

2023 ANNUAL REVIEW



Seeds of Transformation

Jennifer Copeland , Executive Director

In 2023, the North Carolina Council of Churches notched another year in our storied history of advocating for justice through the lens of faith. From environmental justice to democracy rights, from health disparities to criminal justice reform, the Council continues to be the amplifier for progressive Christianity in our state. The bulk of our work involves educating people of faith about the connection between their beliefs and the public policies that bracket their lives. Knowledge about the issues plants the seeds for change and moves all of us closer to God's vision for the world.

In addition to sharing some annual highlights of our work, we hope this report will offer places for you to unite your passion with the passions of the Council. May God continue to sow seeds for an abundant harvest to sustain us all.



**North Carolina
Council of Churches**

OUR IMPACT



38 EVENTS
1,542
PARTICIPANTS



2,013 New
Subscribers
21,232 Total
Subscribers



75,408
NEW WEB USERS
28,249 PAGE VIEWS



41 PRESS
MENTIONS



178 NEW
FOLLOWERS
4,183 TOTAL
FOLLOWERS



51 Voices
Published
15,295 Voices
Pageviews

OUR PRIORITIES



ECO-JUSTICE
Connection
AN INITIATIVE OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

- Initiated local and national **youth programming** and received a **\$20,000** grant to establish the Youth Climate Policy Council.
- Launched a **Congregational Resiliency Hub** project through a multi-year National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grant.
- Delivered over **1,500 signatures** to President Biden's climate envoy during the **United Nations COP28** in Dubai, UAE.
- Made **34** climate justice presentations to over **1,200** people.
- Supported **nine** churches' applications for Interfaith Power and Light's Cool Congregation challenge.



Partners in
HEALTH
and
WHOLENESS
AN INITIATIVE OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

- **211** faith communities make up the current **Collaborative**.
- Hosted **28** events with **848** attendees.
- Awarded grants totaling **\$462,764** to **150** faith communities.
- Increased our engagement focusing on **Tobacco/Nicotine Education** and hosted **7 events** across the state of North Carolina.
- Hosted **7 Overdose Response community events** across the state.
- Supported the establishment of **two mental health hubs**: Living Hope Church Ministries in Kinston and First Missionary Baptist Church in Concord.

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

2023 Legislative Seminar



The **2023 Legislative Seminar** was a dynamic platform for education, discussion, and inspiration with workshops tailored to current legislative matters. **Governor Roy Cooper**, a member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), received the **Faith Active in Public Life Award** and offered the keynote address.

New Website Launched!

We dedicated significant efforts to pave the way for the launch of our **brand-new website!** February marked the exciting debut of our revamped online platform, featuring a fresh and modern design alongside **user-friendly access.**



Gun Violence Prevention



Nine years ago we convened a group that has become the N.C. Coalition for Gun Violence Prevention. Over this time, the Council has collaborated to host summits, influence legislation, hold vigils, produce literature, and tell the truth about gun violence in our state and nation. We celebrated with our partners when Governor Cooper established the Southeast's first **Office of Violence Prevention**, providing a sustained focus on gun violence prevention initiatives.

Partners in Health and Wholeness Collaborative

PHW played a pivotal role in redefining health in faith communities across the state. **Over 10,000 individuals** were impacted by a PHW-sponsored event. Mental health, overdose response, healthy eating, and tobacco education were **key initiatives.**



Eco-Justice Connection Featured on Squeaky Clean Podcast!



Susannah Tuttle and Ren Martin shared their insights on the Squeaky Clean Podcast with the NC Sustainable Energy Association hosted by Matt Abele. They discussed **embracing energy sources from the heavens** and leaving fossil fuels behind.

SPOTLIGHT: HILLSIDE CHURCH

In 2023, Hillside Church, A Baptist Fellowship in Chapel Hill, achieved a remarkable milestone by upgrading its [Cool Congregation](#) certification to the 40% reduction level. This accomplishment, attributed to the addition of a solar array on their property, now prevents 16.9 tons of carbon emissions annually.



Collaborating with North Carolina Interfaith Power & Light (NCIPL), a program of the Council's Eco-Justice Connection initiative, and guidance from John Roberts, a retired engineer and NCIPL's lead Volunteer Energy Auditor, Hillside Church upgraded lighting, installed insulation, and implemented energy-saving measures.

With bold leadership from their pastor, the Rev. Dr. Rob Tennant, and their deacons, Hillside Church continues to exemplify a harmonious blend of faith and environmental responsibility. We celebrate with them as the only certified Cool Congregation in North Carolina!



THANK YOU!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to every one of you who has played a crucial role in supporting the Council's mission. Your generosity helps us to pursue our vision for a more just, compassionate, and thriving North Carolina. We thank God for your support and your partnership in the work of justice. Your ongoing commitment is a testament to the power of faith and collective action, and we are honored to have you by our side on this journey.

STAY IN TOUCH



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We also thank our denominational members for their support:

Alliance of Baptists | African Methodist Episcopal Church | African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church | Christian Methodist Episcopal | Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) | Episcopal Church | Evangelical Lutheran Church in America | General Baptist State Convention | Metropolitan Community Churches | Mennonite Church USA | Moravian Church in America | Presbyterian Church (USA) | Reformed Church in America | Reformed Churches of God in Christ, International | Religious Society of Friends | United Church of Christ | Unity Fellowship Church Movement | United Methodist Church