Two Races in One Fellowship

Robert L. Jordan

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by

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UNITED CHRISTIAN CHURCH
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TWO RACES IN ONE FELLOWSHIP
by Robert L. Jordan

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DEDICATION

To my beloved mother,
MRS. EMMA GADSON
who kept the fire of Christianity burning in our home, this book is affectionately dedicated.
At a time when racial misunderstanding in this country is just about as serious as has been confronted in many years, this helpful volume appears with its enlightenment regarding relationships between two dominant races in our American brotherhood. The author has done an excellent job as he presents the background out of which both our white congregations and Negro congregations have grown.

He does not stop with historical background but proceeds to illuminate present conditions which clearly call for a unity of thought and life in spite of social barriers and customs. These barriers increasingly are being disregarded in the fellowship we all prize in Christ. A plea for Christian unity which has characterized our brotherhood from its inception calls for Oneness in Christ not only theologically but also racially, geographically, linguistically in heart and purpose.

These two races in fellowship should be a bright and shining light in this time of racial darkness comparable to the international fellowship which has so long prevailed between Canada and the
United States. The whole world looks to North America as the resplendent example of nations living side by side in peace and happiness. The Christian world may well see in the interracial fellowship within our brotherhood an example worthy of emulation by Christians of all races.

ROBERT M. HOPKINS

Indianapolis, Indiana.
INTRODUCTION

Since historians recording activities of the Disciples do not include but very little, if any, about the colored Disciples among them, this work is an attempt to codify and organize some of the scattering, fragmentary statements of old pioneers, conversations with their children and data secured from pamphlets and conversations with field workers and others.

This history reveals accounts of Negroes being converted and baptized in meetings held by Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell told by the aged Bishop G. A. Goins, an ex-slave, who knew Alexander Campbell personally and visited protracted meetings held by him.

Several aged Disciples who knew Barton W. Stone and others of the Restoration leaders (all ex-slaves) some ninety years of age, told of the meeting and fellowship in the assemblies. One Arnold Gragson of Germantown, Kentucky, revealed much.

This book does not deal wholly with the origin of the Disciples' movement. It does attempt to throw a little light on the movement as it affected the early and modern religious life of the Negro. Certainly the history of the Disciples is the history of all Disciples, this writer does not deny. This
book, along with other histories both modern and early, can best convey the inclusiveness and interracial harmony and oneness of the movement. Each chapter enfolds the activities of the fathers, both white and colored, in their relationship to one another, to the churches and with the movement.

We could not have written this short history were it not for the information given by Elder H. Herndon, Mrs. Elizabeth Lucas, Anderson Grigsby, Elder Arthur Cross, Amos Cross, James H. Simuel, Herman Turner, George Hoagland, Mrs. Elizabeth Herod, Elder Stafford Campbell, P. H. Moss, I. C. Franklin, R. L. Peters, W. H. Dickerson, J. Frank Green, F. P. Arthur, Harold H. Griffith, Cleveland Kleihaur, R. Graham Keevil, Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones, S. V. Mattson, D. W. Bradley, Rosa Brown Bracy, Harry Smith; T. W. Pratt, J. N. Ervin, R. Wesley Watson, W. H. Taylor, C. H. Whitfield, Charles McClendon, M. H. Garrard, Ulysses Harvey, W. H. Harvey, Mrs. Elizabeth Harvey, Wm. Summers, T. K. Rouse, Willard M. Wickzier, J. B. Lehman, Wm. Owens, Anna Bell, and a host of others. To all we are indeed grateful.

Beside these conversations we have read several books by Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones, Peter Ainslie, W. T. Moore, Alanson Wilcox, Jerome T. Jeter, A. W. Fortune and A. T. Degroot. Our visits to old churches and attendance at state, national and international conventions have aided us greatly in formulating this work.
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CHAPTER I

ORIGIN OF THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

The History of Christianity is a retrospective glance at the successes and failures of man in his long, long climb toward God. It may be preserved by recording a single incident or by including a thousand. How many depends upon the period and the importance of the facts included.

The origin of the Disciples of Christ is one of these incidents. It originated as a movement emphasizing one of the great re-discoveries in religion in the western world. It placed emphasis on unity in the Christian philosophy of life. Division and separation were the preachments of all religious bodies then. In the midst of this religious confusion God through man asserted Himself in a plea for unity instead of division. Thus the Disciples' Movement was born.

Before the nineteenth century, James O. Kelly was advocating the cause of Christian unity in Virginia and North Carolina. Abner Jones was busy discouraging division and advocating unity in Vermont. Barton W. Stone was the advocate in Kentucky.

In 1804, Barton Warren Stone, a Presbyterian minister, and a group of co-workers issued the Last
THOMAS CAMPBELL
Founder of the Restoration Movement
Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery, advocating its death. Some of the articles were: "We will that this body die, be dissolved and sink into union with the body of Christ at large; for there is but one body and spirit, as we are called in one hope of our calling; we will that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven and as many as are offended with other books, which stand in competition with it may cast them into the fire if they choose; for it is better to enter into life with one book, than having many to be cast into hell. We will that preachers and people cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance; pray more, and dispute less." This was dated June 28, 1804, and signed by John Dunlavy, Richard M’Nemar, B. W. Stone, John Thompson, David Purviance, and Robert Marshall.

The reason for dissolving the body was their deploring of divisions and party strife.

In 1809 another document written by Thomas Campbell advocating Christian union was issued by the Christian Association of Washington, Pennsylvania. This last document became the Magna Charta of the Restoration Movement.

Proposition 10 of it is as follows: That division among the Christians is a horrid evil, fraught with many evils. It is anti-Christian, as it destroys the visible unity of the body of Christ; as if He were divided against Himself. It is anti-Scriptural, as being strictly prohibited by His sovereign authority; a direct violation of His expressed command. It is
anti-Natural, as it excites Christians to condemn, to hate and oppose one another, who are bound by the highest and most endearing obligations to love each other as brethren, even as Christ has loved them. In a word, it is productive of confusion and of every evil work.

Proposition 11: That although the church of Christ upon earth must necessarily exist in particular and distinct societies, locally separate from one another, yet there ought to be no schisms, no uncharitable divisions among them. They ought to receive each other as Christ Jesus hath also received them to the glory of God.

Alexander Campbell became the leader of the movement constantly defending the Reformer's position. The movement is generally known as Disciples of Christ. Individual churches are known as Disciple Churches, Christian Churches and Churches of Christ.

Some of the churches of James O. Kelly and Absner Jones affiliated with the Restoration Movement after the union of the Campbell and Stone divisions consummated in 1832.
CHAPTER II

HOW THE NEGROES BECAME DISCIPLES

THIRTY-THREE years after the British yoke was lifted from the shoulders of the thirteen original colonies, long before America was able to stand up, still weighted down with religious bigotry, denominational hatred and racial subjugation, the nineteenth century reformation began.

Thomas Campbell, having served for several years as pastor of a Presbyterian church at Ahorey, Ireland, came to America in 1807 to labor among the pioneers.¹ Not only did he find a spirit of inequality between the colored people who were slaves and the whites but also he found a deep hatred among the religious bodies. What he had witnessed in Ireland was small in comparison with the mockery and divisions practiced in the Christian family in America. Deeply moved by the condition in his native Ireland and now strained beyond mental restraint, he set out to bind up the wound in the divided body of our Lord, emphasizing Christian unity and the equality of all Christians before God.

In 1801 another Presbyterian minister, Barton W. Stone, deeply deploring the unchristian prac-

tices and narrowness of debarring all but their members from communion, held a revival at Cane Ridge Church, inviting both the Baptist and Methodist ministers and their followers to cooperate. Like the Campbells, he had a passion for Christian unity and sought to make it real. While others were building circles too small for Christ, he sought to build one large enough.

Thomas Campbell began his labor among the people of western Pennsylvania, while Barton W. Stone worked in Kentucky. Both were conscious that religious practices of their day were wrong, as
How the Negroes Became Disciples

there are among us today many who know prac-
tices of religious forces fall terribly short of what
our Lord would have. Neither was aware of the
other's efforts in trying to direct the many streams
of Christian thought flowing in every direction into
one great channel of love and Christian brother-
hood.

