

CUIC NOTES

DECEMBER 2006



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MORAVIANS BECOME FULL CUIC MEMBERS

CUIC officially approved the request of the Moravian Church Northern Province (MCNP) for full membership. This brings to ten the number of CUIC member churches. The Moravians look to CUIC for opportunities for closer relations with persons and congregations of color beyond the Moravian Church and for an interchange of ordained leadership.

In a letter to the Moravian congregations, David Wickmann, president of the Provincial Elders' Conference, wrote: "We urge Moravian congregations to seek ties with congregations of the other bodies in CUIC, especially we encourage congregations in communities with congregations of the three traditional African American Methodist bodies to explore possibilities for working together in things as simple and profound as congregations exchanging pulpits and having dinner together."

Rev. Wickmann described the MCNP as a needy member of the body of Christ and one with many gifts. They bring simplicity of doctrines, a gift of distinctive music recognized worldwide, and a gift of storytelling that is spiritual at heart. Founded in 1457, their focus has always been mission.

Upon the unanimous vote by the CUIC Coordinating Council, the Rev. Dr. Robert Welsh, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), noted that the Moravians "don't take themselves too seriously, but they do take the Gospel seriously."

The Moravian Church will celebrate its 550th anniversary on March 1, 2007.

Suzanne Webb, CUIC president, welcomes David Wickmann, President, Provincial Elders, Moravian Church Northern Province. Also pictured are James Tse, CUIC treasurer, Hermann Weinlick, MCNP ecumenical officer, and Abraham Wright, CUIC secretary.



CUIC LETTER TO CONGRESS: MINIMUM WAGE

On October 24 the CUIC Heads of Communion (HOCs) met together for the first time since the January 20, 2002 inauguration of CUIC in Memphis, TN. At this meeting in New York City, all eleven HOCs signed a letter that was sent to Congress urging Congress to increase the federal minimum wage. The letter

acknowledged gratitude that the 109th 'Congress renewed provisions of the Voting Rights Act. At the same time, the letter stated, "It is time to put this important matter [federal minimum wage] in a prominent place in the national debate..."

The letter continued, "As church leaders we are profoundly committed to justice not only for our own constituencies but also for the good

of the entire nation. We urge you to step up *now*, to speak *now*, to act *now*."

The real value of the minimum wage today is nearly \$4.00 less than it was in 1968. At the same time, Congress continues to give itself raise after raise.

See www.cuicinfo.org for the full text of the letter.

ADVENT MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Advent is the season of waiting, preparation, and expectation. When we wait with no expectation or preparation, we take no responsibility and have no real stake in the outcome. Advent is not that kind of waiting.

God is about to do a new thing. Unless we make preparation and unless we believe that a new thing will occur, we will certainly miss what God is about to do.

The season of Advent is not unlike the ecumenical arena. We can simply wait for the

miracles to occur and the church to act as God dreamed. We can wait until once broken barriers are raised again as higher stumbling blocks. Or, we can prepare ourselves - work diligently to develop deeper relationships, talk honestly about what still separates us, try all means to discern the new thing God has in store for us.

I pray that we take seriously the hope that God has placed within us. That hope empowers us to keep working, struggling, and preparing to re-

ceive God's great gifts for us. Churches Uniting in Christ is still a fledgling in the ecumenical movement. Even though we are young, we dare not merely wait for a miracle. God has invested too much in us for that to happen.

May this season be one for stretching our expectations and deepening our preparations. The gift is waiting for us to live into it. God is waiting for us to *be* Churches truly Uniting in Christ.

Fondly, Suzanne



"Heart Song," art poster for 2007 WPCU. Mark Hakomaki artist

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

A world-wide observance, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (WPCU) is an important expression of ecumenical activity at the local level. The theme and text for each year's observance of the Week of Prayer are chosen and prepared by representatives of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and representatives of the World Council of Churches. The international texts are developed, adapted and published for use in the USA by the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute.

