

(Sense-of-the-Assembly)

**CONCERNING "GREEN" CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) EVENTS**

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

Background Information

A "green" event is one that can be defined as environmentally friendly. Organizers of green events strive to:

- Reduce the amount of waste generated; and
- Use degradable, environmentally-friendly green products—those made from recycled content; and
- Recycle all paper, aluminum and glass; and
- Reduce the amount of giveaways distributed or carefully select environmentally-friendly giveaways; and
- Reuse items whenever possible; and
- Explore other ways to create green events, from more environmentally-friendly food and hotel services to alternative transportation.

More than 3,000 members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have signed the Avanna Covenant committing themselves to support recycling efforts. The Avanna Covenant states that

"WHEREAS,

God has created the world with finite resources
God has given to us the stewardship of the earth
God has established order through many natural cycles

WHEREAS,

We are consuming resources at a rate that cannot be maintained
We are interrupting many natural cycles
We are irresponsibly modifying the environment through consumption and pollution
We are populating the earth at a rate that cannot be maintained

**AS A MEMBER OF THE HUMAN FAMILY AND A FOLLOWER OF JESUS CHRIST, I HEREBY
COVENANT THAT:**

- I will change my lifestyle to reduce my contribution to pollution
- I will support recycling efforts
- I will search for sustainable lifestyles
- I will work for public policies which lead to a just and sustainable society
- I will share these concerns with others and urge them to make this covenant."

WHEREAS, Genesis 1:24-25 states, "And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good." Verse 2:9 goes on to say, "Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food...."; and

WHEREAS one in every four mammals and one in every eight birds are at risk of extinction, according to the "most comprehensive analysis of global conservation ever undertaken," a report released Sept. 28, 2000 by the World Conservation Union's 2000 Red List of Threatened Species. Extinction rates are 1,000 to 10,000 times higher than under natural conditions. (Associated Press story by Maria D. Bialaty; Sept. 29, 2000) Human over-consumption has accelerated the natural rate of extinction; and

WHEREAS, as Christians we have a moral and ethical obligation toward stewardship of natural and financial resources; and

WHEREAS, how we conduct local, regional and general church events can exacerbate or reduce environmental problems. Examples of exacerbated problems include:

- Diminished landfill space;
- Air and water pollution;

- Expanded energy resources;
- Global warming;
- Depleted natural resources;

Indirect consequences of our actions can contribute to:

- Poverty;
- Pervasiveness of cancers;
- Toxic poisoning of neighborhoods where people of color and low income people are concentrated; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has adopted Resolution 8315 concerning an ecologically responsible Christian life style, Resolution 8932 concerning recycling and Resolution 9320 for sustainable community;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, July 13 to 17, 2001, adopt the Avanna Covenant as a way of life and also support organizing green events for general, regional and local church-related activities.

(Sense-of-the-Assembly)

CHURCHES UNITING IN CHRIST

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

Background Information

For nearly forty years, member communions in the Consultation on Church Union have engaged in serious conversation and theological dialogue exploring the way ahead to full communion and manifesting our unity in Christ. The nine member communions are the African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Church, International Council of Community Churches, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church.

In 1995 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at its General Assembly in Pittsburgh approved the document, *Churches in Covenantal Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting*, as the basis for joining with the other participating churches in "covenantal communion," declared its willingness to enter into a relationship of covenantal communion; and identified specific issues to be addressed by COCU in moving to the formal inauguration of the Church of Christ Uniting.

In January, 1999, COCU held its first plenary meeting in ten years to receive and review the official actions of the nine member communions. From discussion of these reports, the 1999 plenary meeting revised the original proposal (which had gone to the churches at the time of the 17th Plenary Meeting of the Consultation on Church Union in December 5-9, 1989) to move from the more formal and organizational model of "church union" to a recommendation of "full communion"; proposing a "new relationship among these churches, to be called Churches Uniting in Christ". The inauguration of the new relationship was recommended to take place during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January 2002.

Following the 1999 Plenary Session, a "theological round table" was convened to address an issue that surfaced at the very close of the plenary around the issue of the recognition and reconciliation of our ministries in COCU. As a result of those discussions (which included representation by all COCU member churches) the Executive Committee of COCU passed the following Recommendation to the Churches for a New Relationship, *Churches Uniting in Christ*.