



Churches Uniting in Christ strives to heal divisions of racism in church and society

CHICAGO (October 11, 2011): Racism is a church-dividing issue in the United States. Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC), a historic partnership among nine communions seeking to give expression to our unity in Christ, strives to reconcile these divisions and name the sin of racism both within our churches and within our nation.

Churches Uniting in Christ's coordinating council met on October 11 at the Lutheran Center in Chicago to work on the priorities approved at the CUIC plenary gathering in Fort Lauderdale in January 2011 where the CUIC member communions recommitted themselves to concrete ways to address the issues of visible unity and racial justice.

The CUIC Coordinating Council prioritized work on the following initiatives:

- to gather and distribute liturgical and educational resources for ecumenical observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2012;
- to identify explicit and implicit racism as we enter the 2012 election season, and call on candidates and elected officials to commit to civil and honest discourse about race during the election cycle;
- to name the systemic racism in our country's historic foreign policies, especially in relation to Haiti that have hindered rebuilding in that country;
- to recommit to the work of recognizing and reconciliation of ordained ministries of one another's churches, especially acknowledging racism as one source of division.

The Rev. Robina Winbush, ecumenical officer of the Presbyterian Church (USA), was elected president of CUIC, and Sister Jacqueline Dupont Walker, a lay member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, vice-president. The Rev. Jean Hawxhurst, representing the United Methodist Church, will serve as secretary, and the Rev. Robert Welsh, ecumenical officer of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), will serve as treasurer.

In reviewing the work of the Coordinating Council during this meeting, CUIC President Winbush said, "In this season of American politics, where racism is subtle but pervasive, the churches of CUIC depend on one another even more to speak boldly against racism in our public life and our churches. We trust that the resources and initiatives of CUIC will help local churches, ecumenical organizations, and denominations to be a unified and prophetic Christian witness to reconciliation in a fractured world."

Disciples of Christ were represented in this meeting by the Rev. Timothy James, Associate General Minister and Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the Rev. Robert Welsh.

At the close of the meeting, Welsh stated, "CUIC is 'back in business,' and hopefully, it will now take up the serious challenge of addressing the issues of overcoming racism as the urgent

task facing our churches in giving expression to our unity in Christ as we move into the 21st century. The vision is about both the church and our society and world.”

Member communions in CUIC are the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Church, the International Council of Community Churches, the Moravian Church (Northern Province), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America also participates in CUIC as a “partner in mission and ministry.”

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