

Virginia Churches in Community **Long Range Plan**

Approved by the Coordinating Cabinet, October 19, 1999

Mission/Ministry Statement

The Virginia Churches in Community believes that we are called by God through Christ to be one. We commit ourselves to manifesting more fully this unity in relationship and in action.

Relating to one another in Christ, we will respect one another, rely on one another, care for one another, listen and learn together in order to discern the will of God, support one another's identity and call, and, as we petition in the Lord's Prayer, forgive one another.

Acting together in Christ, we will gather in prayer and council, cooperate in ministry, and, whenever possible, speak to significant issues.

AS VIRGINIA CHURCHES IN COMMUNITY...

Goal 1:

WE WILL work cooperatively and interdependently, respecting one another's traditions and learning how to care for one another.

Objective 1: Increase understanding of one another's traditions.

Objective 2: Increase cooperation among the Virginia churches, as an expression of the unity we already share.

Objective 3: Increase interdependency and mutual responsibility within the Virginia churches.

Objective 4: Explore ways to address social issues of concern to the Virginia churches.

Goal 2:

WE WILL build a more encompassing community of churches and expand interfaith understanding and cooperation.

Objective 1: Explore what it means to be a participant in Virginia Council of Churches. (We must define terms such as participant and non-participant, recognizing that we are in the tension of moving from "council" to "community.")

Objective 2: Increase the depth of participation of churches currently included in Virginia Council of Churches.

Objective 3: Invite participation from churches not now included in Virginia Council of Churches.

Objective 4: Establish a strong ecumenical education component.

Objective 5: Facilitate/support local expressions of ecumenism.

Objective 6: Facilitate/support interfaith conversation, dialogue and cooperation.

Goal 3:

WE WILL together confront the sin of racism and seek to eliminate it in our churches and in our society.

Objective 1: Engage in intentional processes to address racism among ourselves and the churches we represent.

Objective 2: Connect to and/or develop statewide anti-racism education and action programs.

Objective 3: Encourage cooperation among the racial/social justice commissions of Virginia's churches and faith groups.

Objective 4: Bear witness together against the sin of racism.

Goal 4:

WE WILL have an organization and staff adequate to carry out the above-named goals and be sufficiently funded.

Objective 1: A new organizational model will be considered (after the new General Minister has come on board and the goals have been further clarified and prioritized).