RESOLUTION CONCERNING NEW CONGREGATIONS

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

Report on New Congregation Establishment

1985 is the midpoint in our decade-long priority to establish new congregations, entitled CHURCH ADVANCE NOW. This halfway mark provides an opportunity to measure our progress, learn from our experience, celebrate our accomplishments, and renew our resolve.

OUR PROGRESS . . . With regard to our objective of establishing a minimum of 100 new congregations in the 80's, to date, 66 new congregations have been recognized by regions, with an additional 8 Pastor/Developers at work gathering communities of faith, for a total of 74 congregations in formation. Of these 74, 11 are new ethnic/minority congregations. As many as 12 Pastor/Developers are expected to be called to areas needing new congregations in 1986. Most regions have now developed the structure, guidelines, and plans for funding their new congregation establishment programs. Toward the original projected minimum need of $25 million in over-and-above giving to underwrite the program, $8,153,000 has been set in goals in seventeen regional capital campaigns. In addition, approximately $250,000 is raised annually in ongoing regional capital programs. The Church Advance Now staff team - five people from Board of Church Extension and Division of Homeland Ministries - have put into operation all planned-for support services, including recruitment and training of Pastor/Developers, annual training events for Organizing Pastors, program consultation services, and supplemental grants for program and capital needs. A New Congregation Establishment Committee meets annually for purposes of advice and counsel.

OUR EXPERIENCE . . . Indeed, our best teacher, our experience is providing opportunities to reflect and refine our strategies and support services. With Pastor/Developers now at work from Seattle to Halifax, Queens (New York City) to Bradenton (Florida), and other models in operation in a variety of settings, we are learning even as we are growing. Indications are that not only will we likely exceed our goal of 100 new congregations in the decade, but these congregations will have every opportunity to grow into strong congregations as systems and support continue to improve. Our experience also signals a need to redouble our efforts and commitment to a minimum of 30% of these new congregations being black, Hispanic, or American Asian.

As we CELEBRATE OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS, we do not presume to have "arrived." We approach the second half of the decade with RENEWED RESOLVE to establish and support as many strong, vital congregations as are needed in the 80's and to create such a climate and system for support that the 90's will find the evangelistic thrust of new congregation establishment an integral part of who we are as Disciples.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is undergirded and strengthened in its mission of witness and service by the establishment of new congregations and the recognition of previously unaffiliated congregations which manifest the wholeness of the church in a given place, and

WHEREAS, such congregations are accorded certain rights and acknowledge responsibilities under The Design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and

WHEREAS, it is with gratitude and joy that these congregations are recognized and welcomed into the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the church universal,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, August 2-7, 1985, recognize the following congregations which have been established or received since the 1983 San Antonio General Assembly:

Arkansas
California/Nevada
Central Rocky Mountain
Florida
Georgia
Illinois/Wisconsin
Mid-America
Little Rock
Redding, CA
Pueblo, CO
Fort Myers
Atlanta
Chicago
Rolls, MO
New Venture Christian Church
First Christian Church
Boulevard Christian Church
Unity Christian Church
Memorial Christian Church
Chicago Christian Church
Benedict's Mission Christian Church