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The Disciples' Advocate

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Community

The nickel of the Christian faith is community – forming community, living in community, serving community, critiquing community, and renewing/transforming broken community. Community does not just happen. Community must be created.

Community must be nurtured and cared for so that it is ever responding to the needs of the many and to the needs of the one. No one remains outside the boundaries of true community for it encompasses everyone and the whole of creation.

We know from Scripture: "For God so loved the world that . . ." [you can quote it here]. John 3:16 would have had a much different and lesser impact if it stated: "For God so loved the church that . . ." It is for the sake of the world that the church exists and we in the church should never lose sight of this fact. A church that exists for itself and not for the sake of its community and the larger world is an oxymoron.

Let me get back to where I began, to the subject of nickels. Martin Marty once cited economist-ecologist Herman Daly's story about "the village idiot who was stopped every day by the townspeople and asked to choose between a nickel and a dime. The idiot always chose the nickel and the people would go away saying, 'There, you see what an idiot he is.' Late in life the idiot explained, 'If I had picked the dime,

they would have stopped offering it to me pretty quickly. This way I kept getting nickels every day.'" Sounds like a pretty smart chap to me!



Rev. Ron Degges

If our congregations want to keep getting nickels every day they must wed themselves to their communities and to the larger world for the sake of the gospel. In this edition of The Disciples' Advocate, you will read about the myriad ways Disciples congregations and ministries are immersed in the life of their communities.

Your community and world may think that the church is insignificant, powerless, wimpy, and irrelevant. But like the village idiot, the church knows what our communities and our world needs. If we pick the dime we are done. It is nickels we need: forming community, living in community, serving community, critiquing community, and renewing/transforming broken community.

*Nickel-ly yours,
Ron*

Community

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Have you considered making a gift to



in your will?

If so, please contact Rev. Ron Degges

at (317) 713-2684.

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In the Mail

However you like to enjoy the weeks of fall that God provides, it is our prayer that you are getting to experience that enjoyment to the fullest. Those of us here in the Rio Grande Valley are grateful for cooler temperatures and schools filled with children. And we are grateful for your generous support.

This letter acknowledges receipt of your gift to the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries in the amount of \$1,000.00 towards food for the refugees.

Through every season, we thank God for the strength and resources we need to facilitate glorious transformations in the lives of refugees and the poorest of the poor through our ministries here.

Your generosity flows into a new life of freedom for those we serve. As we journey together, we will continue to do our work in awe of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

May your gift be returned to you in the form of God's abundant blessings!

In God's Service,

*F. Feliberto Pereira, Director
Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries
Bayview, Texas*

Thank you so much for your gift of \$600 to Family Promise of Northland Kansas City from Jan. through Aug. 2015.

This gift was very important to the homeless family that are provided good shelter and support while they secure employment, save their money and get into more permanent housing. Lives are being changed. Children's lives are being stabilized. Families are being strengthened.

Your support is very valuable to Family Promise of the Northland and the families that are being served.

Sincerely,

*Marilyn Gardner
Family Promise of Northland Kansas City
Kansas City, Missouri*

On behalf of the congregation of Eastgate Christian Church in Independence, Mo., I wanted to take a moment to thank you and your entire team for your faithful service in support of our shared ministry through the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). You offer a range of valuable resources for congregations and ministers too numerous to count. Our congregation has been especially touched through the years by the efforts of Disciples Women and the Children Worship & Wonder program.

In some ways, we Disciples have given you an impossible job, with broad responsibilities for a variety of groups and limited resources. Somehow, though, you and your team continue to enrich the lives of so many. We hope that you keep up the good work.

Please accept our heartfelt gratitude for these efforts -- and so many more -- on our behalf. May God continue to bless your ministry.

With gratitude and Christian love,

*Rev. Joshua J. Patty, Senior Minister
Eastgate Christian Church
Independence, Missouri*

It's always good to hear what's going on through DHM. I thought I would take a moment and share with you one of the neat things that recently occurred in our "neck of the woods." Our congregation performed a "Serve Day." We dismissed our regular services and went and did several quick service projects throughout the community (buying people's gas, giving flowers to those in a nursing home, feeding the police and fire departments, etc.). The highlight was captured on video when two of our guys went and randomly bought groceries for people. If you have a few minutes, check out the video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkXhEgc4aAg. I think you'll enjoy it.

God bless you!

*Mark Garrett
Legacy Christian Church
Harrison, Ohio*

Continued on next page.



In the Mail *Continued from previous page.*



I am sure that you see such celebrations as this all the time, but I just wanted to share with you a precious picture of the first generation children of the Ghimirey family of Bhutanese refugees which our little church in Lancaster helped resettle.

The girl on the far left is Krista Ghimirey, the daughter of Kharga Ghimirey and Bhagi Acharya whose birth I helped coach and whose family just recently visited us here on the Cape! What a blessing it has been to have shared so intimately in their lives

over the years! I am very grateful to your predecessor, Linda Williams, for doggedly pursuing our congregation about refugee sponsorship for several years before we were really ready to take on the project!

My current congregation is sending funds to the CWS RIP office in Lancaster to help with Syrian refugee resettlement. Just wanted you to know!

The second picture at right is of Kharga and Bhagi while visiting us here on the Cape. (Kharga cut off the kids... I don't know why!) The third picture below is of Kharga just after he arrived here with his family. What a difference, eh?

Appreciatively, Kate

*Rev. Kate Epperly, D. Min.
Designated Interim Pastor,
Christian Union Church
North Truro Truro, Massachusetts*



Moving our community forward to Mission First!

How have you found ways in your local community to accompany others on their way to wholeness? Where do you see opportunities for Disciples to make a bigger impact in both local and global communities?

The Mission First! Implementation Team has been busy throughout the fall preparing the table for mission gatherings where you will have the opportunity to talk about questions that put mission at the forefront of our work together.

Mission First! is about our life in community – locally, regionally and globally – and how we can work together more effectively to do God's work in the world.

Many of the mission gatherings will be part of regional assemblies – a community of communities. Generally, the mission gathering will go something like this: after an introduction to a few key concepts and a short time of worship, small groups will talk about their experiences of mission with a designated

facilitator. They will identify possible areas of focus in mission for Disciples today. The small groups will share their thoughts with the larger group. The responses will be recorded and added to the feedback from all the mission gatherings.

And from there the community grows even larger.

The gleanings from the mission gatherings will be given to a Mission Council tasked with identifying some key mission themes. Those themes will be shared across the Disciples community so we can look together for partnerships

to make a difference showing God's love in the world, both in your local community and beyond.

Mission Gatherings begin in January 2016 and continue into the fall. The Mission Council will meet around the first week in December 2016. The General Board will meet in February 2017 to assess the pilot program and determine the way forward. Go to <http://missionfirst.disciples.org> for more information.



Out of Hibernation and into the Light

Do you live near or regularly drive by a church and wonder why you never see evidence of or hear about the congregation that worships there? Could it be because the congregation rarely opens its doors to venture out with its ministry into the community, let alone invites the community in?



While many Disciples congregations are in perpetual hibernation, the good news is that other churches are throwing wide their doors to make the effort, often successfully, to connect with the community around them.

Disciples Church Extension Fund and Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation are privileged to work closely with congregations and courageous leaders who reject a bunker mentality, choosing instead the path of discernment that leads to action that leads to lives changed in their neighborhoods. South Hills Christian Church in Fort Worth, Texas, is an example of a congregation who looked at the area around them and asked the important question, "How can we use our space and place to serve our neighbors?" In ad-

dition to opening their doors to many community groups, with a loan from Disciples Church Extension Fund the church developed an adjacent vacant lot into a handicap-accessible park to serve walkers and families from the nearby school.

Likewise, Webster Groves Christian Church in St. Louis, Mo., is looking outward as they consider what God is calling them to be and do as disciples. The congregation's visionary leaders are using Hope Partnership's Mission Pathways ministry-planning service to help them determine how to be more effective as a mission-focused church. The process of "interviewing" mul-



multiple constituencies in the community to hear about their greatest needs from their perspectives is helping Webster Groves discern

which mission focus is the best fit.

