

10 REASONS WHY I AM A DISCIPLE

By Michael Kinnamon

- I am a Disciple because, in an age of growing fundamentalism, Disciples seek to be a people of the book who, at the same time, feel no need to protect the Bible from the modern world.
- I am a Disciple because, in a society where beating the competition is regarded as the highest value, Disciples treasure the gifts that God has given to other parts of Christ's one body — and to neighbors of other faiths.
- I am a Disciple because, resisting the extremes of hierarchical power and do-your-own-thing individualism, Disciples attempt to live by a covenant of mutual accountability, grounded in God's covenant of love with us.
- I am a Disciple because, instead of focusing only on the promise of personal blessedness in another world, Disciples celebrate the power and intention of God to transform this world — and the calling we have to participate in God's mission of justice and peace here and now.
- I am a Disciple because we uphold the priesthood of all believers; because, without devaluing the importance of leaders, Disciples affirm that all members of the church have gifts for leadership and a calling to exercise them.
- I am a Disciple because we are a most unusual combination of radical discipleship (signified not only by our name but by our commitment to believers' baptism) and ecumenical openness — preaching a costly faith without claiming that we have the last word on it.
- I am a Disciple because we are also a most unusual combination of informal worship that yet is centered on breaking bread together at the Lord's Table.
- I am a Disciple because, while celebrating freedom from creedal conformity, Disciples recognize that such freedom comes with a responsibility to study the faith in community.
- I am a Disciple because, while emphasizing that the gospel takes root in local congregations, Disciples know that the church and the church's mission stretch from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.
- I am a Disciple because, in an era when communities often define themselves by whom they exclude, Disciples claim an identity as those who welcome the excluded, even as Christ has welcomed us. I recognize that we are not always so good at this. But I think we are getting better.