The theme for 2007 WPCU is "Open our ears and loosen our tongues" (Mark 7:31-37). This year's theme has its origins in the experience of Christian communities in the South African region of Umlazi, near Durban. This year's materials reflect the concerns and experience of a people who have undergone great suffering. A legacy of racism, unemployment and poverty continues to raise formidable challenges for its people, where there is still a shortage of schools, medical clinics and adequate housing.

At the invitation of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, the CUIC Local and Regional Task Force, along with the Ecumenical Officers, provided daily devotions for January 18-25, 2007 for the quarterly publication *These Days*. To order a copy of the January/February/March 2007 issue of *These Days*, call 800-227-2872.

"Open our ears
and loosen our
tongues"
Mark 7:31-37

Churches Uniting in Christ is a relationship among ten communions who have pledged to live more closely together in expressing unity in Christ and combating racism. Member communions are: African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, The Episcopal Church, International Council of Community Churches, Moravian Church Northern Province, Presbyterian Church USA, United Church of Christ, and The United Methodist Church. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a partner in mission and dialogue, and the Roman Catholic Church participates as an observer.

CUIC NOTES is published several times a year.
Patrice L. Rosner, Director
Patricia Garnett, Secretary

We welcome your comments and questions. Please send them by email to cuic@eden.edu or by mail to CUIC, 475 E. Lockwood Ave., St. Louis, MO 63119.

To be better stewards of the environment and of the CUIC finances, please send us your email address so that you may receive this newsletter electronically. Send your contact information to: cuic@eden.edu

AROUND THE COUNTRY

MASSACHUSETTES: WORLD COMMUNION DAY

For four years, the Council of Churches of Greater Springfield coordinated several ecumenical services that highlighted the relationship among members of CUIC. The Council of Churches serves the local churches of fourteen towns and cities of Hampden County. There are seventy congregations of CUIC member communions within this geographic area.

During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2003, the first CUIC Communion service was held at Old First Church (United Church of Christ) in Springfield with the Rev. Mark Goad, pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church, Springfield, as the guest preacher.



The series of ecumenical Communion services continued for the next three years on World Communion Sunday. Guest preachers have included:

2003-at Christ Church Cathedral (Episcopal) Springfield, The Rev. Dr. Peter Wells, United

Church of Christ associate conference minister;

2004 - at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in West Springfield, Rev. Alyce Kelly, Presbyterian pastor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Church

2005 - at Wilbraham United Church, Wilbraham (federated UCC and UMC), Rev. Maria Coleman, District Superintendent of the United Methodist Church.

For the past five years, during the week of Pentecost Sunday, additional ecumenical services were held, with specific invitations to the area CUIC congregations.

MEMPHIS: MONTHLY MEETINGS

"We appeal to you, to join us as participants in Churches Uniting in Christ, as sojourners toward the Beloved Community."

This is the invitation on the website of CUIC in Memphis (www.cuicmemphis.org). On the second Thursday of each month an ecumenical combined Clergy and Laity meeting is convened at Lindenwood Christian Church. Dr.

Sonny Davis and Dr. Cynthia Davis currently serve as the 2006 co-chairs.

CUIC Memphis holds at least two annual CUIC services of worship: Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial on the first weekend in April, and World Communion Sunday. The Rev. Patrice L. Rosner, CUIC Director, was the guest preacher for the October 1, 2006 World Communion service held at First Congregational Church

"We appeal to you, to join us as participants in Churches Uniting in Christ, as sojourners toward the Beloved Community."

MISSOURI: JUSTICE WEEKEND

The Missouri CUIC Coordinating Council, along with Missouri Christians Against Racism and Poverty (MOCARP) are sponsoring a Justice Weekend: Public Witness Event for April 20-23 in Jefferson City, the state capitol.

According to John Bennett, co-chair of the planning team, the goal of this event is to provide a public forum for denominational leaders to declare their common commitment to confront the sin of racism and to work for economic justice. Bennett said, "The 'Gideon's Army' witness at the state capitol will give evidence of the churches' collective commitment to racial justice."