The dawn of a new day brought Alexander
Campbell, the son of Thomas Campbell, and Wal-
ter Scott to the leadership instead of those two
great foundation builders. In 1827, forty-one years
before the next reformation (not in religion alone)
involving the solidarity of the union economically
and the status of the colored people, agitation for
unity of the Stone and Campbell movements were
under way. Along with this was a cry to free the
slaves. Some felt God could not have unity nor
unity while some of His children were slaves, for
out of one blood created He all races to dwell on
the face of the earth and if unity meant anything,
it certainly included cooperation, love, equality and
economic security for all people.

Thomas Campbell, the father of the movement,
did not know there existed such laws in the South,
and those states included therein, prohibiting minis-
ters from preaching to slaves. Once, while living in
Kentucky, he saw a group in a field, listened to their
singing and laughter, then went over to converse
with them. There was something in them akin to
himself. Like a brother, troubled over the condition
of another, his heart was touched over their condi-

tion. They could not read nor write. To listen was their only medium of elevation, but it was a crime to talk to them unless some trusted southerner was present.

In spite of this condition, Thomas Campbell felt it his duty to teach the colored people. Several times he met them. Each time taught them about God. One day a white friend made it clear to him that the colored people were not to be talked to, unless one of the masters was present. Otherwise he had to secure their written permission to do so.

This irritated Mr. Campbell. The Negroes were slaves but human beings. He saw no reason why they should be kept ignorant of God’s love. This attitude provoked him beyond mental restraint. Said he, “I do not desire to live in any section where such restrictions exist.” Not long after this, Thomas Campbell left Kentucky to once again locate in Pennsylvania. With the act, the Father of the Restoration Movement set the precedent, stirring the hearts of many masters. Some had thought it Christian to refuse Christian teachings to the slaves. Others distrusted the preacher’s teaching them unless one of their family was present.

Long before the Civil War, Disciples became aware of the necessity of making Christians of the colored people. Their plea was not only a call to the few but a welcome to all people. Although Alexander Campbell outstripped his father in debate with many opponents, he did not outdistance him in his love for humanity.
She joined the Christian church under Elder John T. Johnson (white) at Midway, Ky. Her husband, Elder Alexander Campbell, erected the church at Midway and added three hundred members. After rebuilding the church the Missionary Board (white) bought him liberty at $1,000. After being a missionary for three years he bought his wife's freedom.
The Negro was a part of the social order; even though a slave, he had a soul and a mind. He was loved by God the same as others. This was the position taken by Thomas Campbell, the father of Alexander.

The spirit of the father, many times, was manifested in the son. Those under his care, whether black or white, received religious instructions. Alexander Campbell, insofar as one can discern, did not condone slavery. Wherever he went, if given an opportunity to speak, he spoke against this evil.

When one reads the *Millennial Harbinger*, he discovers Mr. Campbell's opposition to this evil as early as 1831. Yet he left individuals free to make their own choice in the matter. If one held slaves, Alexander Campbell insisted it was his Christian duty to see to it that they learned about God. One of his favorite Scriptures was "The Epistle of Paul to Philemon." Many of the members of the restoration movement began thinking about those in their own household. Little by little, the masters and sometimes others, would have prayer with the slaves. Often, near meal time, the colored people were taught to give thanks at the table. Later, they were told the story of how Christ died for our sins. When there was to be a service held in the country, many times the slaves were told of it. Sometimes they were invited to go.

In these early days slaves drove their masters to the services, others living near came and stood on the outside while several went in to assist with the
children or do any other kind of work assigned. Some of the slaves being deeply impressed, sought spiritual guidance. They were already in Hades and to hear a man of God tell them how they might secure peace and sit down at the welcome table pleased them very much. They did not choose to go to a torment greater than the one already experienced. It had been hard to understand the preaching, but now this simple way of telling the old, old story appealed to most of them. Several were added to the church, often these went back and told the news to the other slaves. Many believed and were baptized, others were taught by the masters and their families. At times the most gifted among the slaves were trained and allowed to preach to the rest. Occasionally slaves were gathered in separate buildings and were preached to by the evangelists either before or after the regular service. Thus the Negro people living among families embracing the belief of the Disciples of Christ absorbed their religious beliefs and practices as did others who lived among those of other communions.

Alexander Campbell, a slave, was converted at the old Cane Ridge meeting house and became a preacher of note serving in North Carolina and Kentucky. His master, a Disciple, freed him to preach to the slaves. His son, Alexander Campbell, II, preached for the Second Christian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, and another son preached for the colored group at Paris, Kentucky. Many of the slaves heard the Campbells, the fathers of the Res-
toration Movement, Walter Scott and Barton W. Stone. Some were added to the church under them. This writer, while living in California, conversed with an ex-slave known as Bishop G. A. Goins, who knew Alexander Campbell personally and told how several persons, to his knowledge, became Christians. Said he, "Mr. Campbell was a great debater. I saw him many times, with his own hands, baptize colored men and women. I've never tired of hearing him speak. He always had something to say."
Chapter III

The Interracial Congregation

The History of the Disciples of Christ from 1809-1860 is correct in omitting colored churches for there were none to record. Some were in the making but none existed as independent churches until after that date. The slaves who stood at the windows and sat in the churches worshipped with their masters. They occupied the rear seats and balconies in the churches where many heard the Word, believed it, confessed Christ and were baptized. Although they had designated seats, whether in the rear, in the basement or in the balcony, they were members just the same.

Both colored and white worshipped together as recorded by R. H. Peoples, National Secretary of Colored Churches among Disciples of Christ, in his report on The Historical Development of Negro Work and Its Relation to the Organized Brotherhood Life.

"The history of the Negro Church cannot be recovered accurately at this late date, but from scant, fragmentary records available, a dim outline can be formed. From tradition, from statements of pioneer leaders, from cornerstones of churches as well as from old church minutes, we find there was Ne-
gro membership in practically all of the first churches where the Disciples’ movement began. Of course, we have never questioned the fact that Negroes were members of the old Cane Ridge Church in Kentucky, but it is surprising to read in J. B. Lehman’s early history of the work there was Negro membership in the Brush Run Church at Washington, Pennsylvania. In my travels I have run across churches in North and South Carolina, Texas and Georgia which had Negro and white membership originally.”
The Disciples Church was a model church in so far as all being under one shelter, the master, the freedman, the slave, all worshipped together. In this there was the recognition of God as Father and men as brothers, but not as equals. In some of these churches the colored brethren served as officials as reported by an old ex-slave of Germantown, Kentucky, who lived to be ninety-seven years old. In cities today where there is not a congregation of colored, the Negroes attend the white churches. This is true in Traverse City, Michigan, Flint, Michigan, and several of the smaller cities in Ohio. Even in some of the cities where we have new congregations among the colored people and where Negro members have been connected with the white congregation for years, this still exists.

There is something wholesome about this mode of service; all learn to know each other and become contributors for the common good. If children can go to school together and learn under the banner of the city, certainly Christians can go to church together and learn about God.

The Disciples practice this on a larger scale in those states where there is only one State Convention and a few Negro churches affiliating with the same. Such State Conventions as those of Michigan, New York, Indiana, Illinois, and California are included in this group. Other states with Negro organizations usually invite representatives from the white State Society to consider problems affecting the Negro and the general church.
Even today the International Convention is a representative assembly of all the people. Its services include Negroes, Indians, Japanese, Chinese, Mexicans and others. All have a part on the program. A processional of any regional, state, national or international gathering would still portray the Bouquet of the Brown, Yellow, Black and the White. All interested in the same thing — the Kingdom of God.
Dr. Cecil F. Cheverton said, "America is an experimental ground. Its inhabitants are children from every land in the world." How they get along indicates how near the Kingdom of God has come to be. The Disciple of Christ still holds to the original pattern. Long before Negroes had schools of their own in the south, Alexander Campbell (a slave) worked as porter and attended the school known today as Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky.
CHAPTER IV

THE CONGREGATIONS DIVIDE

The agitation before and during the Civil War changed the attitude of the two groups involved in the struggle. The Negro was a slave, subjected to the command of the dominant group. The whites were free and some were slave owners with every conceivable control. Among these two groups were those who felt the colored brethren should be free and equal. Still there was another group who felt it was divine to hold slaves. The Negroes themselves were divided; some felt slavery was good; while others thought it was wrong and longed to be free.

