans Plenary (1988) of the Consultation on Church Union has determined that *The COCU Consensus* is now to be affirmed in the context of the covenanting document *Churches in Covenant Communion*, which clearly states that the process of Covenanting Communion does not require "uniformity in structure" but rather is a growing relationship, a process and pilgrimage toward fuller unity; and

WHEREAS, *The COCU Consensus* has parts that are more in keeping with the understandings of our church than others - thus calling us to grow toward unity - no parts fail to point toward a fuller confession of our common faith which can emerge out of life together within a Covenanting Communion; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has the opportunity now to witness to its commitment to unity by joining with the other COCU churches which have already approved *The COCU Consensus* as an expression of the apostolic faith and a sufficient theological basis for COCU's future;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 28-August 2, 1989, affirms with gratitude and hope that *The COCU Consensus* is:

- 1) A beginning toward eventual "covenant communion" of the participating churches in which "the churches may maintain, for as long as each may determine, their own structure and traditions, including present forms of worship, systems of ministerial selection, training and placement, their international, confessional and communion relationships, and their mission programs" and the ownership of assets (*Churches in Covenant Communion*, 1989, p. 9);
- 2) An expression, in the matters with which it deals, of the Apostolic faith, order, worship and witness of the Church;
- 3) An anticipation of the Church of Christ Uniting which these churches, by the power of the Holy Spirit, seek to become; and
- 4) A sufficient theological basis to proceed with the covenanting acts and the uniting process to be proposed by the COCU churches in the mid-1990's.