

# An Invitation

Near the end of his earthly ministry Jesus prayed for us, *“I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them so that they may be one, as we are one.”* John 17:20-22

Barton Stone’s words express a compelling vision, *“Let Christian unity be our polar star.”* In 1809 Thomas Campbell’s words in the *Declaration and Address* reflect the urgency of Christ’s prayer when he says *“the church of Jesus Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one.”* Their vision brought a great movement into existence—one that called on Christians to worship and work together. Tens of thousands responded.

Yet Christ’s prayer has been forgotten along with the vision of Stone and Campbell. What was once a unity movement is now divided into the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, the Churches of Christ, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). For much of the twentieth century these three streams had little, or no, contact, fellowship, or knowledge of each other.

A new possibility for unity developed in 1996. The Disciples’ General Minister and President, Richard Hamm, spoke to the executive board of the World Convention of Churches of Christ in Calgary and invited the North American heirs of the Stones and Campbells to begin a dialogue. The effort gained momentum at the Westwood-Chevoit Church of Christ in Cincinnati in 1999 with exploratory conversation. Having no illusions of merging, but believing God can do what we cannot, the groups began the dialogue to encourage reconciliation among the three major streams of

the Stone-Campbell Movement in America and agreed upon this statement of purpose:

*“To develop relationships and trust within the three streams of the Stone-Campbell Movement through worship and through charitable and frank dialogue “that the world may believe.”*

The Dialogue has been meeting each year since the initial session in November 1999. God’s Spirit has been working in the Dialogue. In the textual and topical presentations, the discussions that have followed, and the open conversations regarding the beliefs on which we stand, the traditions we hold dear, and the concerns in the midst of all of these, we have seen God’s hand. A number of events have supported the quest for unity. One was the Great Gathering in 2001 to celebrate the bicentennial of the Cane Ridge Revival. It brought together hundreds from across the streams of the movement to celebrate a common heritage and to worship at a place so significant to us all. Meetings in Amarillo, Texas, and Lexington, Kentucky, also promoted continuing conversation toward reconciliation and healing. Also, the national Stone-Campbell Dialogue brought Christians from the three groups together for worship, fellowship, and serious discussion in Louisville in 2002, Atlanta in 2003, Indianapolis in 2004, Dallas in 2005, and Nashville in 2006.

To expand what has already begun, you are invited to begin a dialogue in your area. This manual suggests concrete ways to get started and to continue a meaningful dialogue. It tells you how to access papers generated by the national Dialogue that can be used in conducting your own.

The manual includes four sessions, and other materials you will need are listed and/or included in this manual.

## Equipping the Local Dialogue Leaders

1. Thoughtfully read John 17, and let Jesus’ prayer become your prayer.
2. Prepare yourself by doing research
  - a. Acquaint yourself with this manual
  - b. Browse the Dialogue papers in the document section of (<http://www.disciples.org/ccu/Dialogues/StoneCampbell.html>) or order the papers printed in the October, 2001, issue of *Midstream*. The address is *Council on Christian Unity, P.O. Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1986, (Ph: 317/713-2586)*
  - c. Call or email any member of the national Dialogue team from the list available on the website listed above. These individuals can offer valuable information to assist with a local dialogue.
  - d. Consult such historical and theological information sources as the World Convention of Churches of Christ at their website, i.e. "Our Story" at <http://worldconvention.org>.
3. Call together a group to plan a Dialogue
  - a. Visit with potential partners in your own congregation or from other congregations of your stream of the movement in your area.
  - b. Make get-acquainted visits to the other streams. Contact ministers and other church leaders to raise the issue of a Dialogue.

c. Share stories of the past. (Ask questions to prompt the stories: How have you benefited from relationships with those in other streams? What relationships have been established? How meaningful are they for you? Has faith been strengthened or diminished from these experiences? Have any contacts been negative?)

d. Be specific about expectations and meetings

- e. Make an initial commitment of four sessions approximately ninety minutes in length
- f. Communicate arrangements for the meetings
- g. Make assignments for each of the sessions
- i. Include at least one person from each stream
- j. Determine the best size and format for your group

## Session 1 – Beginning the Dialogue: Getting to Know One Another

### Welcome and Introductions

Greet and introduce the members.

