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What Does It Mean to Move for Wholeness?

"We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us."

We talk about it all the time, have it written in our bulletins and maybe on our church marquee signs, but what exactly does "a movement for wholeness" actually mean? Why do we talk about a movement rather than a belief in wholeness, a desire for wholeness, or even a practice in wholeness? While a movement itself is simply defined as "a group of people working together to advance their shared political, social, or artistic ideas," for Disciples, this movement specifically involves unity and inclusion at the communion table, believer baptism, and so much more than the foundation of religious practices in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ.)

Moving for wholeness is having greeters at the doors; it is having visitor's classes and information desks; it is mission work, and supporting the youth and children in our churches; it is the ministries within the church—the prison ministries, the military ministries, the women's ministries, the prayer groups, the youth groups, the general board and elders, and so much more; it is the offering plate; it is every smile shared, every door held, and every prayer.

The only problem with these things is that too often they get trapped within the walls of the church itself rather than being shared with the fragmented sectors of our world. Being a part of a movement for wholeness simply can't stop inside



Chelsea Martin

of our comfort zones. It requires us to step outside of our security areas and to go where no one has ever gone before. We have already reached the 700,000 members inside of our churches, but what about the 352.46 million outside of our walls in the United States and Canada combined? How

are we reaching out to the 728,000 people affected by homelessness, or the 165,000 orphans in the United States, with another 448,000 children in foster care, or the 67.6 million people who speak a foreign language at home? We have journeyed a long way on our mission, and for that we can pat ourselves on the back, but we still have so far to go. Being a movement for wholeness means we must actually keep moving. We cannot settle for stagnant waters, or complacency, or for just being "good enough." It means striving for radical inclusion inside and outside of our walls, stepping out of our comfort zone, placing ourselves into the brokenness and doing everything that we possibly can to heal our communities with the unconditional love that we are

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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.

A Word or Two from Ron Degges

I have been thinking about that passage from Exodus 16 lately and of our church's need to keep Moving Forward, the theme for this issue of The Disciples' Advocate. Hear the words of the text:

"The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread: for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.'" [Exodus 16:2,3]

Whenever I think of this passage, I think of the hermitic monk living alone in the desert, speaking only three phrases in sixty years. Every twenty years the Bishop would come by for a visit and ask how things are going. Twenty years into his ministry, the hermit said to the bishop, "Bed hard." Twenty years later, the hermit said, "Food Bad." After another twenty years the hermit replied, "I quit." It is rumored that the Bishop responded to the hermits third response: "I've known you for sixty years and all you've done is gripe, gripe, gripe!"

Do you know someone whom you will

never ask the question, "How are you doing today?" If you ask you know that you will get a two hour run down on every sore joint and medical malady. My ninety-four year old grandmother, Freda, a life-long Disciple, asked her doctor, "Doc, tell me the truth. I want to know why my neck hurts so bad?" After thinking it over, the doctor replied, "Freda, I think there's no doubt about it : you've had a mid-air collision with a B-52 bomber." Grandmother Freda responded, "Now doctor, I'm very serious about this."

Let me be serious about this, too: Complaining about our stake in life; singing the blues; longing for the good, old days, that were probably not all that good or all that long ago; looking backwards to re-walk those imagined primrose paths of serenity and tranquility; and, expressing our dissatisfaction with who we are and what we have not been able to accomplish, is not unique to our generation but is as old a story line as that of the Hebrew people.

According to all accounts, between the exodus from Egypt and settlement in the land of Canaan, Israel wandered in the wilderness for some forty years. Not only did Israel wander, Israel griped. The scene played out in Exodus 16 will recur over

Continued on page 6. See Word.



Rev. Ron Degges



In the Mail

Please pass along my deepest appreciation to all those at DHM that made the recent gift possible. This contribution for children is deeply appreciated.

The funds will be used for Camp Lakey Gap for people on the autism spectrum. This will help provide a deserving child, who otherwise wouldn't have the chance, the opportunity to experience summer camp. In addition it will provide the parents with a much needed time of respite.

Thanks again and my God bless your ministry.

Yours in Christ,

Michael P. Murphy

Christmount

Black Mountain, North Carolina

Please accept my sincere thanks and gratitude for supporting my education through the Star Supporter Scholarship. May the Lord repay you for what you have done. Ruth 2:12.

Sincerely,

Larry J. Morris III

San Diego, CA

Continued on next page.