Call 800.274.1883 or visit www.disciplescef.org or www.hopepmt.org to learn more about Hope Partnership and Disciples Church Extension Fund services that help congregations make "community" come to life in their ministries.

Disciples Act and Pray: End Family Detention Now!

Last year, Disciples worked VERY hard, joining multiple other faith partners, to seek an end to the practice of family detention — which has held mothers and children behind bars who came to the U.S. seeking protection for their lives from horrific gang and drug violence in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. (See pictures below of Disciples leaders at a Spring prayer vigil in Texas, and a march for families in Washington last Fall.



In 2016, there remain THREE separate centers, which continue to grow in numbers. Two of the three, in Dilley and Karnes City, Texas, are run by private prison corporations. The third is in Berks county, Pennsylvania. Pastor Hector Hernandez of Indianapolis, Ind., designed the logo of a young child behind barbed wire, which Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries is most grateful to use as a symbol of our efforts to free the children and seek more humane ways of care by ending family detention.

Please contact Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea at ssstanley@dhm.disciples.org or 202-957-7826 for ways you and your congregation can engage in this campaign and help support children and their moms! Also, please continue to WRITE ANGEL TO ANGEL LETTERS to the children in Dilley detention center. See further information at: www.discipleshomemissions.org/families-in-detention



End Family Detention Now!



After one year, Olympia homeless shelter keeps its beds full and its arms open

Every night for the past year, downtown Olympia's newest homeless shelter has been filled to capacity.

The Interfaith Works Emergency Overnight Shelter's mission extends beyond its 37 beds to address basic life needs for hundreds of people on the streets.

And still, it's not enough. Last winter, the shelter turned away an average of 10 people daily. Shelter director Meg Martin estimates that at least 150 homeless people need a bed on any given night.

However, the shelter has achieved several small victories since opening Nov. 1, 2014, in the basement of First Christian Church at Seventh and Franklin. Aside from providing a total of 13,500 bed nights, Martin said the shelter has connected 30 people with permanent housing. Many more people have been put on a path toward recovery, or at least live in more stable conditions than they had on the streets.

The shelter also keeps homeless people out of jails and emergency rooms.

"If we could put ourselves out of business," Martin said, "that would be great."

The shelter's core strategy is to meet basic needs, which in turn can have a ripple effect on a client's overall well-being. Martin said the shelter's clients are resilient people who have overcome incredible odds. Many of them cope with personal trauma through drugs and alcohol. The shelter, which has no sobriety requirements, is the only place that will accept them.

The latter is one thing that sets the Interfaith Works shelter apart. Rather than operate on a first-come, first-serve basis, the shelter gives priority to the most vulnerable clients — those with the highest risk of dying because of health or substance abuse issues.

To determine a client's fragility, the shelter uses a tool called a vulnerability index. So far, the shelter has assessed about 400 people with the index, Martin said. If the shelter knows a client won't need a bed for a night, the bed will go to someone else on the list.

The most surprising part of the shelter's first year has been the primarily older clientele, she said. The average client is 51 years old, with many clients in their 60s and 70s. Martin said almost half suffer from mental

illness or substance abuse.

"What we've learned from this model is that it's the right thing to do," Martin said. "When people are given access to basic needs, it works."

The shelter collaborates with other service agencies including SideWalk, a nonprofit program that specializes in connecting the local homeless population with housing, case management and short-term rental assistance.

Phil Owen, executive director of SideWalk, said the shelter has been instrumental in setting an example and creating a system for helping the most vulnerable homeless people first. One of those homeless people recently became the 500th client housed by SideWalk, he said.

"The difference is that we're moving vulnerable people to housing that we wouldn't have been able to do before," Owen told The Olympian about the shelter's impact. "It's been a great partnership."

To get started, the shelter relied on about \$259,500 in funding from the Thurston County HOME Consortium and about \$250,000 in private donations. Gary Aden, manager of the

county's Housing and Community Renewal program, said the shelter is meeting expectations so far.

"The most important thing is they've gotten some really vulnerable people off the street," Aden told The Olympian, noting that 37 beds still isn't enough. "We could probably use three or four times that much to really address the need."

The shelter also has made an effort to strengthen relationships outside the social service community.

One initiative is the "Good Neighbor Policy," an agreement that all shelter residents sign. The policy prohibits behaviors such as littering, loitering and drug use on church grounds while encouraging respectful interactions with surrounding businesses.

About the same time the shelter opened last year, Thurston First Bank also opened for business a block away at Franklin Street and Legion Way. At the time, bank president Jim Haley expressed concern over whether the shelter's clients would cause security prob-



Shelter director Meg Martin at the Interfaith Works Emergency Overnight Shelter at First Christian Church in downtown Olympia. The center celebrated its one-year anniversary in November. Photo by Tony Overman.

Continued on page 22. See homeless.

Disciple Summer Mission Trips Announced for 2016

Six years of Disciple Summer Mission will commence this summer. The trip that has gathered over 500 youth and adults this past summer, started with a simple trip started by four youth minister friends. These four friends started with wanting to gather their youth together to do a mission trip together. In 2011, 80 youth and adults gathered in Midland, Texas to



DSM participants sorting at a recycling center in Arizona.

help rehabilitate houses, and spend time with the elderly and the young. This trip grew to 140 youth and adults in 2012 when the trip moved to Northwest Arkansas. This trip also included experiencing and joining the rebuilding efforts of Joplin, Mo.

In 2013, 326 youth and adults traveled to New Orleans with Disciple Summer Mission. We painted, put insulation and drywall into homes that were still recovering from Hurricane Katrina. The summer of 2014, the leadership team made the decision to paint the town in Oklahoma City with 350 youth and adults from 28 churches in 7 states. We were able to paint the exterior of 30 homes.

The summer of 2015, was a big step for Disciple Summer Mission in planting two trips in different locations. The leadership team did a trip in Albuquerque, New Mexico and another trip in Nashville, Tenn., with a combined 520 youth and adults. Community organizations were the focus of both trips in helping in community gardens, food banks and worked with multiple organizations that help men and women in recovery and children in impoverished communities.



DSM Participants painting houses in Odessa, Texas.

The leadership team has grown over the last few years and the team is excited to announce that there will be two trips in the summer of 2016. The locations for the trips will be St. Louis, Mo., and central Texas. Each location will accept 300 youth and adults per trip. The St. Louis trip will be Monday, June 27- Friday, July 1, 2016. The central Texas trip will be Monday, July 4-Friday July 8, 2016. Cost will be \$275 per person. The deadline to reserve spots by filling out the online group registration form is March 1st and a deposit of \$75 per person is due at this time. The remaining balance and individual online forms are due on May 1st. The St. Louis trip's contact person is Jessie Gray and she can be contacted at (501) 993-8263. The



DSM participants helping at the samaritan outreach center in Arizona.

contact person for the central Texas trip is Alex Smith and she can be contacted at (512) 971-9411. If you need further information, please go to our new website at: www.disciplesummermission.wordpress.com.



DSM participants clearing tree limbs in Joplin, Missouri



DSM Participants watering trees in Joplin, Missouri.



La Oficina Central Pastoral para Ministerios Hispanos les extiende la más cordial invitación a todos nuestros hermanos a que nos acompañen a nuestra 18va Asamblea titulada “ESCOGIDOS con una Identidad, Misión y Testimonio”. Esta asamblea es histórica, ya que aquí además de nuestros Talleres, cultos al Dios Altísimo, Sesiones de Negocio y la accesibilidad al disfrute de lo que Miami ofrece; estaremos seleccionando nuestro próximo Pastor(a) Nacional.

The Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries extend an invitation for enjoy with us our 18th Assembly entitled “CHOSEN with an identity, Mission and Witness”. This is will be a historical assembly. In addition of our workshops, worshipping our God Almighty, Business Sessions and the ability to enjoy everything that Miami has to offer; we will be selecting our next National Pastor.