Practice your hospitality which is a Biblical expression of grace: serve light refreshments or a simple meal; remember name tags, introductions, offering a warm reception to guests and new friends.

### Convening the Dialogue

Open with a prayer.

Give a *brief* history of the Dialogue (shifting from the national dialogue to local churches/leaders to bring them into the process), and the purpose of the meeting.

### The Importance of Dialogue

Read the following statement aloud by asking three persons to each read a paragraph.

*Our forbears in the Stone-Campbell movement engaged each other in three styles of conversation: debate, discussion, and dialogue.*

*We, too, have these options, but the success of our venture in Christian unity depends upon clearly and intentionally being in dialogue.*

*Dialogue is characterized by openness and receptivity when listening to the views of the other "sides." It does not mean "losing the faith, compromising, or selling out." One simply moves from knowledge (discussion) to understanding by listening carefully to the other. Judgment will be temporarily suspended. Self-critique becomes possible. Respect will be offered to those whose experiences and views are different from ours. Relationships of mutual enrichment are possible not because we agree, but because we are humble in our opinions, respectful of the integrity of others, and united in Christ with those whose views differ from our own.*

### Sharing Our Faith Stories

Our dialogue is keyed to the biblical concept of *koinonia*. Our participation in Christ and these relationships will be crucial in establishing trust and acceptance when our stories differ. Coming to know and love each other within our diversity begins with sharing our faith journey and having it heard and appreciated by others. Our gift to the group is not only our own story, but the loving reception of others' faith stories as well.

Participants may need a few minutes to recollect and organize how their story will be shared. Begin with your own faith journey and invite others to follow.

**The sharing of ourselves through our stories is the key purpose of this session, so allow the time for all to be heard.**

Invite one person from each participating congregation to offer a short profile and history of their congregation.

### Purpose and Commitment

Distribute the brochure, "*The Stone-Campbell Dialogue*," that includes the purpose statement on the front panel. The brochure and all other documents referred to in this study guide may be downloaded at <http://www.disciples.org/ccu/pdf/brochure%20for%20stone%20campbell.pdf>

Explore the question, "Is the Dialogue important enough for a commitment to four 90 minute sessions?" If so, adopt a purpose statement for your group by using the national dialogue team's purpose statement, a revised version of it, or a statement the group creates. Upon completion make copies and distribute to each member of the group.

Ownership and commitment are the goals of this discussion.

### Worship

In the spirit of Alexander Campbell's words, "*Mutually embraced in the everlasting arms, I embrace you in mine*," enter a time of worship together.

Plan a simple service of worship. To experience worship from the times of our founders, a cappella singing is appropriate; however, the local leadership of the host group may decide in their own setting. Either a brief message or a Bible reading is appropriate.

### Parameters of the Dialogue

- an initial commitment of an additional three sessions, approximately 90 minutes each
- persons who wish to commit to the Dialogue
- dates, times, and meeting places
- a rotation that includes all of the churches that are represented
- copies of this manual, *Midstream*, and the brochure, "*The Stone-Campbell Dialogue*"
- websites for additional information

"Coming to know and love each other within our diversity begins with sharing our faith journey and having it heard and appreciated by others."

**Assignments for Session 2**

- Study the three “Who We Are” sections of the brochure, “*The Stone-Campbell Dialogue*.”
- Prepare a brief profile, including a short history of your congregation.
- Read the three “What We Might Have Done Differently” papers (in *Midstream* and on the CCU website).
- Invite three people take a paper to summarize at the next session.

- Appoint someone to lead the gathering prayer and closing prayer, concluding with readings and a hymn.

**Notes & Reminders...**

## Session 2 – Confession of Sin: What We Might Have Done Differently

**Greeting**

Welcome and introduce all who attend. Don’t forget the special items of hospitality (name tags, light refreshments, etc).

**Opening Prayer**

A person was assigned this responsibility at the last meeting.

**Who We Are**

Review the information on each of the three streams in the inner page of the brochure, “*The Stone-Campbell Dialogue*,” by allowing for clarifying questions to be asked and answered.

**Papers— “What We Might Have Done Differently”****Churches of Christ**

*Douglas Foster – Midstream*, October 2002, p. 1

**Disciples of Christ**

*D. Newell Williams*, p. 6

**Christian Churches/Churches of Christ**

*Henry Webb*, p. 11

**A Brief Summary of Each Paper**

Given by the three persons who accepted this responsibility at the last session.