The plans include a Friday night youth lock-in focused on education, fellowship and worship. On Saturday morning the bishops and church executives will meet with the keynote presenter for conversation. CME Bishop Paul Stewart will lead a march around the capitol building. David Beckman of Bread for the

World will speak at the noon "Hungering for Justice," a hunger awareness meal. The day's activities will close with an ecumenical worship service with liturgist Patrice Rosner and music by combined choirs of mid-Missouri CUIC congregations.

On Sunday the planning team is urging local communities to participate in statewide pulpit exchanges.

The weekend will culminate on Monday with a breakfast brunch for bishops and church executives followed by a meeting with Governor Blunt and visits with key legislative leaders.

For more information about the Justice Weekend, contact John Bennett at JHBennett65109@peoplepc.com.



A STEP BACK FROM RACIAL JUSTICE?

ANTI-AFFIRMATIVE ACTION INITIATIVES

A unique hallmark of CUIC is the commitment to overcome racism as an issue manifest in divisions within our church and society. Our common witness to the importance of affirmative action is a means for overcoming racism in our society.

Affirmative action is commonly referred to as the backbone of the civil rights movement. It is the great equalizer, leveling the playing field for women and people of color. As long as negative racial and gender stereotypes persist so must be our efforts to neutralize prejudice and discrimination.

Affirmative action means

taking positive steps to end discrimination, to prevent its recurrence, and to create new opportunities that were previously denied to women and people of color. Susan McGarry, rector of St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, Ann Arbor, MI, describes affirmative action as a tool, "just a tool, to try to create a situation that others may have entrée into the same kind of privileges that have in the past been reserved [for] property and wealthy white men."

The debate over affirmative action carries enormous implications. Critics of affirmative action sometimes inject the issue of "quotas" into the public debate. However, the Supreme Court repeatedly made clear that quotas are illegal and that properly

defined affirmative action programs simply create opportunities for qualified persons. However, anti-affirmative action advocates continue to fight for victories at the state level.

Most recently Michigan became the third state, following California and Washington, to ban affirmative action programs in the state's universities and its government. In speaking with religious leaders in Michigan about Proposal 2, Bishop Wendell N. Gibbs, Province V, Episcopal Church stated, "I realized that what we were facing was a fight with evil....It is a matter of fighting evil; it is a matter of justice; it is a matter of respecting the dignity of every single human being."

At the Heads of Communion meeting on October 24, leaders of the historic black churches expressed a fear that the states' repeal of affirmative action could become "a tidal wave sweeping the nation." As a follow up to that meeting, many of the CUIC HOCs wrote to their leadership in Michigan to educate their churches to the potential consequences of Proposal 2. In a letter to all the stated clerks in the Michigan presbyteries Clifton Kirkpatrick, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church USA, said, "The implications of Proposal 2 are far wider than Michigan and have the potential to turn back the hard-won gains of the civil rights movement throughout this nation."

KEY SCHOOL RACE CASES BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT

On December 4 the US Supreme Court heard two cases regarding whether public school districts in Seattle and Louisville can voluntarily use race-conscious measures to avoid racial isolation and achieve racial integration in their elementary and secondary schools. The justices are divided over what role race should play, if any, in competitive admissions in these schools. Justices Ginsberg, Stevens, Souter, and Breyer seemed more sympathetic toward the diversity programs.

Both sides of the issue agree that classroom diversity is an important goal. The questions presented in the case *Parents Involved v. Seattle School District No. 1*, Docket No. 05-908 are: "Is racial diversity a compelling interest that can justify the use of race in selecting students for admission to public high schools?" and "May a school district that is not racially segregated and that normally permits a student to attend any high school of her choosing deny a child admission to her chosen school solely because of her race in an effort to achieve a desired racial balance in particular schools, or does such racial balancing violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment?"

A ruling next year could help clarify when, and to what lengths, state and local officials can go to promote diversity in K-12 education. Justice Breyer said he was worried about the long-term impact if diversity plans were abandoned. "There's a terrible problem – lots and lots of districts are becoming more and more segregated and school boards are struggling. And if they knew an easy way, they'd do it. I do know courts are not very good at figuring that out."