Así es, nuestro Pastor Nacional Rev. Dr. Huberto Pimentel comenzará su retiro y tendremos el honor de honrarle y decirle GRACIAS por toda la labor y el servicio que le ha dado a la comunidad hispana durante estos 10 años. Queremos que seas parte y que junto a tu familia puedas disfrutar de las ricas bendiciones de Dios y como nuestro logo “SOMOS UNO”, adoremos a Cristo en un solo Espíritu el próximo 14 al 16 de Julio en Coral Gables, Florida.

That's right; our National Pastor, Huberto Pimentel will be retiring! We are so blessed and honored to say THANKS for his service to God's Kingdom and the Hispanic community during these 10 years. We want you and your families to be a part of this great celebration and enjoy the rich blessings of God. As our logo says “WE ARE ONE”! We will worship Christ in one spirit next July 14-16, 2016 in Coral Gables, Florida.

Les esperamos We waiting for you!

Bendiciones Blessings,



2016

Easter

OFFERING

Received in most congregations March 20 & 27

TO LIVE
TO *love*
TO LEAD

YOUR GIFT TO THE
EASTER OFFERING
HELPS BRING LIFE,
LOVE AND LEARNING
THROUGH THE
GENERAL MINISTRIES
OF THE CHRISTIAN
CHURCH (DISCIPLES
OF CHRIST).

**Ministries that
receive funding
from the Easter
Offering include:**

For more information on
special offerings, how to
donate and more, go to the
disciplesmissionfund.org
webpage.

- Center for Faith and Giving
- Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries
- Communication Ministries
- Council on Christian Unity
- Disciples Church Extension Fund / Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation
- Disciples of Christ Historical Society
- Disciples Home Missions

- Disciples Women
- Global Ministries
- Higher Education and Leadership Ministries
- National Benevolent Association
- National Convocation
- North American Pacific/Asian Disciples
- Treasury Services.



FCC of Louisville Helps Bring Technology Access to Over 200 Students

Westport Middle School is home to over 1,200 students. Eighty-five percent of those students are defined as GAP students, meaning they fit into one or more of the following categories: low income, minority, and/or low achievement on tests.

While the faculty at Westport Middle does a great job educating their students, resources are hard to come by. Some textbooks are over 12 years old and still in use. Those books are out of date and often contain inaccurate information.

Church member Carolyn Hoagland is one of the many dedicated teachers who is working hard to overcome these challenges. When she heard about our Wholeness Grants, she thought of a way to help students at Westport.

With the plan in hand, she and her colleague, Caitlyn Workman, came to the church with their request.

What a great request it was!

The proposal would bring the following to Westport Middle:

- Increased computer/technology accessibility to over 200 6th graders
- The use of updated on-line textbooks
- A classroom website
- A news source that allows teachers

to send current news articles geared to each student's reading level

- Access to learning games, web-quests, BrainPop, videos, and a host of other really great teaching tools.

As you can see in the pictures, the students are both benefitting and enjoying their new laptops and all that they bring.

We are so grateful for hard-working and dedi-

cated teachers like Carolyn and Caitlyn. They embody the call to bring healing and hope to our often broken world. What a gift it is to be able to help them impact so many students in such a powerful way!

The wholeness grant used to fund this ministry was made possible through your

faithful financial support of our church and its ministries and help fund a variety of efforts to make our world a better place. You can find more examples of those efforts by visiting

<http://www.stakeyourclaim.info>.

If you are interested in learning more about First Christian Church and it's Wholeness Grants, visit www.fcclouisville.org.

Article and photos used with permission by Rev. Brian S. Gerard, Senior Minister, First Christian Church of Louisville, Ky.



Black Leadership Projects Grant Accepting Applications for 2016

The Black Leadership Projects Committee is happy to announce the 2016 grant process will open in January 2016. Applications are due no later than May 31, 2016. There is no minimum request. All proposals for projects that develop, nurture, and strengthen lay or clergy church leadership in Disciples African American congregations will be considered. Funds will be awarded to the chosen projects in Summer 2016. Go to our webpage for more information and application guidelines: www.discipleshomemissions.org/black-leadership-projects-grant. Here are some of the 2015 recipients.



Community Day 2015 -- New Covenant Christian Church, Nashville, TN (Photos above)

This annual event is a service and outreach effort in inner city Nashville, Tenn., attended by 300+. The event offers resources from 7 community partners for parenting, health, education, spirituality, and economic empowerment. Services included record expungement, career assistance, health screenings, free haircuts, giveaways (of shoes, socks, groceries, and school supplies), entertainment, refreshments, and kids' activities.

Moving On Up! -- First United Christian Church, Xenia, OH

(Photo right -- Dr. Nodie Washington, Committee Member)

Moving On Up! was a project that was co-sponsored by First United Christian Church, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Rho Omega Chapter, and local Historically Black College and University (HBCU) Alumni. Moving On Up! Was designed to educate, develop, and strengthen youth in the greater Xenia and Wilberforce communities. On Saturday, September 26, 2015, Moving On Up! showcased HBCUs and offered hands-on training for the Standardized Achievement Test (SAT) and the American College Test (ACT) entrance exams.

The purpose of Moving On Up! was three-fold: (1) Expose students in grades 9th –12th to HBCUs, (2) Provide hands-on SAT & ACT preparation, and (3) Provide scholarship funds for participants to take either the SAT or ACT.

(1) Expose students in grades 9th – 12th to HBCUs

There were 10 face-to-face participants representing colleges at the college fair, and 22 HBCUs that mailed the Moving On Up! Committee materials to hand out to interested students. Several local high school students and their families attended the fair.

(2) Provide hands-on SAT & ACT preparation - SAT/ACT Bootcamp

Twenty-one (21) students attended the SAT/ACT Bootcamp. Our facilitator, Amanda Jameson, led the students through five and a half hours of hands-on training for the SAT and ACT tests.

(3) Provide scholarship funds for participants to take either the SAT or ACT

Of the twenty-one (21) students that participated, sixteen (16) of them received a voucher for \$56.50 to take the SAT or ACT.



Preparing Our African American Youth/Young Future Leaders for Spiritual Growth and 21st Century Ministry -- New Century Fellowship Christian Church, Louisville, KY (Photos right)

Purpose of Project: To reconnect and strengthen involvement of Young Disciples in the African American Church through a series of events focused on training, spiritual development, and fellowship with a goal of reaching over 150 youth and young adults.

Launching - LIVE BY PURPOSE

We launched this initiative on Friday, September 19th during the 3rd Friday Fellowship.

Topic Discussed: LIFE Choices in Relationships - Day I

The attendance for this event was 25 with the ages ranging from 6-38.

Materials were used to facilitate an atmosphere where discussion points and scriptures were given in the follow areas: Relationships, Health, Home, Friends, and Faith Community.

Younger disciples were present, and we did story and dream boards with this group.

Purpose of Expressive Worship – Day II

Learning different arts in which we worship God through creative, art, dance, painting,

Participants ended this session with painting everything on a board to take away what was learned and made a presentation.

Purpose of Prayer in the Community

We held our second event in the community in partnership with a local Christian high school group. Discussion topic: Praying in our Community

We took a walk in the neighborhood to pray with others. We gathered in prayer circles at different corners in the neighborhoods. T-shirts were purchased "God Belongs in my Community"

The attendance for this event was at 15.

Group returned back to outdoor shelter to share their experience and we had fellowship.

Purpose of LIFE Choices

We held our third event on Friday, November 12th during a 2nd Friday Fellowship

Topic Discussed: LIFE Choices in Leadership Development

The attendance for this event was 8. The date was changed due the availability for 3rd Friday.

Materials were used to facilitate an atmosphere were a movie and PowerPoint presentation with discussion points and handouts.