**Clarifying Questions**

Allow a few minutes for clarifying questions to be asked and answered.

**Suggested Discussion Questions**

What is something new that you learned about your own stream?

What new thing did you learn about either of the other two streams?

How have we fallen short and wounded each other in the Body of Christ?

With what new insight will you go away from this session about your own stream, about either of the other two?

**Confession of Sin**

Invite the group members to silently read and reflect upon “Confession of Sin” in the brochure, considering these questions:

In what ways have you experienced that sin in your fellowship?

Where has your congregation wounded Christ with division?

Where, or how, have you personally participated in the sin of division?

Call the group back together to pray the Confession of Sin in unison.

**Worship**

Conclude with a hymn and a closing prayer. Suggested Hymn: *Come, My Christian Friends and Brethren*, sung to the tune of *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*. Lyrics may be found in Attachment 3 to this Study Manual.

**Assignments for Session 3**

- Read the “Affirmation of Faith” section from “*The Stone-Campbell Dialogue*” brochure and Peter Morgan’s “Consensus” essay in *Midstream*, p. 20 or CCU web page documents. Ask one person to be ready to lead the group through a summary statement of the essay next time.

- Appoint a worship leader to prepare Scripture lessons, hymns, and preaching (optional), which will be used in addition to the Affirmation text in the brochure. Service suggestions are found in Session 3.

**Notes & Reminders...**

“The success of our venture in Christian unity depends upon clearly and intentionally being in dialogue.”

## Session 3 – What We Believe: An Affirmation of Faith

### Greeting and Welcome

### Opening Prayer

### Discussion

Offer a *brief* summary of the three reports from Session 2 on what we each might have done differently using the outline below.

### What the Three Streams “might have done differently” to Avoid Division

*Churches of Christ – Douglas Foster*

1. Resisted excommunicating and vilifying those with different views on mission societies and use of instruments in worship.
2. Recognized the complexity of issues and the broad spectrum of positions related to them.
3. Avoided vitriolic language that impugned the motives of others.
4. Held on to the tradition “Christians only, but not the only Christians.”
5. Refused to act as if a set of doctrines is Christianity and the Christian life.

*Disciples of Christ—D. Newell Williams*

1. Eschewed ecclesiastical politics in favor of education and discussion.
2. Paid more attention to the Gospel, i.e., God’s love as the foundation for unity.
3. Paid more attention to our tradition, particularly the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ as the norm of the church’s life.

*Christian Churches/Churches of Christ – Henry Webb*

1. Found better ways to reach corporate decisions.
2. Prevented a powerful few from bringing chaos to the many.
3. Learned how to stop extremists from crowding out the moderate message of the reasonable majority.
4. Become more effective in managing conflict constructively.

### Sharing “Family” Traits

Whole Group Brainstorming Activity:  
“I celebrate our common family trait across the Stone-Campbell Movement of ...”

Record responses on newsprint or poster board.

### “Consensus” by Peter Morgan

Led by the person identified last session, review the five characteristics outlined in Peter Morgan’s essay: freedom, egalitarianism, manifest destiny, enlightenment, and the immigrant experience

How do these characteristics manifest themselves in our streams today? Where are points we can still identify these family traits in each of our traditions? Add answers to the list made above.

The national Dialogue team experienced a wonder-filled moment when they recited “An Affirmation of Faith” from the brochure “*The Stone-Campbell Dialogue*.” Give your dialogue members time to silently read, consider, and put the faith of that affirmation in their hearts. Invite comments or plan small group discussions with a debriefing to follow.

### Worship

#### Gathering

Call to Worship - Read “An Affirmation of Faith” together.

