

GA-1327
(Sense-of-the-Assembly)

BECOMING A PEOPLE OF GRACE AND WELCOME TO ALL

WHEREAS, “We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world,” called to welcome others as we have been welcomed by God¹ and to practice hospitality to one another,² as well as to strangers;³ and

WHEREAS, Scripture affirms that all people are created in the image of God and share with all others in the worth that comes from being unique individuals;⁴ and

WHEREAS, Scripture affirms that as Christians we are many members, but are one body in Christ each with different gifts, called by Jesus to love our neighbors as ourselves,⁵ and called to the ministry of reconciliation and wholeness within the world and within the church; and

WHEREAS, Disciples historically affirm baptism as the primary call to ministry and offer baptism to all who profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior; and

WHEREAS, Disciples historically profess that the nature of Christian discipleship is profoundly informed by the Lord’s table, which is central to the act of worship, calling attention to the radical hospitality extended by Jesus, who welcomes all to the table of grace; and

WHEREAS, the Disciples’ movement came to be in reaction to limitations being placed on this welcome, recognizing that excluding anyone from the Lord’s table fragments the body of Christ; and

WHEREAS, the 1997 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) called for the church to give continuing research and reflection “concerning the participation of gay and lesbian persons in the full life and ministry of the Church”;⁶ and

WHEREAS, persons continue to be devalued and discriminated against within society and more sadly, within the church because of their sexual orientation and or gender identity; and

WHEREAS, Disciples find identity at the Lord’s table, sharing as the body of Christ, valuing each other in covenantal relationship even when we disagree; and

WHEREAS, Disciples historically affirm that individuals and congregations hold differing interpretations of scripture, but that all are called to transcend differences and claim one another in Christian unity;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly meeting in Orlando, Florida, July 13-17, 2013, calls upon the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to recognize itself as striving to become a people of grace and welcome to all God's children though differing in race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, physical or mental ability, political stance or theological perspective; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls upon the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to affirm the faith, baptism and spiritual gifts of all Christians regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and that neither is grounds for exclusion from fellowship or service within the church, but we celebrate that all are part of God's good creation; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls upon all expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), as a people of grace and welcome, to acknowledge their support for the welcome of and hospitality to all.

Douglass Boulevard Christian Church
Louisville, KY
Midway Hills Christian Church
Dallas, TX
Chalice Christian Church
Gilbert, AZ
Fireside Christian Church
Denver, CO
Little White Chapel
Burbank, CA
First Christian Church
Eugene, OR
Tapestry Ministries
Berkeley, CA

St. Andrew Christian Church
Olathe, KS
Lafayette Christian Church
Lafayette, CA
First Christian Church
Concord, CA
University Christian Church
San Diego, CA
First Christian Church
Vallejo, CA
New Covenant Community Church
Normal, IL
First Christian Church
Lynchburg, VA
Central Christian Church
Indianapolis
First Christian Church
Orange, CA
Open Hearts Gathering
Gastonia, NC
Bethany Christian Church
Tulsa, OK
Pine Valley Christian Church
Wichita, KS
Foothills Christian Church
Phoenix, AZ
GLAD-Pacific Southwest Region
Irvine, CA
GLAD Alliance

**The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT GA-1327. (Discussion time: 24 minutes)**

¹ Mark 12:31 [*Statement of Identity of the CC (DOC)*, Disciples.org]

² 1 Timothy 5:10; 1 Peter 4:9

³ Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2

⁴ Genesis 1:26-7

⁵ 2 Corinthians 5:18

⁶ Resolution No. 9719, A Call on the Participation of Gay and Lesbian Persons in the Life of the Church, accepted by the General Assembly meeting in Denver, Colorado, July 25-29, 1997.