



## Report of the Ministry of Reconciliation Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

### Reconciliation Ministry Report to the National Convocation Board 2018

Reconciliation Ministry is grateful for our partnership with the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and welcomes this opportunity to present this report to the National Convocation Board in its December 2018 meeting.

2018 marked milestone anniversaries for both the National Convocation and the Ministry of Reconciliation. The mission fund of Reconciliation commemorated 50 years since its inception at the gathering of the International Convention of Christian Churches in St Louis in 1968.

Much has changed in the area of racial and social justice since 1968. The evil of racism continues to morph into new and harmful expressions, particularly with regard to Black and Brown human dignity. This is demonstrated in the toughening of immigration policy from southern border and the extra-judicial maltreatment of black bodies by law enforcement. Racism persists, demanding the intentional effort of the Church to accomplish its eradication. In 2018, as we reflected with the Church on our history as a mission fund, we recognized the need to increase our touch points to engage the whole Church in order to shepherd this effort from word to deed. In this report, we share with you the highlights of 2018:

- **Touchpoint 1 – “Tell the Story”**
  - Increase visibility of the Mission Fund through creative and practical communication: We celebrated our 50-year anniversary through a social media campaign with infographics of the highlights of the fund’s history and incentives to share our story with book giveaways.
  - We continued to promote our One Bag of Tea, One Conversation, One Relationship program – partnering with Black Disciples Clergywomen to promote our own accountability to each other’s care, stories and sharing the Good News at the biennial session.
  - Through our Special Offering “Embrace the Call” promotional efforts, we offered webinars on immigration and criminal justice awareness in an effort to raise awareness of the opportunities we have as Church to confront inequities in these policies and social justice practices in our communities.
  - In November, we launched our new podcast “What’s the Tea with Reconciliation Ministry” to introduce our listeners to practitioners in our congregations and para-church ministries to innovations in combating systemic racism and telling the story.
  
- **Touchpoint 2 – Expanding our Training Capacity**



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- In collaboration with our Regional Anti-Racism commissions and teams, we are developing new trainers to support the ongoing commitment to equip clergy and lay leadership for healthy boundaries and standing requirements within Regions and cluster groupings. This has proven to be more of an art than an exact science of balancing and securing the gifts, passion, and talent of skilled facilitators. Our next requisite training opportunity for potential trainers will be in Kansas in February 2019.
- General Reconciliation Ministry Core Trainers facilitated a 30% increase in training events from 2017 commitments. The increase in demand for training and in equipping local trainers has been on a steady incline over the last four years. We have improved our capacity to measure and evaluate this criterion through our website portal.
- **Touchpoint 3 - Grants and Funding**
  - Reconciliation Ministry changed our granting cycle to receive proposals for Anti-Racism and Reconciliation programs from our Regional, General, Higher Education and Recognized ministries to a nine-month process beginning on January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year with Notice of Award by April 1<sup>st</sup> annually. This change was made to improve the frequency of eligible programs to present proposals and receive funding in the same year as the proposed program, ultimately increasing accessibility for proposed programs. We are accepting program proposal now through January 31, 2019.
  - We want to offer our sincere gratitude for the ongoing partnership with the National Convocation for the financial gift from the receipts of the offering from the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennial Session in July 2017. These funds are applied to our Annual Fund which support our ongoing fund development programming as well as our granting program for racial and social justice.

It is with deep gratitude that we continue to serve Christ's Church together with the Board of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)!

Rev. April G. Johnson  
Executive Director & Ministry of Reconciliation