

PURPOSE STATEMENT
FOR THE ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST AND THE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

The purpose of the Ecumenical Partnership Committee is (1) to call these churches increasingly to embrace the "Vision Statement of the Ecumenical Partnership" which has been officially approved by the General Synod and General Assembly in 1989, (2) to reflect on the ever-deepening meaning of the Ecumenical Partnership for these churches, and (3) to enable these two churches to live out the "Vision Statement of the Ecumenical Partnership."

The committee will remind these two churches of the distinctive relationship that has existed between them, which has led to conversations (1979), to partnership (1987), and full communion (1989). It will make clear to the churches that the focus of the Ecumenical Partnership is to seek a new form of visible and organic unity between these churches - a unity in faith, in sacramental life, in ministry, and in mission, rather than in the merging of the churches. The committee will challenge the churches to "live out full communion by promoting the principle that nothing be done alone which can be done together."

The committee will intentionally set the Partnership within the context of the commitments of these two to other denominations through the Consultation on Church Union, councils of churches, and international dialogues.

The committee continues to claim for its continuing work the primary documents which have been particularly formative of its emerging vision, namely: "Baptism in the Ecumenical Partnership," "Ministry in the Ecumenical Partnership," and "Eucharist in the Ecumenical Partnership," together with the Resolution of the Ecumenical Partnership Committee addressed to the General Assembly and General Synod in 1989. Further, the Ecumenical Partnership Committee remains open to the leading of the Holy Spirit as it seeks insight from the study of the Bible, the Tradition of the Church across the centuries, and the histories of these two churches.

The goals which have been adopted by the Committee express its present understanding of the implications of the Partnership. The Committee is moved to pursue these goals out of a sense of the will of God for the church, rather than for pragmatic reasons.

September, 1990