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- Ministry Resources for Women, Men, Children, Families, Youth & Young Adults
- Faith Formation & Education

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In the Mail *Continued from previous page.*

"I haven't been to "class" in a decade, but tomorrow morning I will start a continuing education class through the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center. The class is "Organic Ministry" and my professors are Tim and Lori Diebel. We will meet at their farm Taproot Garden, just south of Norwalk, on the first Monday of the month for the next 9 months. Our day will be spent in "classroom time," eating lunch together, personal reflection and light farming work.

It's going to be a lot of fun and deeply rewarding, and I'm thankful to Disciples Home Missions for providing me with a continuing education grant to make it happen!"

*Travis Stanley
Norwalk, Iowa*

(Travis is a Disciples' clergy who received a Clergy Continuing Education Grant from DHM for this experience. To learn more about these grants, visit the DHM website at: www.discipleshomemissions.org/dhm/clergy/scholarships

Words cannot express my gratitude for your scholarship for the 2015-16 academic year. You give me hope and I pray you can feel the appreciation and the sense of accomplishment in helping others.

I am now in my fifth semester in the pursuit of a Masters of Divinity Degree at Phillips Theological Seminary. I was awarded the Christian (Disciple of Christ) Junior's Honor Student at Phillip's last year as well as the Professor's Book Award in my New Testament class, so you can see that your gift will not be wasted. Being the youth minister at Western Hills Christian Church in San Antonio, with your support I can impress the importance of an education and a continued sense of urgency in God's mission to the children I have in my charge.

I work two jobs to put myself through school, so I thank you from the bottom of my heart for walking this journey with me.

Sincerely,
*Maggie Mossler
Canyon Lake, Texas*

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. -- Hebrews 4:16 (ESV)

As the New Year begins with hopes anew, we are excited to wish you a wonderful year ahead. This season is a time of exploring new horizons and the genesis of emerging dreams. Thank you for your direct support of John Ray in the amount of \$1,000. We hope that your kind and generous support will help you to rediscover new faith, garner hope and exhibit strength to rejoice in the simple pleasures that life has to offer. We are grateful for your decision to support the growth of transformational leaders that impact church, community and the world because of their training at CTS.

CTS is dedicated to providing scholarship support for the next generation of scholars and practitioners pursuing theological, counseling and pastoral education. We deeply appreciate both your kindness and your clear demonstration of commitment to this community. Let us be grateful for all those that share their gifts, because we are collectively enriched by their giving. Let us also be grateful for even our needs, so that we may continue to learn from the generosity of others.

We are especially thankful that your gift represents budding possibilities for those we serve. You are a vital part of our CTS community and we thank you for inspiring and impacting deserving students.

Peace and Blessings,

*Aimée A. Laramore
Director of Seminary Advancement
Christian Theological Seminary
Indianapolis, Indiana*

P.S. We appreciate your generous support of John Ray – his ministry, his experience and the CTS Mission.

Moving Forward: Facilitating Congregational Life

Gathered on the lawn outside an aging church building, a mix of church members and non-members began to work. Previously, they had a wild idea. So, they asked permission. Church leadership said, "Sure! Go for it. Sounds great!" Originally, just a possibility. A passion-turned-Calling that, hopefully, might be shared for the benefit of others. Now, it was moving from idea to manifest ministry.

Over the next couple hours, a pathway for prayer, a labyrinth, was painted on the church lawn. After that, over the next several weeks, many church members came to walk and pray, think and let-go of stress, run and dance and walk and stand-still; open themselves up more-fully to Holy Spirit in their lives. Many folks who had never-before experienced walking a labyrinth said, "thank you" for a holy and unexpected experience in their lives. The church lawn ultimately returned to a blank slate of green growth after a few weeks of mowing. But, new seeds were planted. Others

are asking new "what if's" to help this congregation continue moving forward in mission and ministry.

Every congregation has many moments when folks come to their pastor or lay leadership with an idea, seeking permission to try "it" out. One noticeable marker for thriving congregations, as opposed to congregations sliding into decline, is an attitudinal and practical mix of two things; discerned permission giving, and invitational-solicitation to share gifts within and

through the church.

Thriving congregations are communities in which leadership is good about noticing what gifts individual members actually have and enjoy sharing with others, even if such gifts need encouragement, nurture, and support. So also, through invitation and being open to others' ideas, thriving congregations tend to be good about affirming all positive visions for ministry that rise out of the faith community.

Congregations seeking to thrive should discern whether their culture is one that too-often says "no." And, if so, leadership should spend time considering how the congregation can strategically transform into a realm in which most "what if" ideas are met with efficient, affirming and supportive leadership discerning how such visions might actually prove helpful for the church to move forward in ministry. May we be open to, and discover, more-affirming ways in which we can say "yes" to God's Spirit seeking to breathe new life into our mission of grace in this world.

