

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact:

Alex Goss 203.260.3985 | agoss@fenton.com

Steven D. Martin 202.412.4323 | steven.martin@nationalcouncilofchurches.us

**National Council of Churches Announces
April 4th A.C.T. to End Racism Rally on National Mall**

Yolanda Adams, Marvin Sapp, Vashti McKenzie, DeRay Mckesson, Y'Anna Crawley, Julian DeShazier, Jennifer Harvey, Jim Wallis, Lou Gossett Jr., Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield Join Thousands from Across the Nation in Washington D.C. to End Racism

Washington, D.C. (March 15, 2018) – Today, the National Council of Churches (NCC) announced plans to hold a rally to end racism on the National Mall on April 4. The A.C.T. to End Racism Rally is the starting point of a multi-year effort, launched by NCC, to remove racism from the nation's social fabric and bring the country together.

In remembrance of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who inspired and challenged America to confront and put an end to racism, the rally will take place on the day the nation marks 50 years since his assassination. *"We have for too long lived under the scourge of racism in our society. To begin the process of healing our nation, we as Christians must join with people of all faiths in holding ourselves accountable for our complicity, and commit to righting the wrongs,"* said Jim Winkler, president of NCC.

NCC and its coalition of over 50 partners recognize that the faith community and those of moral conscience have a specific responsibility to address and eliminate racism, but also unique gifts that enable them to do so. *"As we look at our society today, it is painfully evident that the soul of our nation needs healing. We must not only pray, but take concrete action to realize and achieve racial and social justice, and we cannot possibly put an end to racism unless we commit to change at all levels — including within the faith community,"* said Bishop W. Darin Moore, chair of the Governing Board for NCC.

"Christian churches, present in every town and community across the country, are both part of the problem and the solution. NCC and our partners are committed to addressing the systemic evil that many Christians and church institutions have yet to fully acknowledge," said Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, Director of the Truth and Racial Justice Initiative for NCC.

Buses will bring rally-goers from across the country for the three-day event that will see thousands convene on the National Mall. Special guests at the rally include **Yolanda Adams, Marvin Sapp, Bishop Vashti McKenzie, DeRay Mckesson, Y'Anna Crawley, Grammy Award-winning artist Rev. Julian DeShazier (J.Kwest), Dr. Jennifer Harvey, Dr. Jim Wallis,**

Lou Gossett, Jr., Rabbi Jonah Pesner, Dr. Raphael Warnock, Naeem Baig, and Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield of *Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream*. Additional names will be announced in the coming weeks.

The schedule of events is as follows:

- **April 3:** 6:00 p.m. ET: Orthodox Christian Bridegroom Service of Holy Tuesday;
8:00 p.m. ET: Then and Now: An Ecumenical Gathering to End Racism
- **April 4:** Silent March (starting near the MLK Jr. Memorial), Interfaith Service, and A.C.T. to End Racism Rally on the National Mall, 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. ET
- **April 5:** National Day of Advocacy & Action

The rally is open to all people of faith and moral conscience. To learn more about the rally, visit: www.rally2endracism.org.

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About the National Council of Churches

The National Council of Churches is the nation's largest ecumenical body and includes more than 45 million members. Since its founding in 1950, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA has been the leading force for shared ecumenical witness among Christians in the United States. The NCC's 38 member communions form a wide spectrum of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, Evangelical, historic African American and Living Peace churches.