

Churches of Christ

Who We Are

A communion of believers who hold to the foundational doctrine of historic Christianity, accept the Bible as the final authority in all religious matters, practice immersions of believers, and weekly Lord's Supper. They are congregational in organization with no formal leadership beyond local elders, though connected by lectureships, journals, educational institutions, and a variety of parachurch organizations. Their worship is a cappella in keeping with the simplicity of the early church's worship. The numbers of churches and members outside the United States, especially in Africa, is approaching that of the U.S. There is considerable diversity among congregations.

Membership in the U.S. & Canada.....1,264,115
Adherents (includes children and other unbaptized attendees).....1,645,613
Congregations in the U.S. & Canada (65 with 900 members or more)..... 13,032
Largest number of congregations in Texas..... 2,188 and Tennessee..... 1,472
Ministers (est.)12,600
Missionaries (in 1999)842
Members outside of U.S. and Canada...over 1,000,000

Parachurch agencies include:

Camps111
Campus Ministries219
Child and Family Services 76
Senior Care Facilities 99

Periodicals185
Colleges and Universities.....25
Preacher Training Schools.....26
Elementary and Secondary Schools.....120

Churches of Christ/Christian Churches

Who We Are

A fellowship believers in the Deity and Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Scriptures, and who practice baptism by immersion and observe the Lord's Supper weekly. We seek to restore the faith and practices of the early church, freely working with others of like faith, but committed to no organization beyond the local congregation. Committed to missions, we number as many abroad, as in the U.S. and Canada.

Membership.....1,144,000
Congregations, U.S. & Canada.....5,552
Ministers.....5,589
Assistant Ministers.....2,920
Missionaries..... 943

Active Duty Military Chaplains..... 35
Military Reserve/Guard Chaplains..... 27
Miscellaneous 54

Para-church Agencies.....1,025
Benevolent Agencies..... 107
Campus Ministries..... 76
Evangelistic Associations 136

Colleges 31
Seminaries 3
Full-Time Professors 445
Part-Time Professors 561
Total Students8,867

Churches averaging over 1,000 in attendance.... 76

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Who We Are

The Mission Imperative of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) adopted July 2000.

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in our quest to embody Christian unity, led and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we believe God calls us:

Our Vision – To be a faithful, growing church that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for Justice. (Micah 6:8)

Our Mission – To be and to share the Good news of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving and serving from our doorsteps “to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Our Imperative – To strengthen congregational life for his mission. (Ephesians 4:11-13, 15-16)

Membership:

U.S. and Canada834,000
Congregations..... 3,792
Regions 35
General Ministries 11
Ministers 7,113
(Including congregational pastors, associate4 pastors, regional ministers, general ministers, chaplains, missionaries, etc.)

Colleges17
Seminaries and Seminary Houses.....7
Undergraduate students..... 21,900
Seminary and Graduate students 1,000
Congregations with participating membership over 1,000..... 19

A Confession of Sin

Division in the body of Christ is sin – contrary to Christ’s will (John 17).

As Christians, we who are members of Churches of Christ, Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, and the Christian church (Disciples of Christ) are part of a movement that was in its beginning given a special trust to promote the visible unity of Christ’s church. This movement, begun in the early nineteenth century by leaders like Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell, has a great heritage of focusing on Christian unity.

Instead, we have been guilty of dividing the body of Christ in thought, word and deed. Many of us have fortified the spirit of division and have failed to do what we should have done to prevent or overcome division.

This betrayal of our trust has impoverished the whole church of Christ and weakened its mission.

We have deeply wounded one another through misrepresentation, suspicion, mistrust and defamation.

We, therefore, participate in the Stone-Campbell Dialogue, confess to God and to each other that we are guilty of the sin of division and of harboring and maintaining a spirit of division.

We now bring to God our brokenness and repent of the sin of division. We ask God for forgiveness. We ask God to heal us so that our Movement within Christ’s church can more perfectly embody the unity to which we are called.

Assured of God’s mercy and forgiveness, we pledge to move forward in the service of unity within this family of faith to benefit the whole church and the world.

An Affirmation of Faith

As disciples of Jesus Christ ...

- We confess that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God, and proclaim him risen Lord and Savior of the world.
- In Christ’s name and by his grace we accept the mission to proclaim the gospel to all the world and live in loving service to all people.
- We rejoice in God, maker of heaven and earth, and in the covenant of love that binds us to God and one another.
- Through baptism into Christ we enter into newness of Life and are made one with the whole people of God.
- By the gift of the Holy Spirit we are joined together in Discipleship and in obedience to Christ.
- At the table of the Lord, each week we celebrate with thanksgiving the saving acts and presence of Christ and proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.
- Within the Body of Christ we receive the gifts of Ministry and accept the authoritative witness of scripture.
- In bonds of Christian faith we yield ourselves to God and one another that we may serve the One whose kingdom has no end.

Blessing, glory and honor be to God forever. Amen

We invite all Christians of this heritage to join us in this confession and affirmation of faith and make them their own.

- Adopted by members of the Stone Campbell Dialogue Team, June, 2000 6-02

The Stone-Campbell Dialogue

A Dialogue Between

Churches of Christ,

**Churches of Christ/
Christian Churches**

And

**Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)**

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’.