*Rev. Warren Lynn,
Executive Minister for Christian Vocations
Disciples Home Missions*



Well, look at that!

We have an app now, Disciples! Available in both the Apple store and Google Play (for Android users), you can download this handy tool either by going to <http://disciples.org/app> or searching for Disciples of Christ BlueBridge on either site (This may be more challenging since we are new to the stores and don't have a lot of reviews yet to move us up in the ranking.)

Not only will we be providing app-only content, but this will be invaluable to General Assembly participants next summer as we beef up the content for the event as it approaches.



Search for GMP Moves Forward

The 2017 General Minister and President Search Committee is at work on behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Search Committee is populated by lay and clergy persons representing the church. The members are: Monique Crain Spells (IN), Danny Gulden (GA), Bill Jennison (NW), Mary Lou Kegler (GKC), Young Lan Kim (PSW), Tom Perring (PSW), Susan Morris (NE), Allison Enari (IN), Tony Rodriguez (FL), Lori Tapia (AZ), and Jackie Bunch (Chairman, OH).

During the Search Committees' first two-day meeting, the committee felt that it was important to hear from the Church by engaging persons - from the local pews through the General Church - in this process. In order to achieve this, the Search Committee put together a survey that went out in February to the entities of the church, seeking responses to the questions.

To be inclusive of all the voices in the Church, the survey was translated into Spanish, Korean, and French. One thousand six hundred twenty persons (1,620) responded to the survey helping the Committee give shape to the Job Description for the next General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The Job Description and application


instructions went out on May 19. Clergy, who feel called to this position, will have until July 10, 2016 to submit the application packet and have their completed papers in the Search and Call Process.

All completed applications will be screened during July and early August, 2016. Once the Screening Process is complete, the Search Committee will interview the successful candidates in late October 2016 and then recommend 2 to 5 persons to the Administrative Committee to be interviewed in February, 2017. From this second interview, one name will be forwarded to the General Board. The final decision will be made by the General Assembly in Indianapolis, Ind., July 7 to 13, 2017.

Given the great task bestowed upon this Committee, the Committee asks that you keep the Search Process in your prayers and that you pray for the person God is calling to lead the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

To follow the Search Process, we invite you to visit the Search Process page at <http://disciples.org/ogmp/search-committee/>.

Jackie Compton Bunch
Chairman, Search Committee



Special Guests

Bishop Munib Younan
Evangelical Lutheran Church in
Jordan and the Holy Land
Israel/Palestine

Rev. Johnson Mbillah
Program for Christian-Muslim
Relations in Africa
Kenya

iMISSIONWORKS!
Indianapolis • Aug. 26-28, 2016
globalministries.org/missionworks

Our Actions and Inactions Always Have Consequences

As I serve and walk in acompañamiento (accompaniment) with my brothers and sisters from Latin America, I have witnessed firsthand the beauty, richness, resiliency, resourcefulness, and creativity that allow these communities to move forward and



Héctor J. Hernández

thrive. However, I have also witnessed their struggles, pains, and sorrows as they try to survive through multiple and complex oppressive systems that discriminate, marginalize, victimize, and dehumanize

them, vehemently conspiring against their well-being.

As immigrant Hispanic families try to navigate these systems and try to survive the clutches of systemic racism, oppression, and dehumanization, they also deal with the by-product of this struggle: mental health stressors like anxiety, anger, depression, post-traumatic stress, and maladaptive behaviors like domestic violence and addictions, to name a few.

Even when this is a very real, constant, and painful reality for many Latin American immigrants in this country, like Isaiah, I declare that God is doing a new thing! Partnerships with the Marion County Public Health Department “Healthy Start” program and the Center for Interfaith Cooperation and

AmeriCorps IRSC (Immigrant Refugee Service Corps) “Faith Health Initiative” pilot program are allowing our church to reach out to Hispanic young couples who are dealing with the challenges of becoming parents and struggling financially, and to connect the various immigrant communities with available healthcare service—including mental health—in partnership with communities of faith. My ultimate goal is to create a space in which faith and clinical mental health counseling in Spanish could be provided for these immigrant communities.

As people of faith, and as people of privilege, let us never forget the connection between access to affordable mental health services and social justice. Our actions and inactions always have consequences, and the most vulnerable, “the least of these,” are the ones neglected who suffer. Let us continue to pray and work together for whole and healthy immigrant communities.

