

NO. 0516
(SENSE-OF-THE-ASSEMBLY)
CONCERNING OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE PEOPLE OF HAITI
AND HAITIANS IN NORTH AMERICA
ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, Scripture commands us to *“go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and Lo I am with you always, even unto the ends of the earth”* (Matthew 28:19-20); and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is committed to becoming an anti-racist, pro-reconciling church; and

WHEREAS, we, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are a people who strive to *“do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly before our God”* (Micah 6:8); and

WHEREAS, we the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, have a vision to establish 1000 churches by the year 2020, teaching and preaching the gospel from our doorsteps to the end of the world; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church and CONASEPH (National Spiritual Council of Haitian Churches) have been in partnership and mission for the last two decades; and

WHEREAS, the Haitian population in the United States and Canada is growing; and

WHEREAS, we have more than 50 Haitian congregations within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Miami, Florida; Kansas City, Missouri; New York, New York; Atlanta, Georgia; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Boston, Massachusetts, and Montreal, Canada, compared to 3 in 2001; and

WHEREAS, the delegation of New Church Pastors, sponsored by Global Ministries and Church Extension (New Church Ministry), witnessed the richness of faith in the Haitian community and the physical and economical brokenness of their nation; and

WHEREAS, we were challenged to bring that richness of faith and solidarity to our home churches and communities as a model for ministry; and

WHEREAS, the people of Haiti belong to the body of Christ, and continue to struggle for survival, we as members of that same body, suffer as they suffer and hurt as they hurt; and

WHEREAS, the people of Haiti suffered 100 years of isolation from the rest of the world after their freedom from slavery, and for the last 100 years, they have continued to suffer injustice and human rights violations;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Portland, Oregon, July 23-27, 2005, should embrace the cry of justice by joining in the struggle for a just and equitable life for Haitian people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Global Ministries (Division of Overseas Ministries) be requested to continue to provide a critical presence and accompaniment, to support our partner churches in Haiti, by providing annual work groups to go to this nation, and journey with our brothers and sisters, exchange pastors, provide dialogue, education, and other advocacy work; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Global Ministries (Division of Overseas Ministries) make available educational materials about the poverty and injustices, as well as opportunities for ministry about this nation to members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that new and established congregations be requested to advocate for the Haitian people through prayer, partnership, first and foremost by embracing our Haitian brothers and sisters in our denomination, in the United States, exemplifying the message of freedom from oppressive systems and structures; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that New Church Ministry be asked to teach and emphasize core values of global witnessing in the foundational development of new churches, planting seeds of global mission, to equipping them for the work of ministry; for the edifying of the body of Christ around the world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Minister and President, President of the Division of Overseas Ministries, Board of Church Extension, Disciples Home Missions, and congregations contact our State Representatives, Senators, and the President of the United States, to voice our opposition of the unjust treatment of our Haitian brothers and sisters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a special offering be collected during this General Assembly to further the work of Global Ministries (Division of Overseas Ministries) in this effort; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we encourage the U.S. Government to adopt the same policies for Haitians afforded to Cubans that are entering the U.S.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada publicly confess and ask forgiveness for the 100 years of isolation that we gave to this nation, after their freedom from slavery.