All worshipped in the same church, listened to the same sermon and communed together. But the Civil War was emerging — the mighty struggle between the North and South — one portion believing it to be right while the other thought it was wrong. In the middle was the Negro who was in the nation but not of it. In the church before God he was equal, but before man, unequal.

The church differs from the state in that it is a divine institution, world-wide, interracial and international but is conditioned by the beliefs, attitudes and knowledge people in it hold concerning God
and His program. The beliefs of men in the churches instead of the divine principles prevailed. Some of the communions divided over the slavery question. The Disciples of Christ, stressing in essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, love, did not divide. It was elastic here for every individual had a right to interpret for himself. Those who felt it wrong to hold slaves freed them; others kept them until the closing days of 1865 when the war ended, thus making the emancipation proclamation binding on all.

There have always been persons in the church opposed to Negroes attending mixed services. This did not strike deeply until the period of agitation for his liberation from civil bondage. It appears the whites believed civil separation meant religious separation also. What else could the Negro think after being a slave so long than that freedom itself carried with it this too? If the Disciple Movement had held fast to its traditional practice, it would be easier to call other communions to repentance. It was not done because its vision was blurred; it followed the civil acts instead of holding fast to the divine standards already before its eyes. After 1860 Negroes were encouraged to organize into separate bodies wherever a large enough number were found. Those churches having Negro membership did not set them aside all at once but used a gradual process. Whenever a sufficient number became members, they were urged to form a church of their own. The church usually became a mission supported
by the white congregation until it was able to carry on without support. Some of the churches continued the old practice until the Negroes of their own volition decided to withdraw. However, this separation required years to complete.

ARNOLD GRAGSON

Who was a member of the interracial congregation and moved as a charter member into the Colored Church at Germantown, Ky.

R. H. Peoples says, "The separation of the two into distinct churches was a gradual process. In some it came soon. It came soon after they were organ-
ized, while in others it was not done until years had passed, even as late as after the Civil War. The church at Midway, Kentucky is a good example of the former. Soon after this church was organized the membership became very large and the whites built a church for them.”

Arnold Gragson, an ex-slave, who was a member of the white congregation in Germantown, Kentucky, said, “The white brethren helped us organize and finance our church of which I was a charter member.”

The great Christian statesmen not only among the Disciples but in every communion would like to see the two races worship together all the time under the same roof. They are aware of many among them, and often in the church of which they are a part, being opposed to this system. Because of this opposition small cities where all of the church people would make one good congregation are supporting two or more. Since the colored congregation is only made up of a few, the strain to support their churches is often burdensome. Many of these towns are located in Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia, also a few in some of the northern cities.

The spirit promoting this is not only found in the white people but in the colored as well. When we measure the separation and division of congregations, we must not say nor feel that it was promoted by the whites alone, it was not. As late as 1917 leaders among the colored Disciples insisted

on organizing a separate convention while the white leaders opposed it.

Freedom to most of the colored meant separation. They did not understand freedom to mean being able to share in the total joys and sorrows of the whole without restraint. Their conception was freedom meant to control all without interference from others than themselves.

Today many of the great leaders among the colored Disciples hold the new conception of freedom. Their hearts and their tears are like those of the statesmen already mentioned, to raise the level of their people's thinking in order to reconstruct the Christian practices of Apostolic times.

The separation was not the organization of an independent Negro church, but an attempt to worship, plan and direct most of the cultural program in the light of the Negro's own intelligence.
Chapter V

THE PIONEERS AMONG THE COLORED DISCIPLES

The original pioneers among the Disciples of Christ were Thomas Campbell, Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, Walter Scott, Dr. Robert Richardson, John T. Johnson, Samuel Rogers, John Rogers, Jacob Creath, Phillips S. Fall and many others too numerous to mention. Slaves heard some of these teach and preach. Since the Disciples are one and the same whether Negro or white its beginning is identical. How can it be otherwise? What we mean by the title of this chapter is this: after separate churches were established, Negro men took the lead among their people. However, white friends continued to give guidance.

Long before the colored Disciples became able to support some of their individual churches, Alexander Cross was sent out from the Cane Ridge Church (white) in Kentucky as a foreign missionary to work among the Negroes of Jamaica, and Jacob Kinoly went as a missionary to Liberia, Africa. Alexander Campbell, the father of Stafford and Alexander Campbell of Kentucky, traveled extensively preaching in North Carolina, Kentucky and Virginia. In Michigan in 1869 T. W. Cross organized the Wheatland Church of Christ in which both
colored and white worshipped. This church has had both colored and white ministers.

Mississippi was dotted here and there with New Testament Churches early in the history of the movement, probably as early as 1868. A. I. Williams made a second attempt to continue Southern Christian Institute in Jackson, Mississippi in 1881, after the school closed the first time. The late Elder H. Herndon comes from a long line of pioneer preach-
ers. His grandfather, Ben Herndon, and father, Nick Herndon, were associates with Elder J. J. Keyes and W. A. Scott. Some were baptized by B. F. McNear, a white minister. J. J. Keyes was chosen as state evangelist in 1884 and did so for thirty years. He remembers the first church, Bethel, being named after the white congregation and was located in Carroll County. K. R. Brown who distinguished himself as a leader was elected state secretary in the same meeting. Several persons gathered in this assembly, among them being other pioneers, William Ramy, Louis Shields, Walter Sneed, and M. F. Johnson. To these men goes the credit for the hard work of cultivating the soil in that state.

of North Carolina a group of Disciples who washed feet as early as 1867 records the following as pioneers among them: Alfred Lovick, Yancy Porter, Demus Hargett, Allen Chestnut and R. E. Green. B. J. Gregory who received over three thousand into the church; R. E. Green who built thirteen churches; and Charles Randolph Davis Whitfield who baptized one thousand, eight hundred and forty-seven with his own hands and gave six sons to the Christian ministry. California pioneers are A. Cochren, A. W. Jacobs, M. F. Mitchell, D. L. McMickens, A. Harper, and C. Henderson.

words the plea of the Disciples of Christ but demonstrate it to all.

Their work speaks for itself. Preston Taylor ministered to the church at Mount Sterling, Ky., Lea Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee, and raised funds to erect the Capitol City 12th Street Church, Washington, D. C. Others distinguishing themselves were H. L. Herod, who organized Flanner House and pastored the Second Christian Church in Indianapolis, Ind., and P. H. Moss who served for a long time as Director of Religious Education among the Negro churches. Some of these are yet alive,
others have passed on, leaving behind foundations on which a greater church can be built.

Along with this illustrious group of men were women, namely: Mrs. Elizabeth Herod, Mrs. William Alphin, Mrs. Wilma Ervin, Rebecca Strickland, Mrs. Alice Mitchell, Mrs. Lizzie Bowen, Mrs. L. R. Dickerson, Mrs. N. Sharps, Mrs. Preston Taylor, Mrs. E. Kirkpatrick, Mrs. S. A. Pirtle, Sadie Bostic, Mrs. P. H. Moss, Mrs. A. M. Haygood, Mrs. S. Vanburn, Mrs. C. Maybery, Mrs. C. H. Dickerson, Mrs. Rosa Brown Bracy, Mrs. Elizabeth Harvey, Mrs. Rebecca Strickland, Mrs. Detsie Blackburn, Mrs. H. A. M. Singleton, and Mrs. Sarah Blackburn. Also Miss Ella Bean, Hattie Mallory, Fannie H. Johnson, Reta E. Manpin, Mrs. M. J. Brown, C. Martin Harris, Addie Holland, Nancy V. Jennings, Elizabeth M. Harden, Seberlie E. Grubbs, Mrs. W. A. Scott, Mrs. J. W. Scott, and Florence P. Hayden.

These sowed the seed, watered it and kept it alive. Some time while the men were away they kept watch. Every state and every church has its pioneers. Those who toiled when the going was hard; those who gave to their generation and to those unborn, the Communion we love. They may not have made it world-wide but their little part well done made it possible for us to enjoy a greater fellowship.

Since the frontier of the Restoration Movement has not been pushed very far among the Negro, most of the first work was done in the villages and
with farm dwellers. The way was opened for a new pioneer with more tools than the first. In 1914 people moved to cities. To plant churches and administer the programs in the cities were as difficult as laying the first foundation. Young men, some trained in Drake University, Butler University, Eureka College, Southern Christian Institute, Louisville Bible College, Chapman College, Jarvis Christian College, and some self made, went forth suffering to build.


