

1 **NO. 0925**

2
3 **(OPERATIONAL BUSINESS ITEM)**

4
5 **A CALL FOR ACTION**
6 **(PROVISIONAL)**
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8 WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) honors the individuality and
9 diversity of its various members and expressions of church; is called by God throughout
10 its membership to be a movement for wholeness; and is called to address various issues
11 of a moral, ethical and/or justice nature; and
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13 WHEREAS, the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) states:
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15 37. The general representative body of the Christian Church (Disciples of
16 Christ) shall be the General Assembly. In all of its worship, deliberation,
17 and ministries, the General Assembly shall seek to manifest the
18 wholeness and unity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) within
19 the one Body of Christ; and
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21 WHEREAS, several methodologies have been tried over the last forty years to address
22 issues of a moral, ethical and/or justice nature with varying degrees of effectiveness,
23 often ending with contention and strife amid our own part of the Body of Christ rather
24 than fostering new growth in faith or witness; and
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26 WHEREAS, the purposes of General Assembly resolutions have been misinterpreted and
27 misrepresented by members of media and the general public; and
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29 WHEREAS, the act of voting on controversial issues has received more attention than
30 the process of learning about and discerning what God may be calling Disciples to do in
31 our various settings in response to various moral, ethical and/or justice issues; and
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33 WHEREAS, an average of ten Sense of the Assembly resolutions have come for action
34 over the past two biennia, each allowing only a few speakers on either side of the issue
35 to speak for no more than three minutes prior to a vote of the Assembly, often
36 addressing the General Board's recommendation regarding the original submission
37 itself, further limiting the actual discussion on a moral, ethical or justice issue; and
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39 WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform was
40 commissioned by the Administrative Committee of the General Board to consider the
41 effectiveness of Sense of the Assembly Resolutions; and
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43 WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform began this work
44 by asking the question "what does it mean to speak to, for and within the church and
45 society" and was empowered by the concept of partnership, accompaniment, and
46 critical presence; and
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48 WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform defined a Call for
49 Action as an invitation of the General Assembly to the Church for action on moral,
50 ethical or justice issues that require urgent presence and witness by the Church in all of
51 its expressions; and

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53 WHEREAS, action may include prayer, study, reflection, discernment and response;
54 those activities and roles will vary according to the context in which Disciples are called
55 to serve, and

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57 WHEREAS, all parts are necessary for the proper working of the body such that it builds
58 itself up through love and is able to be effective in the work of ministry (Eph 4:11-16);
59 and

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61 WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform found Galatians
62 5 helpful as a test for how the Assembly could deal with these hard issues while in
63 accord with the Spirit (5:22-23) as opposed to dealing with them in ways that foster
64 sinful and broken human nature (5:20); and

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66 WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform knows that no
67 solution will be perfect nor will it meet everyone's needs, we also sense that it is a
68 *kairos* moment to define a new way of addressing moral, ethical and/or justice issues at
69 our General Assembly; and

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71 WHEREAS, the Call for Action addresses the process for submission of issues; provides
72 for the selection and adoption of up to four Calls to be submitted to the General
73 Assembly by the General Board; suggests ways in which the General Assembly would
74 engage more fully with the four issues over three days; and provides for a vote on
75 whether each call for action would be sent from the General Assembly to the whole
76 church for appropriate consideration and action; and

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78 WHEREAS, paragraph 45 of *The Design* provides for the introduction of emergency items
79 of business at a General Assembly;

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81 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the standing rules for the General Assembly regarding
82 Items for Reflection and Action, Study Documents and Sense of the Assembly
83 Resolutions be replaced with the following "Call for Action"; and

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85 FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that this be considered provisional for the General Assembly
86 meetings in 2011 and 2013, with evaluation by the General Board in 2012 and 2014 so
87 that a decision on adoption or further adaptation can be presented to the General
88 Assembly in 2015.

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The General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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The General Board recommends that the General Assembly