#### Opening Prayer

#### Hymn

#### God’s Word

Scripture – Philippians 2:1-11

Prayers of the People (allow for

spontaneous contributions to prayer by anyone who wants to participate)

#### A Parting Hymn

#### Benediction

### Assignments for Session 4

- Ask everyone to read “*Stone-Campbell Dialogue Affirmations on Scripture*” by Robert Rea (see **Attachment 1** to this Study Manual) and “*Stereotypes Often Held By Stone-Campbell Movement Streams*” compiled by the national dialogue team and edited by Robert Rea (see **Attachment 2** to this Study Manual) for next time.
- As you read make notes in the margins of questions or comments for next time based upon your own experience.
- Ask one person to be ready to lead the discussion of Rea’s paper and one person to lead the discussion of the stereotypes.
- Invite one person from each of the three streams to work together to prepare a closing worship experience for next time. Plan to go a little longer for that final session so that the worship experience may be expanded to include the Lord’s Supper (Session 4 notes include suggestions for worship). [**Note:** There are some in the COC and the CC/CC who are uncomfortable with taking the Lord’s Supper on any day but Sunday, and even then believe it should be done in the context of a local church. This needs to be discussed and worked out in planning for the next session.]

### Notes & Reminders...

“Sharing our personal faith stories along with the histories of our congregations brings us closer to understanding one another.”

## Session 4 – Biblical Interpretation: A Foundational Issue for Our Dialogue

### Greeting and Welcome

#### Opening Prayer

#### A Brief Overview

Ask the person identified at the end of the last session as the discussion leader to offer a brief overview of Robert Rea’s paper, “*Stone-Campbell Dialogue Affirmations on Scripture*.”

In the overview be sure to include the statement that the conclusions of the paper grew out of discussion and input from representatives of all three streams, and that the “*We all . . .*” in each statement represents all three streams.

#### Group Discussion

If the group is a large one divide into smaller groups of five or six for the discussion. Ask someone in each group to record the major points to be shared later with the whole group. If you stay together as one group have someone jot down answers as they come for a review at the end.

#### Questions to Consider

1. What was your initial reaction to the “Mutual Affirmations” as you read them?
2. Did you find yourself “nodding along” as you read or did you disagree with any of the affirmations? If so, which ones (and why)?
3. With regard to *Alexander Campbell’s Rules of Interpretation*, do they ring true for Bible study as you know it in your congregation and in your stream?
4. How do you understand the “understanding distance” of Campbell’s Rule 7?
5. How does the notion of “humility” in the “circumference of the circle” affect our understanding and acceptance of each other with regard to biblical interpretation? And how does this notion affect the ways in which we seek to live out the scriptures’ precepts in our lives?

If the group has been working in smaller groups, bring everyone back together and spend ten to fifteen minutes sharing the groups’ insights and answers.

If you have all shared together, take five to seven minutes to review for each other the insights that have emerged in the discussion.

#### Stereotypes We Hold About Each Other

We have often been guilty of holding onto and repeating stereotypes about each other over the years without giving much thought or care to what we are saying.

As a national dialogue team we have worked to identify some of these as a way of seeking to lessen the divide between us.

#### “Stereotypes Often Held by Stone-Campbell Movement Streams”

Quickly review the stereotypes listed on the document.

#### Questions to Consider

1. How did it feel to read the stereotypes about your stream of the movement? Why?
2. In the presence of brothers and sisters from the other two streams, how did it feel to read or hear stereotypes about each of them?
3. Now that you have spent a considerable amount of time over the past four sessions with this group of Stone-Campbell kin, do you react differently to these stereotypes than you might have before you became a part of this dialogue group? If so, why?

#### Closing Worship

Led by worship leaders as identified at Session 3. Gather in a circle around a Communion Table.

#### Call to Worship

#### Opening Prayer

**Hymn** *Help Us Accept Each Other or  
We Are One in the Spirit*

**Scripture Reading:** Romans 14:13-19

[Try “Praying the Scriptures” (or *Lectio Divina*):

- The leader reads the scripture aloud.
- Going around the circle invite (people may decline) each individual to share a word, a phrase, or an idea that jumped out at them as the passage was read. They will speak only that word and no one comments on anyone else’s response.
- The leader reads the passage aloud a second time. This time around persons respond with what they believe God may be saying to them in the word that they heard. Again, only a short comment and no one comments on another’s response.
- The leader reads the passage a third time and each one listens for how God may asking them to respond in this next week, sharing again around the circle.]