Sisters' Night Out: An Outreach Ministry of the Faith Health Ministry of Loudon Avenue Christian Church, Roanoke, Virginia (Photos above)

Sisters' Night Out (SNO) is an outreach ministry of the Faith Health Ministry of Loudon Avenue Christian Church (LACC), in collaboration with community based agencies. The purpose of this project is to effectively communicate cancer prevention information, specific for breast cancer, to women, with an emphasis on our target population, African American women. The presenters presented information on preventive care and how the lack of or no care can have an impact on hindering early detection. The event was attended by 200+ women ages 20 – 70+. Information provided by the vendors/exhibitors in attendance enhanced and provided information to support the goals of the program. Our goals were met and are ongoing. This is an annual initiative.

JUST+WOMEN

EMBRACING LIFE

Disciples Women's Ministries is pleased to announce the theme for the 2016 Just Women magazine ~ **Embracing Our Global Sisterhood**. A one-year subscription (\$19 USA / \$24 USD Canada) includes:

- **The Winter issue** celebrates Disciples creativity and the arts.
- **The Bible study issue**, due to be mailed in the spring, will offer eight lessons under the title of "The Table and Beyond: Lavish Hospitality in the Bible." Orders for non-subscription copies received by January 19, 2016, will ship free. As a reminder, extra copies of this issue sell-out early.
- **The Summer issue** will feature Mission First! Impacting Lives.
- **The Fall issue** will discuss the poverty problem and what the church can do about it.

All non-Bible study issues will include articles and pictures from the participants in the Woman-to-Woman Worldwide 2015 journey to the Middle East, include a free online study guide, and may be purchased separately for \$5 (plus S&H) each. The Bible Study is self-contained and sells separately for \$12 (plus S&H)

Visit discipleswomen.org to place subscriptions or single issue orders.

National Convocation 24th Biennial Session



July 21-24, 2016
Kansas City, Missouri

Hindsight • Insight • Foresight

Habakkuk 2:2



Registration opens August 1, 2015

www.nationalconvocation.org



You Are Called By Name

Sessions '16 @ TCU

Hang Your Hat in Fort Worth

July 8-10, 2016



To register go to:

<https://docgeneralassembly.webconnex.com/2016DisciplesMen>

Join Disciple Men from around North America for three days
of Church leadership training, worship and good times.

Remember: You are Called by Name!

Woman-to-Woman Worldwide 2016



This journey will be to the countries of South Africa and Ghana. Tentative dates ~ orientation beginning on October 13 in the departure city (TBA) and debriefing occurring on October 26. The approximate cost is currently set at \$5,000. Application deadline is February 15, 2016.

Please visit discipleswomen.org/woman-to-woman-worldwide. In the Resource box, read the "What to know before you apply" information. All applications needs to be coordinated with your women's regional staff or president or constituency Disciples Women's president. Applications are available on the same web page.



It's Simple

Making a legacy gift to your congregation or other favorite Disciples cause doesn't have to be difficult. It is as easy as making the church the beneficiary of all or part of one of your retirement accounts (traditional IRA, 401(k), 403(b), etc.). You can do the same thing with a life insurance policy.

The process is simple and costs you nothing:

Just contact your plan administrator.

Want to learn about others ways?

Contact your Christian Church Foundation!

 **CHRISTIAN CHURCH FOUNDATION**

Helping Disciples Make a Difference

info@ccf.disciples.org (800) 668-8016 www.christianchurchfoundation.org

North American Youth Event

Disciples of Christ

National Youth Event

United Church of Christ

July 26-30, 2016

**Coronado Springs Resort Hotel
Lake Buena Vista, Florida**



Mark your calendar to attend the most magical **Disciples of Christ/United Church of Christ NORTH AMERICAN YOUTH EVENT / NATIONAL YOUTH EVENT** of all! Join 3,000 youth from across the country at Walt Disney World's Coronado Springs Resort in Buena Vista, Fla.

2016 Calendar of Events

Jan 1-Mar 15	2016/17 Seminarian Scholarship Application	
Jan 1-Mar 27	Chain of Prayer -- Resources are available at: www.discipleshomemissions.org/chain-of-prayer	
January 25-27	Winter Talk	Tulsa, OK
February 15	Woman-to-Woman Worldwide Application	
March 8-10	42nd Annual Black Minister's Retreat	Jackson, MS
July 8-10	Sessions 2016	Fort Worth, TX
July 14-16	National Hispanic and Biligual Assembly	Coral Gables, FL
July 17-22	Association of Disciple Musicians	Evansville, IN
July 21-24	24th Biennial Session of the National Convocation	Kansas City, MO
July 21	Pre-event Lay & Clergy Leadership Institute 24th Biennial Session of the National Convocation	Kansas City, MO
July 26-30	North American Youth Event (Disciples of Christ) & National Youth Event (United Church of Christ)	Orlando, FL
August 3-6	North American/Pacific Asian Disciples Convocation	TBA
Sep 1-Oct 31	2017 Clergy Continuing Education Grant Application Dates	

Weave Us Together

*The Association of Disciple Musicians 2016 Summer Conference
for Music and Worship will be amazing!*



The Conference workshops will likely include: ADM Chorus, Organ Techniques and Master Class, Organ Improvisation, Powerful Worship Seminars, Choral Conducting, Beginning & Advanced Handbell Techniques, Variety of Quality Worship Experiences, and Choir Music Reading Sessions

July 17-22, 2016

**University of Evansville
Evansville, Indiana**

To learn more about this event visit: www.adm-doc.org

Just Women 2016 ~ Bible Study

The Table and Beyond: Lavish Hospitality in the Bible



2016 Theme ~ Embracing Our Global Sisterhood

Writers and scripture topics for Bible Study

Dr. Catherine Nichols – *Introduction*

Rev. Dr. Xochitl Alvizo – *“Jesus Feeds the Multitudes” (Mark 6:30-44) and “The Last Supper” (1 Corinthians 11:17-33)*

Ms Nora Carmi – *“Jesus Welcomes the Children” (Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 9:33-37, Luke 18:15-17)*

Rev. Dr. Katie Hays – *“Sodom & Gomorrah” (Gen 19:1-29), “Sending Out the Disciples” (Matthew 10), and “Peter and Cornelius” (Acts 10)*

Rev. Dr. Barbara Sims-King – *“Visiting Angels” (Genesis 18:1-18) and “Everything Held in Common” (Acts 4:32-37)*

Rev. Kathy McDowell – *Leader’s Guide*

To ensure availability of copies for your group,

Place your advance order in the Disciples Women online store no later than January 19, 2016.

What is DISCIPLES MISSION FUND?

Disciples Mission Fund is the common fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Disciples Mission Fund supports 72 ministries of wholeness as close as your local congregation and reaching around the globe.

Find out more at
disciplesmissionfund.org



Pre-Convocation Lay and Clergy Leadership Institute 24th Biennial Session of the National Convocation

Hindsight Insight Foresight

Habakkuk 2:2



Lay Leaders Institute

A series of workshops to inspire and strengthen your gifts and passions

Clergy Institute

Dr. Brad R. Braxton, "Preaching and 'Public Health': Serious Preaching in Dangerous Times"

Cost: \$50 (includes breakfast and lunch) **Register:** nationalconvocation.org

Thursday, July 21, 2016
9:00 a.m.— 4:00 p.m.

Sheraton Overland Park Hotel at the Convention Center
6100 College Blvd., Overland Park, Kansas 66211
(Kansas City area)



Co-Sponsored by The Institute for African American Faith and Life, Black Disciples Endowment Fund and The African American Clergy Institute Development Office



Winter Talk 2016

-January 25-27, 2016-
Phillips Theological Seminary (Tulsa, OK)



Guest Speaker: Robert Miller, professor and author of *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Manifest Destiny* (2006)

"The third annual Winter Talk is a three day conversation on the Christian Doctrine of Discovery (DOD) and its influence on Christian theology and polity, with an emphasis on the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) relationship with Indigenous tribes and peoples. Winter Talk is an important time for American Indians and non-Indians, to gather and eat, learn, and talk about the Christian Doctrine of Discovery."

