

## NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

With 18 denominations representing over 6,200 congregations in North Carolina, the Council provides incarnational evidence of Christian Unity. By creating unity without expecting uniformity, member bodies collaborate on matters that contribute to the flourishing of God's creation. We are grateful to the Religious Society of Friends-NC Fellowship of Friends for their support and for the leadership on our Governing Board provided by Wess Daniels of NC Fellowship of Friends, Greensboro, N.C.

Currently, some of our priority areas include:

- **Gun Violence Prevention** advocacy focuses on telling the truth about gun violence in our country. We know the majority of gun deaths are suicides; the next highest number is homicides, usually among people who know each other or who are related to one another. Our work is to help people understand how guns end up in places that create great harm and what each of us can do to make all of us safer. For more information, contact [jennifer@ncchurches.org](mailto:jennifer@ncchurches.org).
- **Capital Punishment Abolition** has long been a priority for the Council. With our allies from N.C. Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty we are focused on adding North Carolina to the list of states who no longer allow this arbitrary and retributive practice. For more information, contact [info@ncchurches.org](mailto:info@ncchurches.org).
- **Cash Bail Reform** is a part of our criminal justice system coming under the microscope for its unfair application. It is also a misunderstood piece of the justice system, making it harder to reform. The Council has assembled a team of representatives from several of our member denominations to help educate all of us about Cash Bail Reform and advocate for better practices. For more information or to join the team, contact [info@ncchurches.org](mailto:info@ncchurches.org).
- **Confederate Monument Removal.** Related to the above, but with its own emphasis, the Council has joined the work of the N.C. Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Criminal Justice in their effort to move confederate monuments from courthouse lawns. If you live in a county currently working on such an effort or would like to begin leading such an effort, please contact: [info@ncchurches.org](mailto:info@ncchurches.org).
- **Eco-Justice Connection (EJC).** This multi-faith program area focuses on environmental and climate justice, with an emphasis on "advocating with compassion." A keystone initiative of EJC is NC Interfaith Power & Light. EJC's program mission is to educate, inspire, and mobilize people of faith and conscience to act on climate change as a moral imperative. For more information, contact [susannah@ncchurches.org](mailto:susannah@ncchurches.org).
- **Partners in Health and Wholeness (PHW)** provides tools to help faith communities form healthy habits by supporting congregation-based health ministries with resources and mini-grants. Other PHW focus areas include mental health, substance use disorder, and issues related to healthy aging. For more information, contact [phwinfo@ncchurches.org](mailto:phwinfo@ncchurches.org).
- **The Opioid Crisis** educates faith leaders about compassionate responses to these growing health concerns and opportunities to reduce the associated stigmas. We provide avenues to engage the overdose crisis by connecting congregations to resources in their communities. If you would like to host an event or learn more about this project, contact [phwinfor@ncchurches.org](mailto:phwinfor@ncchurches.org).

Over the course of this year, the Governing Board approved the following policy statements which can be found on our website along with other statements from previous years:

- Resolution on Reproductive Health (September 13, 2022)
- A Resolution to Change the Cash Bail Bond System (August 8, 2022)
- Tribute to the Life of the Reverend Dr. T. Anthony Spearman (July 21, 2022)
- Statement Condemning Violence Against our Jewish Neighbors (January 24, 2022)

We craft these statements in keeping with our interpretation of the prophetic witness of the Old Testament and the gospel message of the New Testament.

Currently, other areas of emphasis include living wage and paid family leave endorsement, death penalty abolition, cash bail reform, fair courts advocacy, Medicaid expansion, and redistricting reform. Resources are available online and our staff is available to help your congregation address any of the myriad concerns that arise in our contemporary setting. If you have any questions or are interested in more information, please contact us at [info@ncchurches.org](mailto:info@ncchurches.org), or call our office at 919-828-6501.

Denominational members include Alliance of Baptists · African Methodist Episcopal Church · African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church · Christian Methodist Episcopal · Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) · Episcopal Church · Evangelical Lutheran Church in America · General Baptist State Convention · Metropolitan Community Churches · Mennonite Church USA · Moravian Church in America · Presbyterian Church (USA) · Reformed Church in America · Reformed Churches of God in Christ, International · Religious Society of Friends · United Church of Christ · Unity Fellowship Church Movement · United Methodist Church.

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