



## Churches Uniting in Christ

### A CALL FOR PRAYERFUL DISCERNMENT ABOUT OUR FUTURE April 6, 2009

Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC) is a relationship among three historically black and seven predominantly white Christian communions that have pledged to live more closely together in expressing their unity in Christ, to combat racism together, and to work for the day when our ministries are fully recognized and reconciled..

Officially inaugurated in 2002 in Memphis, Tennessee, the churches of CUIC pledged themselves to eight Marks of Commitment (these can be found on the CUIC website). The churches have had a history together dating to the early 1960s in a relationship at that time called the Consultation on Church Union.

As churches in the context of the United States, CUIC member communions share a long history of a call to racial reconciliation. Even as we commit to answer God's call to racial reconciliation, however, a breach of relationship has occurred within the fellowship as some of the churches have recently stated that they have not experienced CUIC as a place of racial reconciliation. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, has severed their relationship with CUIC; but all recognize that as churches in covenant relationship, we have not sufficiently attended to racial injustice as a church dividing issue and have not faithfully fulfilled this mark of our covenant relationship.

At a national Plenary gathering in 2008, the churches determined that in the face of this disconnect between intent and impact, they would take time to grieve this breach in our covenant relationship, understand how racism operates both within our CUIC relationship and the wider church, and discern how God's call to racial reconciliation and justice is served through CUIC as a fellowship of churches. A committee of senior church leaders was convened to make recommendations on how to move forward.

The committee recommended that a hiatus be observed, during which time the churches will review ways in which they have been faithful to all of the Eight Marks of Commitment of CUIC since 2002, and ways they have yet to attend that call. Heads of CUIC member churches will gather in early 2010 to reflect on the results of their churches' discernment processes and consider how they believe their churches can move forward.

During this time of discernment and hiatus, CUIC's organizational activities will be suspended, and ecumenical officers of member communions will serve as organizational leadership to guide the churches through the process outlined above.

Acknowledging the break in relationships, understanding how the sin of racism may be alive in our relationships and discerning the future of CUIC is a painful and difficult process. We ask for your prayers during this time of discernment.



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Finally, the CUIC Plenary gathering in St. Louis in 2008 called for a next Plenary in 2011. If you have questions or comments about CUIC, please be in contact with the ecumenical officer for your denomination [[listed in the column to the left](#)].

We continue to pray and work for the day where justice and reconciliation will give evidence of God's beloved community in which all may dwell in the fullness of life promised in Jesus Christ.



## Churches Uniting in Christ

### **African Methodist Episcopal Church**

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### **African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**

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### **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

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### **Christian Methodist Episcopal Church**

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### **The Episcopal Church**

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### **International Council of Community Churches**

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### **United Church of Christ**

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### **United Methodist Church**

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