Of course, the foundation was laid. It was rural to the core. Most of the members were taught to give as the Lord had prospered them. Their prospering was not the churches’ prospering. The Kingdom of God was sought, first to save their souls but to support the church was another thing. It appeared to be entirely left to God for it was the last thing most of the members thought of. God could have their souls but not their pocketbooks.

The task of raising finance and developing a cultural program were two major tasks of the last group of men. Too, there were people from every section
of the country, all having different ideas. Everyone feeling that the church had to be conducted like the church back home. These problems had to be solved and the next step for unity exposed. To this task they had to address themselves. Some of the women belonging to this last group are Mrs. R. H. Peoples, Orene Cole, A. Dean, Mrs. E. A. Daniel, Mrs. C. W. Arnold, Mrs. W. E. Shumate, Mrs. Oneda Reed, Bessie Chandler, Marion Anderson, Carnella Jamison, Mrs. Geneva Townes, Rosa Page Welch and Edith Barstow Wilson. They, with the men, are building on the foundation laid by the fathers in metropolitan areas.
Chapter VI

The Colored Congregations

The Disciples' Movement was most effective in the rural era. It was known for many years as the rural communion for in this less urban environment it took root first in America. Today many of its churches are still to be found in rural communities, scattered over twenty-five or more states. Some of these are memberless churches; some are churches with three and four members; while others are thriving ones. Many of the memberless churches are found in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Texas and Kentucky. These states lost many of their rural populace during the time of the First World War (1914-1918). Unlike the other several communions losing their constituency in the south but regaining them in the north, the Disciples lost a large number of its members for it did not have churches in the urban communities to which many of its members migrated.

Since 1915 the Disciples have been developing churches in the urban centers of the north. Still there are many large cities without churches of this persuasion.

With the exodus churches sprang up in southern cities as well. However some cities of the south
had churches, as did a few small ones in the north, for example Xenia, Ohio.

Kentucky, North Carolina, Missouri and Texas have the largest number of churches and are the pioneer states among the Negro membership. Mississippi, Kansas, Tennessee and Virginia rival these states not in the number of members but in having pioneers to visit them before going other places. The Early History by J. B. Lehman says there were Negro members of the church in Washington, Penn, Pennsylvania is almost entirely without Disciples' Churches among Negroes. It contains some of the largest cities, populated heavily by Negroes. Only recently have we planted churches in New York City, N. Y., and Detroit, Michigan, both having over 100,000 colored population.

Since the old frontier has been pushed back, the Negro division of the Disciples has been standing where the fathers left it totally blind to the need for a new approach in the struggle for Christian unity. Most of the churches and their members feel to change their approach to challenge persons now would be a denial of the faith, and to cooperate with other communions is all the more a denial. However, some of the leaders and churches are trying to adjust this situation now. It seem the failure to do so rapidly is due to an over-emphasis of our being right and all others wrong, our plan of salvation the only one, and to be a Christian, this was the only way. Many are unaware that our position was an attempt to find a Bible basis which all loyal believers could accept and on which they could
unite. It was not intended to condemn, disqualify and denounce any; instead it was to solidify, strengthen and unite all. Our fathers never did contend we

are the only ones; instead they contend our basis are the only Christians but Christians only; instead they contend our basis was the only one discovered
Two RACES IN ONE FELLOWSHIP

by them in the New Testament upon which all Christians could agree. They contended God alone had a right to judge; we have no right to take His place. They insisted that the plan of salvation ought not to be cumbersome but simple and understandable so that sinners could easily know how to become Christians.

Instead of stopping where the founders intended, too often our plea of unity is submerged and the five steps originated by Walter Scott — faith, repentance, confession, baptism, and the Holy Spirit — became our symbols. This was a movement in the church to bring about unity. This primary purpose forgotten, our five steps, as glorious as they may be, became the measurement of all, whether Christian or sinner, member of a sister church or a non-member. All were tested by them.

After the grand old days many of the older members passed. The youth, their children, repudiated the narrowness of their communion, some deserted; others decided to remain in the church to correct whatever narrowness there was.

The movement in the church to straighten out the curves and broaden the path, itself became more narrow. Too often the people felt to restore the ancient church meant to restore its form and officiary. Never did any think of its spirit of forbearance, tolerance and love. Christ was the creed in name but too often not in practice. This spirit to some degree still dominates the thinking of many of the colored Disciples and whites also.
North Carolina has the largest number of Negro churches. Some affiliating with the United Christian Missionary Society and the National Convention, the latter a Negro organization. Still one hundred and fifty of its churches are organized into separate Assemblies presided over by Chiefs. They have four regularly organized Conventions, two in the Eastern part of North Carolina, namely: The Goldsboro-Raleigh Assembly; The Washington-Norfolk Assembly and the Southern and Western. The Convention Assemblies do not hold simultaneous sessions; each has an independent date. All together, there are 18,000 or more Disciples in the group — some of the churches have 1,000 members or more. This last group wash feet. Some of them are drawing away from this practice now.¹

In all, among the Disciples of Christ are five hundred colored congregations. About 150 of these are without pastors; two-thirds of the remaining are unable to support them. The remaining fifty pay their ministers' salaries on which they might support their families. Although the vocation of the second group is the ministry, many of these colored ministers must find other employment in order to live.

In these five hundred churches are to be found 50,000 or more Disciples scattered through congregations ranging in membership from three through three hundred and fifty. There are a few with one hundred or more members; some with two hundred, and ten or fifteen churches with three hundred

fifty or more. The majority of these congregations have less than ninety members.

All of these churches do not contribute to the world program of the Disciples; some are not able and others are indifferent. Yet a large number send missionary contributions to the co-operative causes. Some of the friction in the colored group can be traced to the different schools of thought among the white group. Some read the *Christian Evangelist*, *Front Rank* and other literature printed by the Christian Board of Publications (Bethany Press), while the other group reads the *Christian Standard* and other literature printed by the Standard Publication Company *although an independently-owned corporation*. It is too bad these two companies do not have a harmonious editorial policy, both working for the elevation of all instead of having a competitive one.

The leaders in the Brotherhood would do well to assign various printing to each of these concerns. Unless this is done it would be best for the 50,000 colored Disciples to patronize only one. To continue patronizing both develops friction in the local church and throughout the colored Brotherhood.

In a study of 186 churches among the Disciples' colored constituency, R. H. Peoples found that during a period of four years all of these churches contributed one or more times to the causes of the Disciples of Christ.\(^3\) One hundred and seven of them are located in urban communities and seventy-nine in rural. They have 19,875 members of churches

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and 8,892 members of Bible Schools and 142 ministers. About seventy-four ministers of this number have less than a high school education; eleven have high school training; fourteen are college graduates, two with graduate degrees; and three have done some work in seminaries.

The buildings occupied by the five hundred congregations may be divided into three groups: house churches, basement structures and gothic buildings. Some of these were given to the congregations, others were designed and built by the groups, and the last group are old structures built by other communions who sold them to the colored Disciples.

The worship services in these churches are on the whole in keeping with the Disciples' tradition in that they administer the communion every Sunday, extend the invitation and the minister delivers the sermon. In the rural churches the fellowships meet once a month, following the usual pattern of the urban congregations.

A few, if any, of the churches are extremely emotional. Most of the services are characterized by silence, now and then one hears an "amen" or "that's right."

Most all of the churches have robed choirs and other singing groups. In all, the Disciples Church among Negroes is not strong. Many do not know what is meant by the names. Since local congregations are sometimes called Churches of Christ, Christian Churches and occasionally Disciples' Church, more often Campbellites, and since the masses of colored are not too well acquainted with the move-
ment and since the Disciples' position is more intellectual than emotional, it is sometimes difficult to win them for the church.

The future of the movement among the colored people depends largely upon the quality of its leadership, whether it has ability to mingle and participate in activities for the upbuilding of the race as a whole; secondly, whether it translates or interprets the Disciples' Movement as one means of self improvement and cooperative good will. If so, it must be oriented into the stream of life now, whether or not the buildings compare favorably with those of other movements in the same city or town. Some remain in the church because of father and mother being members. This is on the decline now. It is the Church, its members, what they are doing, and its position in regards to great questions, as well as its Divine Service that counts.

It looks bright, if a more intensive advertising campaign is launched to acquaint the general public with the movement among the colored people, both locally and nationally.