These cases are about voluntary school diversity. Opponents will try to frame the cases in terms designed to evoke concerns that considering race is divisive. However, research demonstrates many benefits from an integrated education, including an improvement in critical-thinking skills of all students and a less likelihood to develop racial stereotypes or prejudices.

Years of experience show that many communities can't achieve inclusive diverse schools without making that an explicit goal and working toward it intentionally. We can let race divide and separate us, or we can come together across lines of difference.

With CUIC's commitment to combat racism, we must stay informed of these issues. We must stand together as a community of faith to make a witness for racial justice.

"Talk About Race Sunday"

A resource to assist CUIC congregations in engaging communities in dialogue about the oppressive practices of racism and classism. The one-day program includes worship and study. Available on the CUIC website: www.cuicinfo.org

CUIC INSTALLS NEW DIRECTOR

More than 200 people gathered at Union Avenue Christian Church in St. Louis, MO, on Tuesday evening, October 3, for a CUIC service of Eucharist and the installation of the Rev. Patrice L. Rosner as CUIC director. Praise dancers led the procession that included representatives of all eleven CUIC communions. Choirs from Union Avenue Christian Church and Wayman AME Church raised their voices in jubilation as they led the congregation in music. The Rev. Paul Reiter, Executive Presbyter, Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery, served as the celebrant for the Eucharist service. The

Rev. Dr. Suzanne Webb, host pastor and CUIC president, along with Bishop Ronald Cunningham, CME ecumenical officer and CUIC vice president, offered the installation covenant, prayer, and declaration. Bishop Vinton R. Anderson, retired AME bishop, preached a powerful sermon, "An Invitation to Love," in which he challenged the congregation: "...our call to this place by the Churches Uniting in Christ is not about comparative ecclesiologies, or orders, or functions, or who of us loves Christ more than others do. It is, moreover, an invitation to love Christ by acknowledging that

some are called to a more definite serving of Christ and God's Kingdom, in more definitive spiritual ways. Our calling is not only for the salvation of our souls, but to help God in God's saving of the world."

The full text of Bishop Anderson's sermon is available in the most recent edition of *Call to Unity* (see box on p. 6).



Patrice Rosner, Director, Suzanne Webb, President, and Charles Rosner, Patrice's husband.

CUIC EXPLORES ISSUES OF EPISCOPACY

One of the eight Marks of Commitment of CUIC participation is to engage in an ongoing process of theological dialogue to strengthen our shared witness to the apostolic faith, to deepen our understanding of racism in order to make a more compelling case against it, and to provide a foundation for the mutual recognition and reconciliation of ordained ministries.

About fifty pastors, laypersons, and scholars from eleven communions gathered at the Millennium Hotel in St. Louis, MO, October 2-4 for a Consultation on Episcopé sponsored by the Ministry Task Force. *Episcopé*, a Greek word used in the New Testament, means "oversight" and refers to the role of ordained ministry. The purpose of the Consultation was to contribute to the ongoing process of mutual recognition and reconciliation of ministries within the CUIC member communions. Five presenters addressed topics related to understanding of episcopé in the context of the U.S. ecumenical journey and the implications of these understandings for global ecumenical relationships.

The Consultation was intended to produce constructive reflections on the Ministry Task Force proposal "Mutual Recognition and Mutual Reconciliation of Ministries" (MRMRM). Each member communion has undertaken a time of study and

reflection on the MRMRM document, and these reflections became part of the Consultation background.

Presenters and their topics were:

- Dr. Ellen Wondra, Professor of Theology and Ethics, Seabury-Western Theological Seminary: "Expressions of Episcopacy, Part I"
- Dr. Anna Case-Winter, Professor of Theology, McCormick Theological Seminary: "Expressions of Episcopacy, Part II"
- Dr. Kristen E. Kvam, Associate Professor of Theology, St. Paul's School of Theology: "Relationship between Episcopé and Apostolic Succession"



- Rev. John H. Thomas, General Minister and President, United Church of Christ: "Gifts of Episcopacy"

- Bishop Thomas L. Hoyt, Jr., Bishop of the CME Seventh Episcopal District: "Reconciled Episcopé"

Fr. John T. Ford, Professor of Systematic Theology, Catholic University of America, led three Bible studies and periods of discernment and worship.