Online Registration & Housing Information:
<http://doctrineofdiscovery.wordpress.com>

CEUs also available.

Preachers Announced for Black Ministers Retreat 2016

The 42nd Annual Black Ministers Retreat will take place **March 8-10, 2016** in Jackson, Mississippi and will feature a tag team preaching format including the following talented voices:



*Rev. Dr. Dietra Wise Baker
Pastor & Planter
Liberation Christian Church (DOC)
Chaplain & Program Development
Manager
Episcopal City Mission
St. Louis, Missouri*



*Rev. Derrick Perkins
Senior Pastor
Centennial Christian
Church (DOC)
St. Louis, Missouri*



*Rev. Zedric K. Clayton II
Senior Pastor
Real Faith Christian Church (DOC)
Clarksdale, Mississippi*



*Rev. Dr. Ann Pickett-Parker
Co-Pastor
New Generation Christian
Fellowship CC (DOC)
Pascagoula, Mississippi*



*Rev. April Johnson
Executive Director
Reconciliation Ministry of the
Christian Church (DOC)
Indianapolis, Indiana*



*Rev. Antonio Redd
Associate Minister
Mt. Olive East Christian
Church (DOC)
Martinsville, Virginia*

The retreat will explore the theme, *Ministry for the Long Haul: Self-Care and Sustenance*, through daily worship, fellowship, and educational workshops. More details on speakers, registration, and lodging is available at www.discipleshomemissions.org/black-ministers-retreat.

Update on Real Faith Christian Church

Clarksdale, Miss., felt the recession harder than most. Nestled in a neighborhood of boarded up businesses and abandoned homes sat an unsafe, partially-finished church building. Before the money ran out and the contractor left, the congregation had been leaders in the hurting community. It may not have been a tornado or a great flood, but disaster had struck Real Faith Christian Church.

In 2012, the congregation called Reverend Zedric Clayton as their pastor. Under Pastor Clayton's leadership, they found renewed passion for service in their community. In partnership with the local high school, they began offering tutoring and computer classes. They began handing out hygiene kits to seniors and backpacks filled with school supplies to local children. Real Faith Christian Church had, once again, outgrown the small building from which they ministered.



In 2014, Disciples Church Extension Fund (DCEF) and Disciples Home Missions (DHM) began to imagine how to complete the original building construction. Disciples Volunteering started coordinating volunteer labor, and all three expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)—general, regional, and local—came together to ensure the church would have the facilities needed for transformative ministry.

April 5, 2015, Real Faith Christian Church opened its new doors to celebrate Easter Sunday and its own resurrection. "We are excited today," Pastor Clayton told the DCEF and Hope Partnership General Assembly dinner.

"Our city is excited today, because the Disciples of Christ has come along side us, has decided to become one and live out our true mission."

Continued on page 24. See Real Faith.

Community of Faith: Find Balance Between Evangelism and Social Justice

It is difficult to identify distinguishing qualities of faith communities such as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). There are at least two qualities that need to be coupled in a passionate and meaningful manner. One needs to understand the necessary mission of evangelism and social justice. What makes these qualities setting people of faith apart is the fact we have always understood them as two sides of the same coin.

In the past the Disciples' passion, for example, is social justice matched by a commensurate concern for evangelism, and passion for evangelism was matched by a concern for social justice. This is sadly no longer the case, with each group going its own way and seldom talking to the other. It appears some have forgotten their history and betray their heritage.

Perhaps one way to strengthen identity today, for people of faith, is to recover this balance between evangelism and social justice ministries. I am convinced that our desire to engage in evangelism and social justice ministries will be a revitalized defining quality of all church and the community.

Christian history tells us that we are a people who have believed the church is called to go into all the

world as witness to Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20), and to do so as people of compassion (Matthew 25:31-46). In short we are a people who from the beginning have understood that genuine discipleship shows itself in word and deed.

Who are people of faith? We are people who know "evangelism is one beggar telling another where to find bread." We know the bread our world needs is both of heaven and earth. It is overwhelmingly important that we promote justice and peace to all of God's creation.



Alan Hilberg

*Rev. Alan Hilberg
First Christian Church
Missoula, Mo.*

(Special thanks to Jan Linn)

Alan just completed a term on the DHM Board of Directors.

Creating a Better Place

The Day Foundation, founded in 1987, by Doris and Victor Day, began its operations as a Grantmaking Foundation with \$10 million that was bequeathed from the estate of Doris Dammann Day. The Days loved the community in which they lived and where their business, Bear Manufacturing, was headquartered and grew to become a leader in automotive safety. They established the Foundation for the betterment of their community. It was Doris's hope that Rock Island would "be a better place" for future generations.

The Board of Directors and Staff are committed to keeping its founder's vision for a better community. To reach this vision the Foundation awards annual grants to local non-profit organizations and public entities serving the Quad City area who work in areas of health, education, youth development, community development, basic human need and culture. The Foundation supports innovative thinkers and leaders of organizations that are working to reduce poverty and injustice and to promote democratic values, free expression and human achievement.

The Foundation believes it should be accessible to the community and offers the service of its Program Officer and Executive

Director to consult in advance with anyone considering a grant application or in need of advice, as long as the office is contacted prior to the application deadline.

The Directors of the Foundation are committed to a policy of flexibility, and do not want to establish rigid regulations that limit the Foundation's creative ability to meet human needs. However, a few restrictions apply:

- The Foundation will only accept applications from non-profit organizations with a 501(c)3 status and qualified public entities who serve the Quad City area.
- The Foundation will not consider grant applications for:
 - Grants to individuals.
 - Individual scholarships (undergraduate/graduate).
 - Religious organizations applying for programs that are sectarian.

To learn more about the Day Foundation visit: www.dayfoundation.org.

David Geenen is the Executive Director of Doris and Victor Day Foundation in Rock Island, Ill. David just completed a term on the DHM Board of Directors.

DHM Empowers Lifelong Learning of Clergy

Through Disciples Home Missions' Clergy Continuing Education Fund, 28 clergy will each receive a \$250 to \$500 grant to help pay for educational programs in 2016. A total of \$13,720 was awarded for 2016. Funding for these important professional development and formation awards comes through interest from investment accounts and donations to DHM's Clergy Continuing Education program.

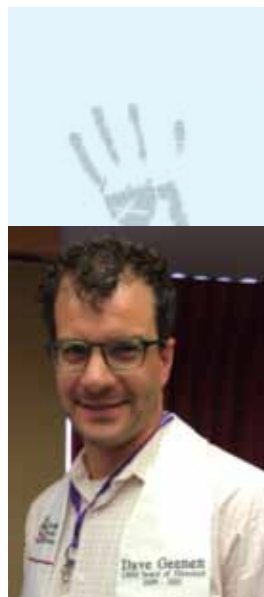
If you or your congregation would like to contribute funds to support the future of DHM's clergy continuing education program, you can contact Warren Lynn at: wlynn@dhm.disciples.org. Each year, more clergy apply for more funds than DHM has available to award. Thus, there is always a need for additional and increased finan-

cial support to these continuing education funds, as we strive to help clergy who are seeking to grow professionally and spiritually.

If you are an Ordained or Commissioned Disciples minister, with Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples Of Christ), and would like to apply for future continuing education funds, you can find additional information at:

www.discipleshomemissions.org/christian-vocation-continuing-education.

The next application window opens up between September 1, 2016 and October 31, 2016. This upcoming application cycle will be for awards to help fund continuing education experiences for clergy in 2017.



David Geenen

General Youth Council

Our first council meeting was in 2014 in Columbus, Ohio. Seeing as we had only spoken through emails, our first encounters were undeniably awkward; however, with time we slowly transformed from a group of strangers into a group of companions who did ministry together. We learned how to share our ideas and began envisioning our possibilities. Mealtimes filled with choruses of laughter, planning meetings transformed into an opportunity to dream and slowly but surely our thoughts began to line up as our hearts were drawn together by one simple motive: to communicate the love of Christ to others.