The future will glow when the members of the Church become Ambassadors for Unity and Evangelists for Good. When its ministry can give all of its time to the church, instead of making it a secondary item on the calendar — when young men can know they and their families will be supported, if called to a Disciple Church to minister, it will not only boost the movement, but will accelerate its growth.
CHAPTER VII

THE COLORED BRETHREN RECEIVE AID

After the Negro was housed in his own churches, problems of maintenance, evangelism and education confronted him. The change was desirous but he was puzzled as to what to do. Most of the leaders could not read. They had been trained to remember that which was told them. To preach and sing was all they knew. To develop worship programs, finance undertakings and develop leadership to continue the work, left them bewildered.

The white brethren, conscious of all this, all along began helping the colored Disciples. First, individuals labored among them. Randall Faurot and his wife Letetia labored in Mississippi. He preached and his wife ran a school to which Negroes were encouraged to attend. After a short period other individuals decided to labor with the Faurots. They formed a corporation to start a school designed to train Negro leaders. This was the beginning of the Southern Christian Institute in 1872. Sometimes the classes were taught in Bethel Church in Carroll County by J. Land and Ben Merrill. In 1882 the school was consolidated into the present Southern


Secondly, the states rallied to their support. Illinois raised funds to support two evangelists in Mississippi who organized thirty congregations, placing a greater responsibility upon the already distressed institution to train leaders.

In every assembly of the General Convention held after the Civil War great speeches were delivered

urging the American Christian Missionary Society to do something for the Negro. In 1890 the Society organized the Board of Negro Education and Evangelism in the Convention at Des Moines, Iowa. About 1900 the agencies of the Brotherhood began to support work among the Negroes; sending out evangelists far and near. The American Christian Missionary Society co-operated with the several state Societies in that it supported the evangelist sent out by them and itself employed Preston Taylor as National Evangelist, sending him forth. He organized churches and raised funds for another school, the Louisville Bible School in Kentucky, out of which came R. Wesley Watson, M. F. Mitchell, J. Salvador Johnson, C. H. Dickerson, C. E. Graggrett, S. C. Divine, Wm. Martin, and others. In January, 1890, the property of Southern Christian Institute was turned over to J. W. Jenkins, who set out to find someone to carry on the work. In the fall of 1890, he influenced J. B. Lehman to become head of Southern Christian Institute, who later developed it into a recognized, accredited junior college in Mississippi.

C. C. Smith was chosen as Secretary of the Board of Negro Education and Evangelism at the convention at Allegheny, Pa., in 1891, with the added responsibility of raising monies to support all of the Negro work. Soon the American Christian Missionary Society took over the budget of the Negro department, thus curtailing a multiplicity of ap-

6. Ibid. p. 5.
peals, but left C. C. Smith free to plan and direct the expenditures for its operation. Later the Christian Women’s Board of Missions was asked to take over the support of the Negro work. This was done in the convention held at Kansas City, Mo., in 1900. They were glad to do it. At this time five schools for Negro education were operating. Lum in Alabama, Louisville Bible School in Kentucky, Southern Christian Institute in Mississippi, Piedmont Christian Institute, Martinsville, Virginia, and the Central Christian Institute at Jonesboro, Tennessee.

Through the efforts of W. H. Hopson, the first attempt to start the Louisville Bible School was made. It operated for four years with Professor P. H. Moss as principal. The next attempt was at New Castle, Ky., in 1886, by Dr. J. M. Maimuring and J. Augustus Reed who opened it the second session. This attempt ended in 1892. The last and successful attempt was made on Duncan Street in Louisville, with Professor A. J. Thomson principal and later Professor O. Singleton, assistant.

October 15, 1894 the Lum Grade School was opened with Robert Brooks, a graduate of S. C. I. as principal. October, 1900, the Piedmont Christian Institute held its first session. James H. Thomas was principal.

Today, all of these schools are closed except S. C. I., due to the depression following World War I. Monies derived from the sale of the properties are

6. Ibid. p. 5.
invested and interest used to defray expenses of Negro students preparing for Christian service.

"Shortly after the Christian Women's Board of Missions took over the Negro work. C. C. Smith began to use J. B. Lehman in state conventions to conduct institutes and all he could to help the work." After serving as head of the Negro work for twenty years, Mr. Smith retired and J. B. Lehman, who had become familiar with it, succeeded him.

In 1914, the Christian Women's Board of Missions and the Bible School Department of the American Christian Missionary Society asked Mr. Lehman to recommend persons qualified to serve as field workers. Those recommended were to serve among the Bible schools and the women of the Negro Brotherhood. He recommended Miss Rosa Brown to work among the women and P. H. Moss for the Bible Schools. The first began working July 1, 1914, and the latter October 1, 1914. Within a short time states with fifteen or more churches had evangelists, some being of the second generation. Soon change after change took place. In 1917 two calls went out to organize a National Convention; Preston Taylor sent one from Nashville, Tenn.; William Alphin sent the second for a meeting to be held in Kansas City in cooperation with the international Convention. In September a host of brethren gathered at Lea Avenue Church in Nashville to organize the National Christian Missionary Convention of the Disciples of Christ. At that gathering were Preston Taylor, H. L. Herod, William
Alphin, W. H. Dickerson, Dr. J. E. Walker, J. J. Keys, K. R. Brown, P. H. Moss, Miss Rosa Brown, I. C. Franklin, G. M. Dickerson, M. Jackson, W. A. Scott, R. E. Hathaway, B. C. Calvert, J. B. Duncan,

Hattie Mallory, Ella Beaver, H. A. M. Singleton, Lizzie T. Bowen, Ida Taylor, Fred Smith, Miss L. R. Dickerson, R. H. Davis and J. N. Ervin. In this time of need guidance came, Mrs. Anna R. Atwater representing the Christian Women's Board of Missions, Stephen J. Corey, representing the Foreign Missionary Society, Robert M. Hopkins, representing the American Christian Missionary Society, and J. B. Lehman, Superintendent of Negro work. The latter group felt the Negro constituency was too hasty in organizing. In fact, they contended the Christian Church needs only one convention; that the Negro is as welcome in it as any white person. When the colored brethren appeared to be determined, the latter group contended if it had to be, make it an auxiliary of the International Convention.7

Out of the National Convention came an advisory board, members of which were selected by the National Convention: the whites serving on the same, being appointed by the cooperating board interested in Negro work.

In 1935, P. H. Moss, National Director of Religious Education among Negro Churches, passed after a remarkable career. In the same year, R. H. Peoples was chosen to become General Secretary of Negro Churches. In 1938, Mrs. Rosa Brown Bracy, after twenty-three years of service, was succeeded by Miss Carnelia Jamison. Preston Taylor, pastor of Lea Avenue Church, and the first president of the

National Convention, died in 1931. Henry L. Her-od, pastor of the Second Christian Church, and second president of the National Convention, died in 1935.

New men came to the lead. B. C. Calvert of Port Gibson, Mississippi, became president of the National Convention and served for one year and died. He was succeeded by J. N. Ervin of Hawkins, Texas. Before the setting of the next General Assembly at Knoxville, Tennessee in 1937, Ervin passed away and L. H. Crawford of Kansas was elected president of the National Convention.

All along the convention had had ten secretaries, William Alphin and C. E. Craggett serving the longest. After Ervin's death, Craggett resigned and I. C. Franklin was elected and served for two years. In 1940, R. W. Watson succeeded L. H. Crawford as president and Dr. J. E. Walker continued as treasurer. In 1942, W. H. Taylor became president of the National Convention, Church Division; Mrs. J. Kirkpatrick, president of the Women's Division; R. L. Jordan, president of the Bible School Department; and Foster Craggett and Evelyn Dunn, co-presidents of the Christian Youth Fellowship and C. E. Departments.

L. L. Dickerson was chosen as Recording Secretary and Mrs. Rosa Brown Bracy, Executive Secretary of the National Convention. While Mrs. F. Walker was chosen President of the Ministers' Wives Council and I. Q. Hurdle, Transportation Secretary; Rev. R. H. Peoples and Carnelia Jamison, Na-
tional Secretaries, were again chosen, and Merle Eppse re-elected editor of the Christian Plea.

Out in Texas another school was developing. After twenty years of hard work and suffering, Jarvis Christian College became one of the great schools of Texas under the leadership of J. N. Ervin. After his death, Peter C. Washington became president of Jarvis. The land on which this school was erected was given for Negro educational purposes by General and Mrs. J. J. Jarvis of Fort Worth, Texas.