Learn more about the NBA Mental Health Affinity Group at nbacares.org/mental-health.

*Rev. Héctor J. Hernández, Interim Pastor, Iglesia Nueva Creación, Indianapolis, IN
Guest Blogger, NBA Mental Health Affinity Group*



*Con tu mano y la mía.
With your hand and my
hand. Digital Art by:
Héctor J. Hernández*

Word

Continued from page 2.

and over again all the way from Egypt to Sinai, and then from Sinai to the banks of the promised land. The people persistently complain and the Lord continually does what God does best—understands, provides gracious care, and preserves the people.

I am so glad that God is a God big enough to take all we have to dish out, and then more. Complaints are lodged at God throughout the biblical narrative. Jonah complained and ran. Then he complained again, pouting underneath the disappearing gourd. Job, on an ash heap, goes round and round with God, as well as his so called friends and comforters. In more than fifty Psalms there is recorded both individual

and corporate lamentations.

I am not so much concerned with the griping that goes on as I am with the discontent it breeds. We live in an age still waiting to be named. But if I were to name it for you today, I would call it the age of discontent. Our satisfaction quotient is so low that we are not satisfied with anything. Recent polls of voters indicate that discontent with the status quo is driving us to poor decision making. Discontent is only useful if it leads us to a time of contentment. Left all by itself, discontent just breeds more discontent.

In church lingo, there is much discontent to go around: discontent with the direction

Continued on page 11. See Word.



National Youth Event: A Place to Believe!

The United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will gather for the National Youth Event in Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., from July 26 until July 30.



A Fresh Type of Worship

This year's theme focuses on various elements of belief. Thousands of attendees will immerse themselves in innovative worship experiences, including:

1. Believe in the Earth
2. Believe in Each Other
3. Believe in the Unconventional
4. Believe in the Prophetic
5. Believe in Justice
6. Believe in Your Story
7. Believe in You(th)!

The worship team is excited to have programs not only designed for youth, but also featuring youth speakers and liturgists. Poets. Spoken-word artists. Activists. You won't want to miss the variety of inspirational voices at NYE!

Volunteer!

The UCC and DOC are encouraging Florida residents to get involved with the event! If you are interested in volunteering, please email youth@ucc.org. Volunteers need to either be paid attendees of the event

or able to commute to and from the event.

Stay Connected

Social media will be a major component of NYE. Everyone is encouraged to tag the following accounts and use these hashtags when they post for NYE:

Facebook:

United Church of Christ:
"United Church of Christ"

www.facebook.com/UnitedChurchofChrist

Twitter:

United Church of Christ:
"@UnitedChurch"

<https://twitter.com/unitedchurch>

United Church of Christ Youth:
"@theuccyouth"

<https://twitter.com/TheUCCYouth>

Instagram:

@UnitedChurchofChrist

Hashtags:

#NYE2016

#Believe2016

Let Us Hear How You're Getting Ready!

If you're getting ready for NYE and want to share your thoughts about belief, tag the UCC in a photo or video on Twitter (@unitedchurch) or Instagram (@united-churchofchrist). You could be featured on screen at NYE!

Please send any questions to youth@ucc.org. We look forward to seeing you in Florida this summer!

Disciples Home Missions is now on Facebook!



Follow us for resources on . . .

- Missions & Volunteering
- Congregational Transformation
- Support for Clergy & Lay Leaders
- Faith Formation & Education
- Justice & Advocacy
- Scholarships & Grants
- Ministry Resources for Women, Men, Children, Families, Youth & Young Adults



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Finding Our People

QC Family Tree has been doing the work of community building for 10 years, rooted in Enderly Park, a West Charlotte neighborhood that bears the wounds of racial oppression and economic injustice. The rich culture, strong advocacy, commitment to intergenerational leadership, and voice are just some of the reasons that the West Side is so great.

Resilient as we are, ours is also a neighborhood where higher levels of poverty, school segregation, displacement, pollution, and lack of Internet connectivity challenge us. As a result, our community is fragile.

Over the years, we've witnessed a particular story repeat itself over and over. Ambitious and driven young leader, romanced with the idea of helping others and fixing problems, comes in on the scene. He sets up his agenda, calls in his people, imposes his fix-it plan on others. When that doesn't work, he takes on a mash-up identity, puts on a different dialect, changes his wardrobe. Quickly, he becomes disenchanted. Folks aren't responding to his gestures. Things aren't changing in big enough ways or as rapidly as he'd hoped. In no time, the once dreamy fella vanishes like fog, leaving us to grieve over yet another loss, yet another recovery.