The pivotal moment of this weekend was not found through food, planning, or even laughter; rather it was the game of Uno. Plans for our last night together didn't pan out, leaving us with free time before bed. Although we were exhausted, when someone offered up a game of Uno, no one refused. Hours later we found ourselves sitting in the hotel lobby at 1:00 a.m., and even

when we were all hundreds of miles away from home we still found community in sitting together playing cards. Only knowing each other a few days didn't matter, and in that moment it became clear how deeply connected we were already and what an incredible team that made us. From that moment on we ceased to be strangers from different states, but rather a close knit community of Disciples.

Since then we have been blessed enough to spend hours on conference calls, send hundreds of emails, and ultimately lead General Assembly Youth. The distances that separate us, while inconvenient, have not prevented our community from flourishing. Community is not inherently limited, but rather contains the only restrictions that we create. When we allow ourselves to experience vulnerability with others, the possibilities are endless.

*Jaclyn Oden-Peace and Chelsea Martin
Moderator and Vice Moderator of GYC 2015*

Homeless *Continued from page 5.*

lems or promote drug activity in the area.

One year later, Haley said the shelter has been a quiet neighbor. Some clients have caused "distractions" outside the bank or inside the lobby, he said, but they have had no negative impact on the business itself. However, Haley makes sure that when his employees leave for the night, they walk in tandem to their vehicles.

"I still have the same concerns, and I'm watching carefully," Haley said. "We're just trying to be proactive."

Another neighbor is the Olympia Timberland Library, which serves as a de facto daytime hub for the homeless population. Former library manager Donna Feddern, who now runs the Tumwater and Tenino branches, still praises the growing relationship between the shelter and library.

This week, Feddern told The Olympian that library staff loves to hear the success stories of shelter clients who find permanent housing, "even though it might mean they won't be visiting us at the library as often."

Because the shelter is available only at

night, there is still a void for the homeless. Martin wants to see an adequate facility where the homeless can have their needs met — or simply gather — during the day.

"There's an incredible need for a daytime place for people to be," Martin said. "It would take the burden off downtown Olympia."

*Andy Hobbs, Staff
writer for The
Olympian
Olympia, Wash.
Article and photos
used with permission
from The Olympian.*

www.theolympian.com



Mike Cooper arrives with his dog, Taz, to spend the night at the Interfaith Works Emergency Overnight Shelter at First Christian Church in downtown Olympia. The center celebrated its one-year anniversary in November. Photo by Tony Overman.



Mental Health and Congregational Care: NBA Responds to the Call for Welcome and Support

As the health and social service ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the National Benevolent Association (NBA) takes seriously its call to create communi-

ties of compassion and care. In doing so, the NBA has been called to engage in dialogue and action centered on the issue of Mental Health and Congregational Care.

Mental health concerns are prevalent in our communities of faith. Fear, uncertainty, danger,

shame, guilt, hopelessness, and helplessness have taken up residence in our homes and churches as sufferers of mental health issues, their families and friends, people of faith, both clergy and lay, law enforcement, and many others grapple with how to respond. Churches—often seen as places where people find welcome and hospitality—are far too often places of discomfort and pain for many who feel they cannot share their stories of living with mental illness and/or mental health disorders. Pastors and other

church leaders often feel ill-prepared to offer care and support to those struggling with such issues.

To open up this dialogue, as a shared effort with Disciples Home Missions (DHM) and in response to the passing of GA-1523 “Becoming A People of Welcome and Support to People with Mental Illness and/or Mental Health Disorders” by the 2015 General Assembly, the NBA has called together a research and design team tasked with structuring a Mental Health and Congregational Care Affinity Group. This group will serve as a network of support for Disciples congregations and communities engaged in spiritual care and advocacy ministries with those affected by mental illness and/or mental health disorders.

This research and design team has been working to define the purpose and goals of a full Mental Health and Congregational Care Affinity Group to launch in early 2016. For more information, please email mkilpatrick@nbacares.org.

Rev. Monica Wedlock Kilpatrick, Director of the Disciples Care Exchange and NBA Affinity Group Ministries

Building Community: Retos and Desafíos

David A. Vargas, President Emeritus of the Division of Overseas Ministries and former Global Ministries' Area Executive for Latin America and the Caribbean shared with Global Ministries an interesting reflection about the differences between two Spanish terms: “reto” and “desafío”. Following Rev. Vargas's reflection, for English speakers both terms mean “challenge”; that is, facing a situation that may demand our engagement in a contest or fight; a situation that may demand an explanation from us; or a situation that may demand or require total use of our abilities and resources. But a key difference between these two words in Spanish is that a “reto” is not the type of challenge that may involve a serious risk, threat, or great sacrifice ... as may be the

case with a “desafío”. In other words, when we try to talk about challenges, it does not take us long to realize that, indeed, there are challenges and there are CHALLENGES. Rev. Vargas ended this part of his particular reflection, sharing a vivid image: “a hen, for instance, to lay an egg means to face a situation which requires full use of her abilities and resources. For a hen, to lay an egg is certainly a challenge that I would describe in Spanish as a “reto”. However, for a pig to produce bacon is much more than a “reto”; it is a “desafío” a challenge that demands a supreme sacrifice.”

Latin America and the Caribbean are passing through a moment where our Partners are dealing with more than just “retos”

Continued on page 28. See Retos and Desafíos.

NBA XPLOR Residency Develops Hearts for Care and Service

At the heart of NBA XPLOR is a desire to cultivate hearts for care in young adults. How can we help young adults recognize needs at their doorsteps and then live a life of faithful response? Drawing upon our rich history of compassionate service, the National Benevolent Association continues to assist Disciples in developing supportive networks that join systemic-justice work with direct action and care.

The NBA XPLOR Residency provides 10-months of leadership development and vocational discernment for 21- to 30-year-olds to live simply in community and engage in direct service and justice work. "Our 23 Residents (www.nbacares.org/xplor-residents) this year are tremendously diverse, talented, passionate, and committed," says Rev. Bonnie Osei-Frimpong, director of NBA XPLOR. "They are united in their commitment and purpose to explore their own vocations, to support each other, and to discover where God is leading them."

The 2015-16 XPLOR host communities—Tucson-Marana, Ariz.; Golden Gate/Bay Area, Calif.; North Hollywood, Calif.; Quad Cities, IL/IA; St. Louis, Mo.; Hiram-Mantua, Ohio; and East Dallas, Texas—are rich collaborations between Disciples regions, congregations, spiritual

companions, and local nonprofits serving together.

This year, NBA XPLOR is building upon the program's anti-oppression and cross-cultural communication training and implementing additional mentorship opportunities for XPLOR Residents. Along the way, spiritual companions are working with the Residents "to put a theological understanding on what they are doing and engaged in, and how they not only work with each other, but the Church," explains Rev. David Cartwright, senior pastor of Community Christian Church in Richardson, Texas, and spiritual companion for the Dallas XPLOR house.

You can follow this year's NBA XPLOR journey on Facebook, Twitter, and our online Stories and News. NBA XPLOR is currently accepting applications for the 2016-17 cohort of Residents, with the next application deadline of January 15, 2016. Learn more at www.nbacares.org/xplor.



www.facebook.com/NationalBenevolentAssociation



<https://twitter.com/NBADisciples>



Stories and News

www.nbacares.org/stories-and-news/category/xplor

Real Faith *Continued from page 20.*

Real Faith Christian Church has grown to an average of over 400 people in weekly worship. They continue to serve their neighbors through backpack and tutoring ministries, free gasoline days, cooking and nutrition classes, and women's empowerment services.

"The partnership that grew out of this remarkable building project has been truly historic, and we are grateful to everyone who was a part of it," Rick Reisinger, DCEF president, said. DCEF, DHM, Hope Partnership, National Convocation, Disciples Women,

Disciples Volunteering, Reconciliation Ministry, Week of Compassion, the Great River Region, and many local congregations participated in this story of reconciliation and rebirth.