On the final day of the Consultation, Dr. Michael Kinnamon, Professor of Mission and Peace, Eden Theological Seminary, provided a summary statement of what had been said in the six discussion groups.

Rev. Joy Moore, Associate Professor of Preaching, Asbury Theological Seminary, served as the moderator of the event.

The five presentations and the three Bible studies, along with a summary of the Consultation insights by Dr. Michael Kinnamon, and a sermon by Bishop Vinton R. Anderson are available in the most recent edition of *Call to Unity* (see box on p. 6).

CUIC WELCOMES NEW SECRETARY

I am very excited about joining the Churches Uniting for Christ staff as Patrice Rosner's secretary. Thank you for your warm welcome! My first exposure to CUIC happened when I contracted with Patrice to assist with the Consultation on Episcopé in October of this year.

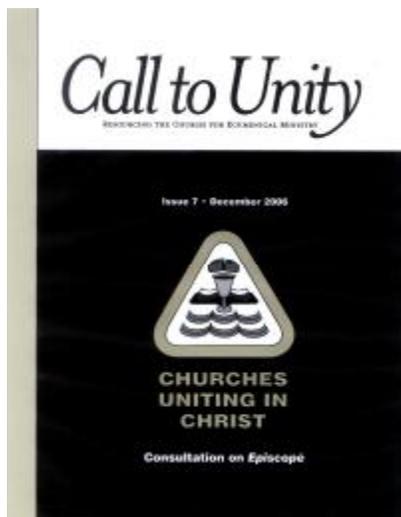
As a Catholic I have found throughout my life that I am surrounded in my work and in my play by people of many faith traditions. I like it that way, and I

continue to learn and grow spiritually from these encounters..

I am the mother of 3 sons, one who died 3 years ago, and the grandmother of 8 (2 boys and 6 girls), Of the 8 there are sets of twins! Without a doubt I most enjoy camping with my kids and grandkids. I am a very active participant in table tennis for the Senior Olympics each year and have received 2 bronze and 1 silver medal for my age group. I share my work skills part-time

with both CUIC and the Institute for Peace & Justice where I am the office manager and book-keeper. The Institute for Peace & Justice is an independent , interfaith not-for-profit organization that creates resources and advocates publicly for alternatives to violence and injustice at all levels.

I look forward to the new experiences and growth in working with CUIC and its mission!



Special Edition

Call to Unity :

Resourcing the Church for Ecumenical Ministry

Produced in partnership with all CUIC member communions to further dialogue on issues of *episcopé*. Brings together the presentations, Bible studies, and summary report from the Oct. 2-4 Consultation on Episcopé. Also includes Bishop Vinton R. Anderson's sermon preached at the CUIC service of Eucharist. To order, contact the CUIC office with your name, address, and communion: email - cuic@eden.edu; fax - 314-252-3162

UPCOMING CUIC WORSHIP SERVICES

The following services of worship, based on the CUIC liturgy, are open to all. Please encourage people you know in the area to participate in one of these services:

- Wednesday, Jan. 31, 5:30 pm – Washington DC, Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1518 M Street NW. This service will be in conjunction with the annual National Workshop on Christian Unity. For more information on NWCU, see the website: www.nwcu.us
- Friday, Mar. 9, 7:00 pm – Denver, CO, Shorter Community AME Church. This service will be in conjunction with the spring meeting of the CUIC Coordinating Council.
- Sunday, July 22 – Oberlin, OH. This service will be in conjunction with a conference entitled "On Being Christian Together: The Faith and Order Experience in the United States." For more information on this event, see the website: www.nccusa.org/faithandorder/oberlin2007/

For more information on any of these CUIC services, or if you know of a CUIC service in your area, please contact the CUIC office: 314-252-3160 or cuic@eden.edu.