**Communion Hymn** Suggestions\*

*Here at Thy Table, Lord  
These I Lay Down  
Come, Share the Lord  
When You Do This, Remember Me*

#### Words of Institution

#### Prayers

#### Sharing of the Lord’s Supper

#### Words of Appreciation for each other

#### Closing Hymn

*Blest Be the Tie That Binds*

#### Benediction

\* Suggested hymns are from *Chalice Hymnal*

“Let us then pursue  
what makes for  
peace and for  
mutual  
understanding.”  
Romans 14:19

## Attachment 1

### STONE-CAMPBELL DIALOGUE AFFIRMATIONS ON SCRIPTURE Representatives of Churches of Christ, Christian Churches & Churches of Christ, and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) June 12-13, 2006

#### I. MUTUAL AFFIRMATIONS:

In our discussions concerning Scripture, we discovered that:

- We all believe in the inspiration and authority of the whole Bible.
- We all seek to be shaped by the Scriptures in matters of faith, doctrine, and practice.
- We all share a rich heritage which holds Scripture in high regard—we all think of ourselves as Scripture-focused and Spirit-driven, and we all seek to understand or interpret the Bible with appropriate respect.
- We all affirm key mandates from Scripture, such as evangelism, social justice, mercy ministries, etc., though emphasis on these mandates varies within each group and among the groups.
- We all take into account the larger themes in Scripture in seeking to understand or interpret the meaning of specific passages.
- We all share common difficulties — each group has a wide variety of perspectives concerning the Scriptures and their application. The difference may lie in the numbers of those committed to various emphases in each group.
- We all seek to understand Scripture through the process of hermeneutics, and all generally employ historical-critical or theological-grammatical methodology using similar methods.
- We all affirm Alexander Campbell's *Rules of Interpretation*:

RULE 1. On opening any book in the sacred Scriptures, *consider first the historical circumstances of the book. These are the order, the title, the author, the date, the place, and the occasion of it.*

RULE 2. In examining the contents of any book, as respects precepts, promises, exhortations, etc., *observe who it is that speaks, and under what dispensation he officiates. Is he a Patriarch, a Jew, or a Christian? Consider also the persons addressed; their prejudices, characters, and religious relations. Are they Jews or Christians, believers or unbelievers, approved or disapproved? This rule is essential to the proper application of every command, promise, threatening, admonition, or exhortation, in Old Testament or New.*

RULE 3. To understand the meaning of what is commanded, promised, taught, etc., *the same philological principles, deduced from the nature of language; or the same laws of interpretation which are applied to the language of other books, are to be applied to the language of the Bible.*

RULE 4. *Common usage, which can only be ascertained by testimony, must always decide the meaning of any word which has but one signification; but when words have, according to testimony (i.e., the dictionary,) more meanings than one, whether literal or figurative, the scope, the context, or parallel passages must decide the meaning: for if common usage, the design of the writer, the context, and parallel passage fail, there can be no certainty in the interpretation of language.*

RULE 5. *In all tropical language, ascertain the point of resemblance, and judge of the nature of the trope, and its kind, from the point of resemblance.*

RULE 6. In the interpretation of symbols, types, allegories, and parables, this rule is supreme: -- *Ascertain the point to be illustrated; for comparison is never to be extended beyond that point—to all the attributes, qualities, or circumstances of the symbol, type, allegory, or parable.*

RULE 7. For the salutary and sanctifying intelligence of the Oracles of God, the following rule is indispensable: *We must come within the understanding distance.*

There is a distance which is properly called *the speaking distance*, or *the hearing distance*; beyond which the voice reaches not, and the ear hears not. To hear another, we must come within that circle which the voice audibly fills.

Now we may say with propriety say, that as it respects God, there is an understanding distance. All beyond that distance cannot understand God; all within it, can easily understand him in all matters of piety and morality. God, himself, is the centre of that circle, and humility is its circumference.

The wisdom of God is as evident in adapting the light of the Sun of Righteousness to our spiritual or moral vision, as in adjusting the light of day to our eyes. The light reaches us without an effort of our own, but we must open our eyes, and if our eyes be sound, we enjoy the natural light of heaven. There is a sound eye in reference to spiritual light, as well as in reference to material light. Now, while the philological principles and rules of interpretation enable many men to be skilful in biblical criticism, and in the interpretation of words and sentences, who neither perceive nor admire the *things* represented by those words; the sound eye contemplates the things themselves, and is ravished with the moral scenes which the Bible unfolds.