Another shift in the personnel of the work was Miss Dale Ellis. She became head of Institutional Work and Willard M. Wickizer, Executive Secretary of the Home Missions Department, after all boards were merged into the United Christian Missionary

Problems affecting Negroes are still being referred to an inter-racial committee whether known as administrative or advisory.

Under the Home Missions Department, new churches and old churches in cities are supported. Their ministers’ salaries are supplemented. In some instances the city organization and the state society also assist in the support of the minister as well as help to keep payments on the property up to date. In making loans to Negro churches, the salaries of the Negro preachers have been supplemented by Church Extension.

Many times colleges and universities have granted fellowships and scholarships to students preparing for the ministry and other religious work. Sometimes individuals have paid the tuition for colored brethren.
CHAPTER VIII

THEIR ORGANIZATIONS

The local church is the unit of organization. There are other subsidiary groups within each local unit, such as the Bible School, Christian Endeavor, Ladies' Aid Society, Missionary Society, mens' groups and several other boards, elders, deacons, trustees which are broken down into committees.

Some of the churches have only elders and deacons with a Missionary Society as the sole organization of the church. It depends largely upon the size and cultural background of the people. In some of the churches only the elders and deacons comprise what is known as the official; other congregations have these and representatives from other groups such as the ladies' aid, missionary society, Bible School, Christian Endeavor, deaconesses, etc.

For a long time these independent congregations had no way of fellowship with each other unless several existed in the same county or town. Many knew of each other by the evangelist traveling from place to place; sometimes a family from one church would visit or move into a neighborhood and look for the church with a service like the one back home. If this was found, a letter to the remaining family or friends was a connecting bond among the congregation.
After the schools were organized and men from them began pastoring, there was a growing desire for some medium of expression in which one might communicate with the other. Sensing the need for such a medium, Southern Christian Institute published the *Gospel Plea* which is known today as the *Christian Plea*. It is the national organ of the Negro Disciples of Christ. Merel Eppse succeeded C. H. Dickerson as its editor.

In 1884 the colored Disciples organized its first state organization in Mississippi. When there was a growing desire on the part of the colored brethren for more self-expression and fellowship, fourteen states were organized, namely, Arkansas, Alabama, George, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. However, Missouri was organized in 1874, ten years before any other state.

Still there was being held the Workers' Conference at Southern Christian Institute in which many of the state leaders and evangelists had fellowship, but this was not a convention of all of the churches. It was a conference of leaders. Many of the leaders felt great good could be derived if a convention was organized. In 1917 at Nashville, Tennessee, August 5th through 9th, representatives from the fourteen states assembled with a few white representatives and proceeded to organize the National Christian Missionary Convention of the Disciples.

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of Christ. Officers elected were: President, Preston Taylor; 1st Vice-president, W. H. Dickerson; 2nd Vice-president, William Alphin; 3rd Vice-president, J. Louderback; Recording Secretary, R. E. Pearson; Corresponding Secretary, H. L. Herod, and Treasurer, Dr. J. E. Walker. For twenty-five years the colored brethren have been meeting in this annual assembly to which all of the states and local congregations send delegates. Much of the advance work for the growing brotherhood is done in conference groups annually. The chairman of these are elected every year at the convention.

Some of the leaders are appointed by the National Secretary of Colored Churches, who has accomplished wonders in developing these conferences, namely Religious Education, Pastoral Counselling, The Local Church, Missionary, etc.

All branches found in the local church have their own national organizations, the Christian Endeavor, Bible School and Women’s Missionary Society.

Today the Negro brotherhood have representatives from twenty-five states and probably from two hundred and fifty of its five hundred churches in attendance at its convention. Usually a convention ranges from four hundred to five hundred in attendance. Other changes are taking place; adjustments are being made and new organizations are being formed.

The purpose of the National Convention was, and still is, to create a medium of self-expression and cooperative endeavor for development of our churches
that our best contribution may be made to our posterity and to the world.

The program of the National Convention is to develop:

1. A headquarter office
2. An informed laity
3. A learned ministry
4. A prepared leadership

In memory of Henry L. Herod, a fund is being developed known as the Henry Herod Scholarship Fund. In memory of P. H. Moss, the P. H. Moss Scholarship Fund has been established.

The Constitution and By-Laws of the National Convention were:

**Name**

This organization shall be known as the National Convention of the Church of Christ.

**Membership**

This Convention shall be composed of: (1) Churches known as Disciples or Christians only, with all their departments represented by duly elected delegates. (2) State Conventions by duly elected delegates. (3) And such others as the Convention in session may provide. (The number of votes each State shall be entitled shall be fixed by By-Laws.)
OFFICERS

The officers of this organization shall be: President, First, Second, and Third Vice-Presidents, Recording Secretary, Assistant, Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Statistical Secretary and Treasurer, Executive Committee and Auditing Committee.

The duty of these shall be such as is usually performed by such officials, and shall be elected annually by the Convention and serve until their successors are elected.

The Recording Secretary and Treasurer shall be paid for their services. The Treasurer shall give bond at the expense of the Convention.
The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Recording and Corresponding Secretaries, Treasurer, Presidents of the Bible School and C.W.B.M. departments, and three (3) others elected by the Convention.

This organization shall be a chartered institution and shall have its legal location in the City of Nashville, County of Davidson, State of Tennessee, but it shall have power to meet and transact business at any place which shall be designated by the Convention or Executive Committee.

**Object**

The object of this organization shall be to cooperate in preaching the Gospel at home and abroad; to help in preparing and maintaining teachers and missionaries in America and other lands; to assist in promoting religious education and benevolence. This object shall be carried out by such methods as the Convention shall consider wise and best to adopt; and cooperation with other organizations of Disciples or otherwise shall not be denied. The wisdom and nature of such cooperation, when not expressed by the Convention as a whole, shall be left to the wisdom of the Executive Committee.

**Meetings**

This organization shall meet annually at such time and place as the preceding meeting may name, or at the call of the Executive Committee.
Neither this organization or any of its officers, as such, shall ever assume any authority whatever over individual congregations of Disciples.

AMENDMENTS

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Convention by a two-third majority vote of the delegates present and voting, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing and read to the Convention at the preceding annual meeting.

BY-LAWS

1. Each delegate and representative shall present a certificate from church or State Convention, and shall pay an enrollment fee of not less than two dollars ($2.00).

2. Each State Convention shall pay an enrollment fee of not less than ten dollars ($10.00).

3. All moneys received shall be accurately recorded by the Recording Secretary, and disbursed by the Executive Committee by order signed by the President and Recording Secretary.

4. Each State represented in the Convention shall on all questions submitted, be entitled to one (1) vote for each five hundred (500) members or fraction thereof, the census of the last State Convention shall be the standard.

5. A vote on any question shall be taken by States, when such a vote is called for by as many as three
(3) delegates representing three (3) States. In such cases the roll shall be called in alphabetical order. In all other cases the vote may be taken *viva voce* by standing or ballot. Each delegate present and voting may cast the vote or votes his or her Church or State is entitled, provided no other delegates from that State are present.

6. No additional enrollment of States, or delegates, or representatives, after a vote by States has been called, on any question, shall be counted in the vote cast on that question.

7. No proxy shall be cast.

8. The Executive Committee shall meet as often as the Chairman, in counsel with the other members of the Committee, may think necessary and wise. The Convention shall pay the railroad fare of the Committee for such meetings.

9. The Executive Committee shall fill all vacancies in the Committee, also in the officials of the Convention. The term of election to such vacancies to expire at the assembling of the next Convention.

**Committee:**

W. H. Dickerson, *Chairman*, Ohio
Mrs. O. A. Singleton, Kentucky
Prof. J. N. Erwin, Texas
J. E. Walker, M.D., Mississippi
Prof. J. H. Thomas, Virginia
R. E. Pearson, Kentucky
Wm. Alphin, *Secretary*, Missouri
The New Constitution was adopted in Convention of August 23, 1942 at Kansas City, Missouri, which was the National Christian Missionary Convention.

Article I. Name
The National Christian Missionary Convention.

