

Chris Hobgood, Disciples leader and anti-racism advocate, dies at age 83

Hobgood was the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) general minister and president from 2003 to 2005, and founded the Disciples Center for Public Witness.

People in the [July 3, 2019](#) issue



William "Chris" Hobgood. Photo courtesy of Hobgood family.

William Christopher "Chris" Hobgood, an author and former top executive of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), died May 31 at age 83 at his home in Maryland. He had Parkinson's disease.

Hobgood was the Disciples general minister and president from 2003 to 2005. He was also a longtime consultant to the Alban Institute and author of several books, including *The Once and Future Pastor* and *Born Apart, Becoming One: Disciples Defeating Racism*.

“I was blessed to be in pro-reconciliation and anti-racism training with him several times,” said current general minister and president Teresa Hord Owens in a Disciples News Service release. “His leadership in a transitional time called us to faithfulness in our witness as a pro-reconciling anti-racist Church.”

Hobgood was a founder and copresident of the Disciples Center for Public Witness.

“Chris allowed a loving and liberating God to use him as a force for good within our denomination and beyond,” wrote Ken Brooker Langston, current executive director of the center.

Prior to being head of the denomination, Hobgood was regional minister in Arkansas and the Washington, D.C., area. His final role was pastor of Bethany Beach Christian Church in Delaware.

“We would not have anti-racism in my denomination at the level we have it without him,” wrote Sandhya Rani Jha, a Disciples minister and author of *Transforming Communities*.

A version of this article appears in the print edition under the title “People: William Christopher ‘Chris’ Hobgood.”