*Bethany Watkins Lowery
Director of Development,
Disciples Church Extension Fund
and Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation*

Loving Our Neighbors As Ourselves

The transition a person makes from prison or jail back into society is almost always complex and challenging—not only



for those who were incarcerated, but also for their families, friends, and communities. Those who reenter society often have limited housing options and inadequate job skills. Some

struggle with mental health issues and/or substance abuse. Most face some level of stigma within their families and neighborhoods.

In the Disciples' Pacific Southwest Region, Another Chance @ UrbanMission



(www.umpomona.org)—the restorative justice ministries within a new joint UCC/DOC church start—decided to get into reentry work as a way to live out Jesus' call to love our neighbors as ourselves. With collaborative partners and start-up help from a PSWR Legacy Fund grant funded by Arlington Christian Church in Riverside, we created a new nonprofit organization: the Pomona Valley Reentry Coalition (PVRC).

For the past year, PVRC has been host-

ing Ex-Offender & Reentry Resource Fairs for men and women returning home after incarceration. These monthly events provide a "one-stop" access to job training and employment opportunities, housing, identity documents, medical insurance and testing, transportation and communications assistance, food, clothing, and more. Representatives from local organizations, agencies, and businesses offer services, information, and referrals. Volunteers from Disciples congregations in Pomona, East Whittier, and Orange serve lunch and provide staffing. More



members are joining the coalition as we write grant requests to fund our expanding efforts.

This reentry effort draws on a vision for wholeness in a fragmented world that our Disciples movement articulates so well. We seek to promote wholeness and reduce crime/harm. Welcoming home our returning brothers and sisters after their incarceration with what we share at our reentry resource fairs is one way to live toward that vision of wholeness and shalom.

Learn more about the NBA Incubate Initiative (www.nbacares.org/incubate) and NBA Prison and Jail Ministries Affinity Group (www.nbacares.org/stories-and-news/jail-and-prison-ministries-creating-communities-of-compassion-and-care).

*Rev. Nora Jacob
Restorative Justice Minister, UrbanMission
Guest Blogger, NBA Prison & Jail Ministries
and NBA Incubate Initiative*

“Moving for Wholeness!” . . . Virtual 5K... Virtual?

*Sponsored by: General Youth Council, Family and Children's Ministries, and Disciples Home Missions
Supporting the Disciples Mission Fund*

“A virtual race is a race that can be ran at any location. You can walk, use the treadmill, run outside or participate in another race. You can run your race at your pace wherever you like.” (You can even break it up over time!) If you are really not able to actually “move,” you can donate online.

YES... YOU!

Youth Groups, Families, Individuals, Women's Groups, Retreats, (Donations too!)

Registration Open: March 1-31

Race: Any time after registration

Bling: Will arrive in mid to late April – Early May

Where: Anywhere but if you need to map out 3.2 miles
near your house, retreat, or church, check out <http://onthegomap.com>



CELEBRATE!

Share your time, pictures, or thoughts on our

 Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/disciples5k>

Hashtag: #disciples5k

We will have a “Kick-Off” Facebook Party March 1st – There will be prizes!

We will have a “wear your medal/t-shirt day” at future Disciple Events!

REGISTRATION COST

This is a fundraiser! It is also a way to celebrate being a Disciple of Christ and all that we can be in an active and fun way – internationally! It is easy to register as an individual or family starting March 1st. We also want to encourage people to get those youth, college, women's, and other groups out to “move for wholeness!” You will want a t-shirt, but it is more important that we find ways to participate together. Below are a variety of ways that groups can get together and... MOVE! Camp? . . . Retreats? . . . College Groups? . . . a few times around a really big labyrinth? Start moving!

Individuals: \$25 (March 1-31 Registration is OPEN... run anytime!) Includes Medal and T-Shirt
Groups:

Family/Small Youth Group Run (4-8 people): \$100 (Includes Medals and T-shirts)

Family/Small Youth Group Run (4-8 people): \$75 (Includes Medals – NO T-shirts)

9-20 People: \$400 (Includes Medals and T-shirts)

9-20 People: \$300 (Includes Medals – NO T-shirts)

21-50 People: \$1250 (Medals and T-shirts)

21-50 People: \$1000 (Includes Medals – NO T-shirts)

51-100 People: \$1800 (Medals and T-shirts)

51-100 People: \$1500 (Includes Medals – NO T-shirts)

100+ People: Contact Jessica Kramer at: jkramer@dhm.disciples.org or call 317-713-2641.

We will be able to negotiate a Group Rate.

Why Disciples Mission Fund?

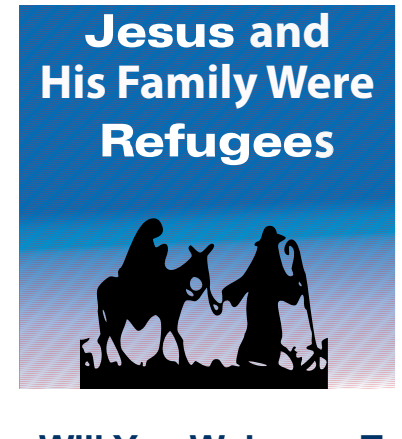
This is the first time we are hosting an international Virtual 5k. We wanted to welcome all types of people. We want to invite walkers, runners, and those who may just get up and move for the first time in a while. This is an opportunity to share how our church really has a passion to put mission first. It made sense to have this first run coincide with the timing of the Easter Offering for Disciples Mission Fund. If you want to begin to learn more about the Disciples Mission Fund look here, www.disciplesmissionfund.org/what-is-dmf.

Once you register we will also be sending out e-mails and updating our social media to help ALL ages and groups join together to remember why we are literally, “moving for wholeness.”

March 1st... mark it, join the Facebook group, and then get MOVING!

Refugees Welcome!

Our Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries (RIM) office wants to THANK all churches and regions throughout our churches who have helped to WELCOME REFUGEES during the previous year!! Your responses have been remarkable, and filled with the hospitality of Christ!! As the world continues to have more refugees—20 million!!—than since World War II, your assistance in welcoming particular families assigned for our care as Disciples, providing “Refugee Hospitality Kits,” educating about refugee needs, and advocating for refugee welcome is needed more than ever!! And, we’d love to have you join our social media campaign to demonstrate your welcome for refugees by taking pictures in your church with “Welcome Refugee” signs like those below, and sharing them with sstanley@dhm.disciples.org, at [#RefugeesWelcome](https://www.refugeeswelcome.org), and at: americawelcomes.us! Contact Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea, RIM Director, at the email above or 202-957-7826 for more information, and see our RIM website at: www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries for much more information!



Who Will You Welcome Today?

FCC Volunteering on Thanksgiving Day-2015



Photos above: There is absolutely nothing like giving back to your community. First Christian Church, Reidsville, N.C., is grateful to have experienced the gift of love by Father Rick & St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, as they helped them and other churches in the community feed hundreds on this blessed day. It's A Family Affair. Photos used with permission from First Christian Church.

Retos and Desafios *Continued from page 23.*

that may require their "full use of their abilities and resources" to be a wide community based on the fullness of life. Instead, they are really dealing with "desafios" or "serious risks, threats, and great sacrifice" that tend to divide and even destroy them as an Indoafrolatinamerican and Caribbean community. Human rights are still an uncompleted agenda in Mexico, which still suffers the disappearance of 43 students in Ayotzinapa. Indigenous people from the Andean countries (Ecuador, Perú, Bolivia) resist more than five hundred years of colonialism and exploitation of their original lands and resources. Peace continues to be a pending assignment in Colombia. Haiti is moving between hope and despair on their journey of recovery after the 2010

earthquake. In that particular context, our partner churches and ecumenical organizations continue interpreting the sign of the times, and calling us to embrace mission, not only as a "reto", that is to say beyond the mere use of abilities and resources. Our calling on this present day is to accompany them to walk through this moment of risks, threats and sacrifice.