Article II. Membership

Section 1. Membership shall consist of individual Disciples of Christ eligible from Christian Churches, and conventions of Christian Churches with the following agencies: Women's Missionary Societies, or Councils, Church School Departments, Christian Endeavor Societies, Youth Fellowship and Laymen's Movement, or any agency the convention chooses to elect for membership.

Section 2. This convention shall reserve the right to refuse admittance or expel from membership any organization or individual whose professional practices is considered detrimental to or a reflection upon this organization. (D)

Article III. Object

It shall be the purpose of this organization to cooperate in the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ; to promote the cause of evangelism, to foster and maintain a program of Christian Education among the Christian Churches of the Brotherhood, to perform such general supervisory functions as the best interest the work may require, and to cooperate with the International Convention, The United
Christian Missionary Society, and other Brotherhood agencies, Boards, or movements for the furthering the world program of the brotherhood, and any other religious movement the brotherhood chooses to work with.

**Article IV. Organization**

*Section 1.* The officers of this convention shall consist of a president, 1st and 2nd vice-presidents, recording secretary, and treasurer. These officers shall be elected annually by the convention.

*Section 2.* Each department shall elect its own officials and make its own by-laws, provided such shall not conflict with the constitution and by-laws of this convention. These departments shall be given adequate space on the convention program, time enough to present their work and needs and hold their annual business session, this being determined by the program committee.

*Section 3.* Trustees: The trustee board shall consist of nine members. The members of the board shall be elected by the convention for a period of three years, one-third retiring each year. That the trustee board shall organize itself by electing a chairman, secretary, and treasurer. The trustee board shall hold title to all properties of the convention and shall be in charge of all permanent funds of the convention, such as scholarships, endowments, and bequests.

*Section 4.* The Board of the National Convention shall consist of 17 members, president and secretary
of trustees, 9 elected members from the floor. The term of the elected members shall be three (3) years, one-third retiring each year; the remaining six will be the elected officers; namely, the president of the convention, the secretary, and treasurer, the presidents of the following agencies: Women's Missionary Society, President of Church School, and President of Christian Endeavor Society; an honorary group including Promotional Secretary, Editor of Christian Plea and two general secretaries.

Section 5. The Board shall meet at least four times annually. Once at the setting of the convention, twice during the session, and again at the end of the session. The Board may meet upon the call of the executive committee, or at the written request of seven members of the Board. Nine shall constitute a quorum. The president of Convention shall be chairman and the Board shall elect its own secretary and three members to the executive committee. This Board shall have full charge of all business, promotion and general supervision of the program of the convention.

Section 6. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President of the Convention, officers of the Board, chairman of the trustee board, and Treasurer of the Convention, and three elected members from the board; the said members being named by the National Board. The Executive Committee shall be vested with power to act for the board between sessions of the board.
Section 7. The National Board shall have power to establish such commissions or committees as shall be necessary for the work of the convention. It shall be the function of a commission or committee to give special study and direction to the particular phase of the National Convention program for which it is responsible. The necessary expense of the commission or committee shall be provided by the board. The chairman of the commission shall be a member of the board and the life of the commission shall be one year.

Section 8. All officers and employees of the convention who in pursuit of their duties are required to handle funds of the conventions shall be bonded for the amount fixed by the National Board.

Section 9. The membership of the recommendation committee shall consist of five members of the National Convention Board, appointed by the board, presidents of State Conventions, and one representative from states where they have no conventions, that person being determined by the National Board.

Section 10. Each department shall share in the financial maintenance of the convention and promotion of the convention. The financial quota of each department shall be determined by the Executive Committee. (D)

Section 11. The Program Committee shall consist of the President of the convention, and presi-
dents of the Departments of the convention, Field Secretaries, and the pastor of the entertaining church. The chairman of the committee shall be appointed by the president of the convention.

Section 12. Headquarters: The headquarters shall be Nashville, Tennessee, but, the National Board can designate and maintain a temporary office of their own choosing and all funds of the convention shall be received through this office and properly receipted from it.

Article V. Convention

Section 1. The Annual Convention of the National Christian Missionary Convention shall convene the Wednesday morning, 9:00 a.m., before the 4th Sunday in August, and close the following Tuesday. The National Board shall appoint a committee on Nomination of Officers. The members shall be nine; four from the national board and five from the floor. The National Board shall submit to the Annual Convention a complete certified financial report covering the previous year; a report of the work undertaken during the previous year and its achievements and a statement for future activities.

Article VI. Employed Staff

Section 1. The National Board shall have the sole power to recommend workers, fix salaries and establish conditions of service of all workers, subject to the decision and policies determined by the convention.
Section 2. The National Board shall employ an Executive Secretary of the convention and all other workers employed by the board shall work under the direction of the Executive Secretary. The said Board shall build a budget and recommend same to the National Convention to be administered by the Executive Committee.

Article VII. Inter Agency

Section 1. The Inter Agency Council shall be an Inter-racial committee. The Negro membership of the committee shall be three members elected by the convention, president of the Women’s Missionary Department, Bible School Department, and Christian Endeavor. They shall serve for a term of three years, one-third retiring each year. The white members of the committee shall be left to the co-operating boards and agencies. The duties of this committee shall be: to serve in an advisory capacity and make recommendations to the National Convention Board and Brotherhood agencies.

Article VIII. Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at any regular session of the convention by a two-third majority vote of members present and voting, providing notice of such amendment has been given to the secretary in writing in time to be read in, at least, three business periods of the convention before action is taken. Said amendment to become effective one year after adoption, or at the next annual conven-
tion. (Roberts’ Rules of Order will be used as our parliamentary procedure.)

Article IX.

All other Rules, Regulations, Recommendations, or Resolutions in conflict with any provision of this Constitution or By-Laws as revised and adopted, this 23rd day of August, 1942, are hereby revoked and annulled.

Article X.

This convention shall have the right to purchase, hold or dispose of property, real and personal and to publish a Religious Journal or some other medium of information.

Organizations for Work Among the Negroes in Cooperation With The United Christian Missionary Society

National Workers
National Secretary of Negro Churches: C. L. Parks, 222 Downey Ave., Indianapolis, Indiana.
Secretary Missionary Organizations: Miss Carnella Jamison, 222 Downey Ave., Indianapolis, Indiana.

National Convention
President: W. H. Taylor, 1703 Madison Ave., Baltimore, Maryland.
First Vice-President: R. H. Davis, 218 E. 44th St., Chicago, Illinois.
Their Organizations

Second Vice-President: Baxter Carrol Duke, Los Angeles, California.
Secretary: L. L. Dickerson, 59 Jacob Price Home, Covington, Kentucky.
Treasurer: Dr. J. E. Walker, 234 Hernando, Memphis, Tennessee.
President Bible School Department: R. L. Jordan, 11331 Oakland Ave., Detroit, Michigan.
President C. E. Society: Foster Creggett, 6708 Belvedere, Cleveland, Ohio.
President Womens' Department: Mrs. J. Kirkpatrick, 2216 W. Chestnut, Louisville, Kentucky.

Joint Executive Committee

Seven members are chosen by the United Christian Missionary Society and seven by the Negro Nation Convention. To this committee all matters of vital interest to the Negro work are referred. The committee is as follows:

From the U. C. M. S.  From the National Convention:

Willard M. Wickizer  W. H. Taylor
Miss Dale Ellis  T. W. Pratt
Miss Helen Spaulding  C. H. Crawford
Alexander Paul  Dr. J. E. Walker
James A. Crain  Mrs. J. Kirkpatrick
T. T. Swearingen  Mr. Foster Craggett
Virgil A. Sly  R. L. Jordan

Life Member: J. B. Lehman
Presidents of State Organizations

Alabama—Frank Lewis, Montgomery.
Arkansas—B. T. Armstrong Scott.
Georgia—H. J. Johnson, R. 3, Box 166, Valdosta.
Kansas—W. S. Sims, Lawrence.
Kentucky—L. L. Dickerson, Covington.
Maryland and D. C.—M. R. Robinson, 310 Jonathan, Hagerstown.
Mississippi—N. R. Trivillian, Port Gibson.
Missouri—S. S. Myers, 2400 Paseo, Kansas City.
Ohio—F. J. Barnett, Cleveland.
Oklahoma—R. L. Dercy, Oklahoma City.
Piedmont District (Va., W. Va., N. C.)—A. I. Terrill, Winston, Salem Teachers College, Winston, Salem, N. C.
Tennessee—D. W. Bradley, Rogersville.
Texas—I. Q. Hurdle, 1416 E. 12, Austin.
South Carolina—R. H. Boyd, Ellenton.

