

# CHRISTADELPHIAN NASU STEERING COMMITTEE

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April 11, 2005

## **To All Brothers and Sisters in the Christadelphian North American Unamended and Amended Communities**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings and love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The NASU Steering Committee would like to thank all ecclesias and individuals throughout North America for their prayerful consideration of the November 2004 NASU Unity Proposal. As indicated in that proposal, this document provides a report on the results of the proposal's Phase 1 ballot. This vote was conducted to assess the will of the Christadelphian Amended and Unamended communities regarding the NASU Unity Proposal. We respect the positions of all ecclesias, regardless of whether or not they chose to vote or to respond. The 78% combined total ecclesial response rate is high compared to many surveys. This is encouraging and provides sufficient information to assess the will of the communities. The intent of this document is to summarize and report survey results accurately and concisely so that all ecclesias and their members receive timely information concurrently.

On the inside pages of this report, a summary of survey data is provided. Due to the varied responses received, we have included with the data some observations intended to provide greater insight. On the final page of this report, further observations and the conclusions of the Steering Committee are presented.

Summary data and observations are provided in four categories:

- 1. Voting – *ecclesias that responded to the survey as requested.*** This is the most definitive and accurate data, since it is based on more complete information, including member vote counts as well as ecclesial decisions.
- 2. Incomplete Responses – *not reported in the manner requested.*** These did not report an actual ecclesial vote and some lacked other pertinent information. Nonetheless, this data is included to report on all returns, regardless of whether or not they conformed to the requested format and content.
- 3. Total of ALL Responses.** This provides combined total results of categories 1 and 2 above.
- 4. Non-Responding.** This is a count of ecclesias that did not respond. Although not part of the survey results, this information is included for completeness.

# NASU Unity Proposal

## All North American Christadelphians

### **VOTING – ecclesias that reported in the manner requested**

This boxed upper section provides the clearest data as all factors are known and quantified.

<b>Members</b>
ACCEPT
<b>2474</b>
87.4%

<b>Ecclesias</b>
ACCEPT
<b>107</b>
84.9%

### Amended

*These results indicated clear support for Phase I of the NASU Unity Proposal*

Member Votes	
ACCEPT	REJECT
<b>2154</b>	<b>265</b>
89.0%	11.0%

Ecclesial Votes	
ACCEPT	REJECT
<b>91</b>	<b>12</b>
88.4%	11.6%

## **INCOMPLETE RESPONSES – non-responding**

A number of responses were received by letter (11 Amended and 46 Unamended) which did not contain a vote, so it is impossible to know how many brethren these letters represent. In responses that p

*A number of Amended ecclesias indicated the negative votes in their results related to concerns about withdrawal of fellowship from ecclesias of long association that do not accept the NASU. This concern was common to both communities.*

*Some Amended ecclesias felt that fellowship practice should be more clearly defined.*

*Some Amended ecclesias wished to maintain the BASF as the exclusive basis of fellowship.*

*Some Amended ecclesias supported unity, but offered suggestions for changes to the NASU doctrinal statements. These ecclesias were not participants in the unity discussion process in which these statements were developed.*

### Amended

Incomplete Responses		
ACCEPT	REJECT	No Decision
<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
72.7%	18.2%	9.1%

Total of ALL Responses		
ACCEPT	REJECT	No Decision
<b>99</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>
86.8%	12.3%	0.9%

### **Non-Responding**

**35 of 149 Ecclesias**

# Phase 1 Results

## Unamended and Amended

<b>Member Votes</b>
REJECT
<b>358</b>
12.6%

<b>Unamended Votes</b>
REJECT
<b>19</b>
15.1%



*More than half of North American Christadelphian ecclesias (Unamended and Amended) responded with an ecclesial vote as requested. The data indicates a high level of acceptance among ecclesias reporting votes.*

### Unamended

<b>Member Votes</b>	
ACCEPT	REJECT
<b>320</b>	<b>93</b>
77.5%	22.5%

<b>Ecclesial Votes</b>	
ACCEPT	REJECT
<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>
69.6%	30.4%



*These results indicated clear support for Phase 1 of the NASU Unity Proposal*

## *Not reported in the manner requested*

Some did not include all the information requested. Most of these letters did not report an actual ecclesial vote. Where no vote count was provided, the proportion of rejections is much higher than in ecclesias that reported votes.

### Unamended

<b>Incomplete Responses</b>		
ACCEPT	REJECT	No Decision
<b>3</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>
6.5%	56.5%	37.0%

<b>Total of ALL Responses</b>		
ACCEPT	REJECT	No Decision
<b>19</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>17</b>
27.5%	47.8%	24.7%

<b>Non-Responding</b>
<b>17 of 86 Ecclesias</b>

*Unamended ecclesias (accepting and rejecting) were concerned about withdrawal of fellowship from brethren of long association in ecclesias that do not accept the NASU. This concern was common to both communities.*

*21 of 33 rejections were similar: sent early; unsigned; copied to all Unamended ecclesias; challenged committee legitimacy; cited doctrinal differences (few specifics); stated exclusive BUSF fellowship policy – some even excluded Unamended brethren who accept the NASU. The impression of negative momentum created was out of proportion to the numbers potentially represented by these mostly small ecclesias.*

*Some Unamended ecclesias rejected the proposal or would not vote without clearer assurances on fellowship practice and ecclesial autonomy.*

*A majority of Unamended responses did not report an actual vote count and rejected the proposal. The rejection rate was much higher where votes were not reported.*

## Observations

1. Support in both communities was particularly strong in two regions: Ontario and US Mid-West. Supporting ecclesias were those that participated longest in the unity process.
2. Responses from a significant portion of the Unamended community conveyed two themes: a) support in principle for unity; and, b) concern regarding fellowship. There was very strong support in certain regions and in localized areas of other regions. Another group of 26 Unamended response letters rejected the NASU Unity Proposal, although it was impossible to gauge the actual levels of acceptance and rejection due to incomplete reporting. A significant group of Unamended ecclesias indicated their rejection of the proposal was related to concerns regarding the third bullet point of the NASU Resurrectional Responsibility statement.
3. Many ecclesias from both communities expressed appreciation to the committee and strong desire for reconciliation with their brethren in the other community.

## Committee Conclusions

1. The Amended community results indicated strong support to pursue unity based on the NASU Unity Proposal.
2. The Unamended community results did not indicate sufficient support to pursue unity based on the NASU Unity Proposal.
3. Due to conclusion 2 above, the results did not clearly indicate preponderant majority support overall. The committee does not feel it can proceed with the proposal's Phase 2 option a) to propose "specific recommendations for the implementation of unity" throughout North America based on the NASU Unity Proposal.
4. Therefore, the committee will proceed with Phase 2 option b) to work on "other proposed means by which the NASU unity initiative may be concluded". These matters will be prayerfully considered in coming months. We request the prayers of the brotherhood for our Father's direction in this task, above all that He and His Son may be glorified.

With Love in the One Hope we share,

The Christadelphian NASU Steering Committee