The moral *soundness* of vision consists in having the eyes of understanding fixed solely on God himself, his approbation and complacent affection for us. It is sometimes called a *single* eye because it looks for one thing supremely. Every one, then, who opens the Book of God, with *one aim*, with one ardent desire—the intent only to know the will of God; to such a person, the knowledge of God is easy: for the Bible is framed to illuminate such, and only such, with the salutary knowledge of things celestial and divine.

Humility of mind, or what is in effect the same, contempt for all earth-born pre-eminence, prepares the mind for the reception of this light; or, what is virtually the same, opens the ears to hear the voice of God. Amidst the din of all the arguments from the flesh, the world, and Satan, a person is so deaf that he cannot hear the still small voice of God's philanthropy. But, receding from pride, covetousness, and false ambition; from the love of the world; and in coming within that circle, the circumference of which is unfeigned humility, and the centre of which is God himself the voice of God is distinctly heard and clearly understood. All within this circle are taught by God; all without it are under the influence of the wicked one. "God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace to the humble."

He, then, that would interpret the Oracles of God to the salvation of his soul, must approach this volume with the humility and docility of a child, and meditate upon it day and night. Like Mary, he must sit at the Master's feet, and listen to the words which fall from his lips. To such a one there is an assurance of understanding, a certainty of knowledge, to which the man of letters alone never attained, and which the mere critic never felt.

## II. HISTORIC MODELS FOR BIBLICAL AUTHORITY:

In our discussions we discerned at least four prevalent models of authority and interpretation are prevalent among members of all three Stone-Campbell groups. In fact, individuals of all three groups often employ multiples models simultaneously as seek to understand or interpret the Scriptures. Brief descriptions of these four prevalent models follow:

**Common Sense or Rationalist or Foundationalist model:** found in A. Campbell and W. Scott, but reaching its extreme version in Tolbert Fanning and others. Approaches the Bible as a pure foundation of "facts" and "propositions," or as a logical body of evidences leading to a final conclusion.

**Christocentric or Narrative-Centered or Gospel-Centered model:** also has roots in both Campbells, Stone, Scott, and Robert Richardson. Views the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as having an even more basic authority than the text of Scripture. Focuses on the central gospel story of Christ's incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension and return and the need for the interpreter or believer to enter into that "story." Sees Scripture as transformative and not simply informative. Recent Stone-Campbell : Tom Olbricht (his autobiography, *Hearing God's Voice*, describe his shift to this position).

**Classical Liberal Model:** deeply informed by biblical higher criticism and the demythologizing of the Bible. Sees the Bible as “inspired” in a quasi-poetic sense. Scripture is most authoritative where it is most *humanizing*. One classic Stone-Campbell example: Herbert Willett.

**“Pietistic” model:** sees the Bible as not just “inspired” but as “inspiring.” The Holy Spirit lives in and beyond the text and brings scripture to bear on our lives and experience within the church. Recent Stone-Campbell examples who use this method quite differently from one another: Max Lucado, Fred Craddock, Bob Russell.

### **III. THE RESULTS OF OUR DIALOGUE:**

Our mutual encounter has led us to the following actions:

- We confess that social, cultural, political, and other presuppositions greatly influence our perspectives and decisions about the meaning of Scripture.
- We confess that we have often sinned by judging brothers and sisters on the basis of our stereotypes or caricatures rather than engaging them on the basis of their commitment to Christ.
- We are aware that although we have a common commitment to the inspiration, authority, and priority of Scripture, we have often come to very different conclusions about some specific teachings of Scripture. This is true within each stream and between the streams.
- We affirm through the grace of God we will seek to understand one another and with renewed understanding to embrace one another.
- We will seek to stand with one another in ministry whenever and wherever we can do so with integrity.
- We confess we are united in Christ through the Holy Spirit and not through agreement on Biblical interpretation or anything else.



## **Attachment 2**

### **STEREOTYPES OFTEN HELD BY STONE-CAMPBELL MOVEMENT STREAMS**

Members of the Stone-Campbell Movement have often misunderstood the other streams of the Movement, resulting in a number of stereotypes, particularly concerning Scripture. Impressions arise from real experiences and partial truths, but the generalizing of those impressions results in broad stereotypes which cast an unrealistic and unfortunate shadow across an entire group. We believe this situation has driven deeper wedges between the groups and must be addressed.