MEET THE HOC'S

Each person who serves as the Head of Communion for a CUIC member communion comes to this responsibility in a different way. Some are chosen because they are senior bishops in their communion; some are elected at the highest national legislative body of the communion. Some serve for a one-year term, while others have terms of 2, 3, or 4 years. There are a variety of titles for this responsibility as well: Senior Bishop, General Minister and President, President, Presiding Bishop and Prelate, etc.

These persons currently serve as Heads of Communion (HOCs):

Member Communions

African Methodist Episcopal Church: Bishop Preston H. Williams, Senior Bishop

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: Bishop George W. Walker, Sr., Senior Bishop

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): The Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President

Christian Methodist Episcopal Church: Bishop William Graves, Sr. Senior Bishop

The Episcopal Church: The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop and Primate

International Council of Community Churches: The Rev. Michael Livingston, President

Moravian Church Northern Province: The Rev. David Wickmann, President, Provincial Elders

Presbyterian Church USA: The Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

United Church of Christ: The Rev. John H. Thomas, General Minister and President

The United Methodist Church: Bishop William B. Oden

Partner in Mission and Dialogue

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America: The Rev. Mark Hanson, Presiding Bishop

Find out more about these leaders by checking out the websites for each communion. You can access those websites from the CUIC website: www.cuicinfo.org.

2007 CALENDER

Jan. 15: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
 Jan. 18 - 25: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
 Jan. 29 – Feb. 1: National Workshop on Christian Unity
 Jan. 1–Feb. 3: Association of Presbyterian Church Educators—Philadelphia, PA
 Mar. 1: 550th Anniversary Moravian Church
 Mar. 6-8: Local/Regional Task Force Meeting - Denver
 Mar. 8-10: Coordinating Council Meeting - Denver
 Mar. 9-12: Ecumenical Advocacy Days - Washington, DC
 Mar. 26-28: Racial Justice Task Force—Memphis
 Feb. 25-27: Christian Educators Fellowship Spiritual Renewal Retreat - Mission San Luis Rey, CA
 Jun. 22-26: United Church of Christ General Synod, Hartford, CT
 Jul. 19-23: On Being Christian Together: The Faith and Order Experience in the U.S - Oberlin, OH
 Jul. 22-25: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) General Assembly -Dallas, TX
 Jul. 29 - Aug. 2: International Council of Community Churches Annual Conference, Nashville

Wishing You All the Gifts Christ Was
 Born to Bring!

Patrice

Pat



We are on the web

www.cuicinfo.org

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" THAT THEY ALL MAY BE
ONE " (JOHN 17 : 21)

CUIC'S FIFTH ANNIVERSARY: JANUARY 20-21, 2007

On January 20, 2002, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the communions gathered in Memphis, TN to inaugurate a new relationship called Churches Uniting in Christ. What an audacious move!! Just four months after the tragedy of September 11, 2001 these churches stepped forward and committed themselves to overcome both the sin of disunity and the sin of racism. On January 21, 2002 the Heads of Communion stood together on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel and placed their signatures on an Appeal to the Churches "To Seek God's Beloved Community." Their resolve stated: "Together we will seek to find the common ground where we can all sign with integrity

that it is on 'Christ the solid rock we stand.' We will do the painful work of honestly facing our history, seeking mutual compassion, developing a common vision and identifying the sacrifices we must make."

The fifth anniversary of the inauguration of CUIC calls us to be audacious again, to renew the commitment, to strengthen the relationship, and with God's help to "renew our faith, proclaim the good news, unite our churches and heal the nation."

As you celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (see article, p. 2) and honor Martin Luther King, Jr., gather with other CUIC congregations to lift up the CUIC rela-

tionship and vision.

Let us not succumb to complacency, to forgetfulness, to memory loss. Let us instead take up the responsibility laid on each congregation to be active advocates for CUIC, this relationship that calls us to live differently with one another.

Jan 20-21, 2007: CUIC 5th anniversary

Jan. 18-25, 2007: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Jan. 14, 2007: Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday,



Heads of Communion wait on balcony of Lorraine Motel in Memphis for signing of the Appeal to the Churches