Rev. Angel L. Rivera Agosto
Area Executive for Latin America and the Caribbean
Global Ministries



Photo above: Chimiste Doriscar, receives a gift from Rev. Ron Degges and DHM staff at the Dec. 8, Christmas Luncheon in honor of his affirmation of ordination service on Sunday, December 13, 2015. Chimiste has been serving as Intern for Developing Haitian Ministries with DHM.

Photo below: Rev. Ron Degges, President of DHM, in front of National City Christian Church in Washington, D.C. for the Disciples Center for Public Witness Board of Governors Meeting on October 23, 2015. Following the meeting there was a Racism Summit led by the Rev. Dr. Bill Lee.



Photo above: Al Sharpton and Ron Degges at Ground Zero in New York City awaiting the Interfaith Prayer Service with Pope Francis.

Newsletters, Publications and Resources

Christian Graphic Arts, LLC. -- owned by the Rev. Robert L. Whiteley -- Certificates for Baptism, Dedication to New Life, Christian Marriage, Servant Leadership, Membership, Thank You Notes, and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Name Badges are available. The certificates are high quality cover stock for the embossed covers, and high quality stock for the printed text. The certificates are boxed 12 per box with envelopes. The price per box of 12 certificates is \$20.00. Visitor Badges come 100 to a packet for \$6.00 each package. Note cards are 25 cards to a box for \$8.00 per box. Or you can get a Visitor Folder with a sampling of 10 items for \$8.00 per folder. To order contact: Christian Graphic Arts, LLC. by Fax at (772) 569-9769 or e-mail christiangraphicarts@yahoo.com. Christian Graphic Arts, LLC is located at: 1906 33rd Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32960. For more information call (772) 569-9769.

Disciples Home Missions Updates -- bimonthly e-newsletter from the president. Sign up at: www.discipleshomemissions.org/.

Disciples Thumbnail Sketches and You Are Series -- These handouts are available from Chalice Press in downloadable electronic PDF format that allows unlimited printing for up to one year after purchase. These resources have been developed by Disciples Home Missions. Visit Chalice Press at: www.chalicepress.com. EPDF ISBN: 9780827206618 and EPDF ISBN: 9780827244283.

Family & Children's Ministries E-newsletter -- bimonthly e-newsletter. Sign up at: <http://eepurl.com/QwcwX> or www.discipleshomemissions.org/?p=15674 Archive of past issues: <http://us3.campaign-archive2.com/home/?u=aa757cb990bd7a0f77ade17d1&id=7a1d1af859>.

Green Chalice News -- monthly creation care e-newsletter. Sign up at: www.discipleshomemissions.org/receive-green-chalice-news/.

Immigration Legal Updates -- Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel provides timely updates on changes to immigration law and policies that impact Disciples congregations and families. Sign up at: disciplesimmigration.org.

Just Women magazine -- quarterly-issued resource material for Christian women is published by Disciples Women's Ministries. Place your subscription or have individual copies delivered to your door. Contact JustWomen@dhm.disciples.org.

News and Notes -- monthly newsletter that is sent out to Disciples Chaplains. Visit: www.discipleshomemissions.org/chaplainsnewsnotes/ or contact Anne Marie Moyars at: amoyars@dhm.disciples.org.

Rapid Response -- periodic updates about actions you can take in response to legislative action. Sign up at: www.discipleshomemissions.org/dhm/justice/rapid-response/.

Refugee & Immigration Wrap -- periodic updates about what is happening around immigration issues, refugee resettlement and Farm Worker Ministry. Sign up at: <http://www.formstack.com/forms/?1481425-c0NazlxyzU>

The Well-Fed Spirit -- Visit: www.wellfedspirit.org.

The Voice of Disciples Men -- e-newsletter from the Disciples Men. Sign up by contacting Kelly Harris at kharris@dhm.disciples.org.

Umoja -- newsletter *Umoja*, which translates to Unity-Oneness-Harmony, is created by and produced for the Disciples Women of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and edited by the Disciples Women program staff and merger staff position. Visit: www.discipleshomemissions.org/dhm/disciples-women-newsletters/ or contact: odw@dhm.disciples.org.



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(and UCC) related institutions and congregations listed in the Yearbook and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. All letters sent to the Disciples' Advocate will be treated as intended for publication and are subject to the Disciples' Advocate's unrestricted right to edit or comment editorially. Specifications for advertising insertions are available on request. There is no charge for advertising from covenantal Disciples organizations. Insertions and notices are freely accepted subject to space.

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www.discipleshomemissions.org

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www.facebook.discipleshomemission

FCC in Gulfport Fills Need in Community

Photos below: First Christian Church in Gulfport, Miss., delivered 80 Christmas stockings, 80 sack lunches, dog baskets, gloves and clothing for "Feed My Sheep" distribution and a few that were left went to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi.

The first Sunday of every month (for several years) volunteers from FCC have provided a sack lunch at a local food pantry called "Feed My Sheep." They are not open on Sundays and several local churches decided to help feed on Sundays to fill in the gap.

Also among several community outreach projects this Christmas season, FCC did a Christmas meal donation drive for "Gulf Coast Community Ministry" where they collected needed items to be distributed by GCCM to persons in need in the community. (Photos used with permission from First Christian Church.)



Disciples Home Missions is now on Facebook!

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- Support for Clergy & Lay Leaders
- Faith Formation & Education
- Justice & Advocacy
- Scholarships & Grants
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DHM Student Scholarship Program

Application form deadline is March 15.
Reference and transcript deadline is April 15. Please go to the link below for complete information on eligibility and guidelines. There are numerous scholarships available. It is imperative that you read all of the information on submitting applications and supporting documents.

www.discipleshomemissions.org/scholarship-guidelines

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God Loves You ... No Exceptions



Photos above: First Christian Church of Lynchburg, Va., participates in the 2015 Lynchburg Christmas Parade on December 6. Photos used with permission from First Christian Church.

Weakness Becomes Strength

Many families, like mine, have the blessing of members who don't share a blood relationship but are part of the family related by love. When we find ourselves in this familial community we are stronger and our lives are enriched by the extended family



relationships. When we are around people who don't know us, it is often difficult for people to recognize which children are the ones to whom I have given birth.

When we have strong faith communities we often enjoy a similar situation...sharing together with a community in ways that those new to the community cannot tell the difference between family units residing

in homes together and everyone else who makes up the family of God. We often hear the General Assembly referred to as a family reunion. In addition to business and training and education we look forward to renewing friendships and deepening the bonds we have with other Disciples.

I am an introvert at heart. My ministry is to travel to participate with women in retreats, workshops, worship, mission, meetings, etc. While that seems like a dangerous coupling the important fact to note is that I am always welcomed as if I already belonged in each of those various groups, primarily because that is exactly how we understand the community of women...as sisters, members of the family, partners in ministry. Going to a new venue for women's ministries is really about getting better acquainted with sisters I already have but haven't met face-to-face yet. The community already exists in ways that support and uplift one another so that adding another person to the community makes it stronger rather than becoming a

threat. I hope for the day when our nation is able to recognize that welcoming someone new into our community is an opportunity for new strength rather than a threat to what exists.

Often our ministry requires a long series of back-to-back gatherings where preparation, presentation and travel drain our physical and mental resources. While we come to these events prepared to give of ourselves and the resources we have to offer, we also receive care, love and understanding. Often my hostesses have prepared a place apart for me to rest and recuperate in the moments available. While I come with the understanding that I will be pouring from my cup, the women who are hosting are constantly refilling that cup so that when I leave I have an overflowing supply of love and care to take to the next group of women. This is how our community grows. Whether or not we have personal interaction, together we build up Christian community...the body of Christ.



Leonardo da Vinci said, "An arch consists of two weaknesses, which, leaning on each other, become a strength." Like the understanding in 2 Corinthians 12, in our weakness we become stronger. Sometimes community isn't about being the one who gives and serves others but it is about acknowledging the need for one another and allowing everyone in the community to participate

in building up the larger community. Disciples Women is a group of communities that blesses and strengthens the larger Disciples Women community.

*Rev. Patricia Donahoo
Executive Director
Disciples Women*



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