Jesus taught, “If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and to your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering” (Mt. 5:23-24, NASB). Consider the following stereotypes often held by streams of the Stone-Campbell Movement toward one another. After reflection and clarification, as an act of repentance and reconciliation we suggest that members of your local dialogue unite around the Table of the Lord by taking the Lord’s Supper together.

#### **STEREOTYPES ABOUT SCRIPTURE OFTEN HELD BY OTHERS ABOUT CCCC:**

They are biblical literalists and fundamentalists—their approach to Scripture is overly pietistic—they are too emotional and give little attention to social issues, such as race, gender, and poverty.

They don’t believe the whole Bible—they study Scripture selectively and ignore passages that contradict what they want to do. Therefore they function as a denomination, use musical instruments, etc.

They are driven more by culture than by Scripture and are therefore flag-waving fundamentalists with a middle-class white agenda.

They are biblical patternists, and often as a result are too independent and uncooperative, unwilling to support any missionary boards or societies.

They believe the Bible restricts women from eldership and pastoral ministry and therefore have no women ministers.

Though they claim commitment to Scripture, they have few highly trained Biblical scholars.

#### **STEREOTYPES ABOUT SCRIPTURE OFTEN HELD BY OTHERS ABOUT COC:**

They are biblical literalists and fundamentalists—their approach to Scripture is overly pietistic—they are too emotional and give little attention to social issues, such as race, gender, and poverty.

They believe they are the only ones true enough to Scripture to go to Heaven and are therefore sectarian.

They are biblical patternists—they are therefore legalistic about issues like instrumental music, missionary societies, hired pastors, etc.

They are driven more by culture than by Scripture and are therefore Southerners who never saw the point of the War between the States.

They believe the Bible restricts women from eldership and pastoral ministry and therefore have no women ministers.

Though they claim commitment to Scripture, they have few highly trained Biblical scholars.

## **STEREOTYPES ABOUT SCRIPTURE OFTEN HELD BY OTHERS ABOUT CC (DOC):**

They don't believe the whole Bible—they study Scripture selectively and ignore passages that contradict what they want to do. Therefore they function as a denomination, use musical instruments, etc.

CC(DOC) are cultural and intellectual elitists—they forsook their biblical roots to embrace the culture, and are therefore liberal, meaning loose theologically, morally, etc.

They reject the authority of Scripture—they are driven more by social issues than by Scripture, more interested in inclusion than in Biblical standards.

They reject key items about Christ from Scripture—Christ's resurrection, that Christ is the only way to salvation, Christ's Great Commission, etc.

They are a denomination and handle the Bible as a denomination. They are not autonomous—they have to follow the denominational line.

They are driven more by culture than by Scripture—they are liberals, captive to an upper class liberal agenda, including radical feminism and a pro-gay agenda.

### Attachment 3

## Come, My Christian Friends And Brethren

*(to the tune "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling")*

1. Come, my Christian friends and brethren,  
Bound for Canaan's happy land,  
Come, unite and walk together,  
Christ our leader gives command.  
Lay aside your party spirit,  
Wound your Christian friends no more,  
All the name of Christ inherit,  
Zion's peace again restore.

2. We'll not bind our brother's conscience,  
This to God alone is free,  
Nor contend with one another,  
But in Christ united be:  
Here's the Word, the grand criterion,  
This shall all our doctrine prove,  
Christ the centre of our union,  
And the bond is Christian love.

3. Here my hand, my heart, my spirit,  
Now in fellowship I give,  
Now we'll love and peace inherit,  
Show the world how Christians live;  
We are one in Christ our Saviour,  
Here is another bond nor free,  
Christ is all in all forever,  
In His name we all agree.

4. Now we'll preach and pray together,  
Praise, give thanks, and shout and sing;  
Now we'll strengthen one another,  
And adore our heavenly King;  
Now we'll join in sweet communion,  
Round the table of our Lord;  
Lord, confirm our Christian union,  
By Thy Spirit and Thy Word.

5. Now the world will be constrained  
To believe in Christ our King;  
Thousands, millions be converted,  
Round the earth His praises ring;  
Blessed day! O joyful hour!  
Praise the Lord-His name we bless.  
Send Thy Kingdom, Lord, with pow'r,  
Fill the world with righteousness.