Since the adjournment of the last National Convention the joint Executive Committee composed of white and colored representatives, has been somewhat altered. Instead of being called joint Executive it is known as the Inter-Agency Council. Its personnel consists of the Presidents of the National Convention; Church Department, Bible School, Women's and C. E. Departments. To this group matters of vital importance are submitted. Along with this change, R. H. Peoples, for five years the
National Secretary of Negro Churches, resigned and C. L. Parks was chosen to succeed him. Mrs. Rosa B. Bracy resigned as Executive Secretary of the National Convention. This work is to be carried forward by the newly elected National Secretary and the President of the National Convention.
CHAPTER IX

THE ONENESS OF THE DISCIPLES

There is a kindred relation among all Christians whether it is adhered to or not; all are believers in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, whether a member of the yellow race, brown group, white or black. Whether African, Italian, English, Canadian, Japanese, Chinese or so on, to some degree there is a feeling of harmonious purpose beating in each other’s heart; one believes in Christ, so does the other.

In every Disciple there is a sense of belonging to a larger group than his own immediate congregation; a sense of belonging to a national organization and then a sense of belonging to one that is worldwide, international, interracial and divine.

Every Disciple has a catholic conception of the Church. That it has no boundaries and no earthly masters; that the Church is God’s organization in our world to lead men back to Him. It’s head and priest is Christ, God’s only Son. Whatever the organization he is associated with, be it his local congregation, his master and judge is God. No one, whether priest, rabbi, rector, or minister, can turn Him out of it for the Church is a spiritual concep-
tion of the divine order over which only the di-
vine has authority.

The Disciples are one in that even today where-
ever one goes he is welcome whether it be a colored
or white congregation in which he sits. Always
the warmth proves beyond a doubt that he belongs
to the same fellowship.

One in supporting the needy churches and for-
eign work; one in every cooperative enterprise to
which all should pull together. There might be a
national convention in which all of the colored
brethren assemble but they are not barred from at-
tending the international convention, nor are whites
barred from theirs. There may be state societies
organized by both groups but always there is a spir-
it of mutual helpfulness in every instance.

The National Convention is not only attended
by the colored Christians, it is also attended by rep-
resentatives of the United Christian Missionary
Society. It is still an auxiliary of the International
Convention. From it is appointed Negro members
to serve on the Board of Managers of the United
Society and other managerial boards. Since the in-
ternational convention is financed from missionary
funds, the National Convention receives funds from
the Home Missionary Department which are mis-
sionary funds also.

In each state Negro churches are supported out
of the funds of the state societies even in those states
where Negroes are strong enough to have state organizations. What else is this but oneness?

The publishing boards which print literature for the white churches print literature for the colored; the organizations sending literature for the whites, sends it to the colored also. If there is a church to be saved, Church Extension does it. It is not a divided fellowship but an inclusive one for all of the churches whether Negro or white belong to the one communion.

In this fellowship there is a colored man and a colored woman with offices in the Headquarter Office. They are there as hired servants of the United Society, representatives of the Colored Disciples, traveling among the colored and white churches, doing what they can to help broaden and enlighten the Disciples.

Someone attempted to build a circle, small, but God would not have it. So it was broadened to include the slave. Then when emancipation came, it had to be enlarged to include the freedmen, ah, yes, and all who wished to be saved.

The Disciples of Christ is an inclusive fellowship in that its plea is for Christian unity and that all people belonging to the communion are at heart workers for the reunion of the divided house of our Lord. They may belong to more than two races but wherever they are, uppermost in their minds

are the central words of Thomas Campbell: "That the Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one, consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedient to Him in all things of the Scriptures and that manifest the same by their temper and conduct, and of none else can truly and properly be called Christians."
CHAPTER X

TWO RACES IN ONE FELLOWSHIP

The riddle of the denominations and the Negro is one and the same. He is found in all of them. Some have legislated his place, some have morally opposed his being an integral part of their fellowship but to some degree all maintain some relationship with the Negro even if it is in a separate church group. The Southern Methodist communion was one of the latter. It maintained its relationship with one branch of the Methodist among the Negroes. It did not want his membership in its own churches but assisted in the maintenance of that wing of Methodism known as the Colored Methodist Episcopal.

The Southern Baptist and the Fundamentalist groups are like the Southern Methodist. They have a kindred relationship with their black brethren but do not desire an equal participation on his part with them in religious services. It is the old, old story retold. God is our Father and the Negro’s distant uncle. Therefore we must treat him fairly. Along with these communions are multitudes in all of the churches believing to fellowship with the Negro is lowering the status of the church and race.

It is true a nation cannot survive half slave and half free; it is equally true a communion can never
be potent lily white nor rosy black—all must become one to be powerful. Progress in thought demands changes. What was considered right yesterday is found to be wrong today. What was considered truth yesterday has been proven to be a half truth today. In the flesh we are different, in the spirit we are one. That is the preaching of the great theologians of our time. Our goal is not down the high way to division and human differences, instead it is up the high way to unity and spiritual harmony.

In all of the churches these walls of definite separation are crumbling. Some of the churches in all of the communions including those mentioned above are beginning to realize the folly of our dual pronouncements about God's children and His family. Ever since the origin of some of the greatest churches in America there have been two races in their fellowships. The Northern Baptist has never committed itself to oppose Negroes becoming members of any of its churches. Even today in some of the cities there are Negro members. Great churches like the Methodist Episcopal maintained a policy of equal love and devotion to its colored constituency. If today in the unification of the Southern Methodist, Methodist Episcopal and Protestant groups, this great movement has drawn restrictions, God forbid. There can be no unity unless based on love and reverence for the human personality regardless of race.

The Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Disciples, Nazarines and Seven-Day Adventists
have always opened their doors to the Negro people. When the Negro was ignorant of the denominational world, concerned more about God, he was taught by the whites the belief of their various denominational groups. Down through the ages he has been devoted to the teachings of the church leaders. If there is division, he is not responsible for he did not start it. It started long before he embraced the denominational religion.

After the Civil War, schools were opened for him. Teachers from the north went into the south and taught him. In the north he was instructed by whites also. Each group pounded in his mind their conception of religion. All had torn Christ into fifty or more divisions. Into this muddle the Negro was to participate and become a child of God.

He was denied fellowship in some denominations. Ah, that was only a branch of the church. In the meantime, he developed some great churches controlled and maintained by himself, the African Methodist Episcopal, the African Methodist Episcopalian Zion, the Colored Methodist Episcopal, and the Baptist bodies. These are denominations, segments of the Protestant family, the same as those of the whites. It required all of them to make the Protestant fellowship.

With the organization of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, a definite movement for the unity of the divided family of our Lord was launched. Invitations were sent out to all
churches including the Negro bodies. The con-
summation of this objective indicated the whole
was to be composed of all of its fragments, consist-
ing of all colors and creeds. Today that objective
is being realized. Although the Negro was denied
fellowship in some of its divisions (denominations),
he was welcomed into the larger family—the Protes-
tant fellowship.

Interracial communions, like the Disciples of
Christ, when making an urgent plea for Christian
unity through its representative, does not speak only
for one race but for all races in its fellowship. When
Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones became president of the
Federal Council of Churches of Christ in 1936, he
was not only the voice for the white denominations
affiliated with the federal body, he represented the
Protestant fellowship which included the Negro.
Whenever he spoke he symbolized the inner spirit
of all believers. Outwardly the denominations are
caracterized by petty differences and jealousies.
The mortar holding all together is invisible. It is
not only the knowledge of God being our Father
and Christ our elder Brother, but a consciousness
of the same indwelling spirit in all men. Ah, to
say two races is not enough for there are more than
two. As the mountains rise upward sometimes kiss-
ing the sky, so does the lofty spirit in man rise above
his own race and denomination. There sitting on
the holy peak man discovers the frailty of his vis-
ible self, whatever his color. There he discovers the
unity of the soul with the infinite, the same self
clothed in mortal flesh in us all, whether black or white.

That they all may be one—that is the goal of the Disciples. A movement among the churches and in the church interracial and international to recreate the spirit of tolerance, forbearance and love exemplified in the early church among all Christians everywhere, regardless of color or race.
### ILLUSTRATIONS

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