Finally, this time, things were different. Realistic yet hopeful, this seasoned mother-activist full of passion and righteous anger comes into view. She didn't just show up. She's been here all along, tending the soil,

marching to the beat of the justice drum. She chooses to be boldly and authentically herself while also acknowledging her deep connection to this place and these people. She draws her tribe into relationship. Her listening and observant spirit draw even more into the fold. She is one of us—rooted, kinfolk, freedom fighter.

What happens next is surprising and not. The organization that employed our Freedom Fighting Sister made drastic changes in a matter of hours. Without stable income, her housing is threatened. Our progress slows. We scramble to put pieces of healing together, grieving yet another loss of a job. With no notice, we volunteers now have to shoulder additional responsibilities. We do what we can

to recover again.

The thing is, this time, things are different! Our flame is not snuffed out. We are fighters. We will find a way. The rug may have been pulled out from under us, our hearts may be wounded, but our roots are deep, and the possibilities are many. Our Sister's voice is still loud and clear: "What we need is here. We can do this together!"

And so, together, we march on...

Learn more about the NBA Incubate Initiative at nbacares.org/incubate.

Rev. Helms Jarrell

QC Family Tree, Charlotte, NC

NBA Incubate Initiative



2016 Calendar of Events

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	Pre-Convocation Lay & Clergy Leadership Institute	Kansas City, MO
July 21-24	24th Biennial Session of the National Convocation	Kansas City, MO
July 26-30	National Youth Event	Orlando, FL
	United Church of Christ & Disciples of Christ	
August 3-6	North American/Pacific Asian Disciples Convocation	Sunnyvale, CA
Aug. 26-28	¡Missionworks!	Indianapolis, IN
Sep. 1-Oct. 31	2017 Clergy Continuing Education Grant Application Dates	



News from Disciples Women

The regional staff, presidents, constituency leaders and other women's leaders meet each January for the Disciples Women's Leadership Council. This year it was in Daytona Beach. These leaders accomplish a lot of work in a short time. The president of the DWLC is the Rev. Dr. Christal Williams, who kept the group on task while surrounding the event with worship and celebration of God's presence.

Information was shared for the plans of the IDWM Executive Committee to begin DWConnect. DW will bring together women in each region who are a mixture of those well-seasoned in Disciples Women's Ministries, and women who are less involved or only tangentially involved, to learn from one another and build relationships.

These learning opportunities will inform the Executive Committee as to what is next for women's ministries and what resources or support is needed, while also providing an opportunity for education on current and historical women's ministries. (#DW-Connect) Pat Donahoo, Executive Director, and Marilyn Williams, President of IDWM, shared information about what this might look like and how it will help us prepare for the future.

Time was also taken during this gathering to participate in a Mission First reflection. The group was led by Cathy Myers-Wirt, who directed our activities and created a

space for conversation and sharing. Once again we noticed the importance of community in what we do and where we hope to go in the future.

In February, Disciples Women and DHM celebrated the ministry of Beverly Ledwon, Ministry Associate for Disciples Women, who retired after many years of faithful service. The women of DWLC and many others sent pictures, cards, and well-wishes that were presented to Beverly in a memory book at a Disciples Center celebration in her honor. We are grateful for all she has done and the support she has offered women across the U.S. and Canada.

At the end of February, Disciples Women also welcomed Elizabeth Clough as our Ministry Associate to continue support of women's ministries. Elizabeth is working hard and doing well to get her arms around this ministry.

*Rev. Patricia Donahoo
Executive Director
Disciples Women*



Christal Williams



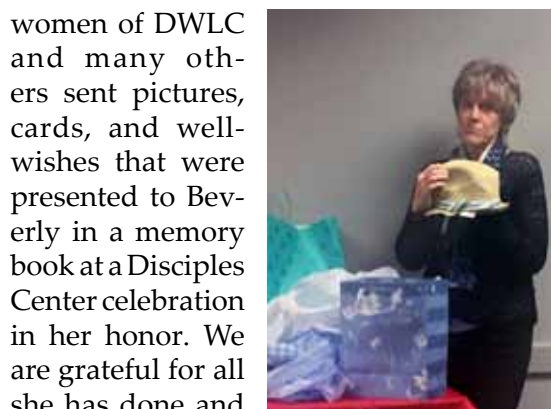
Cathy Myers-Wirt



Kathy McDowell



Loria Tapia, Pat Donahoo and Marilyn Williams



Beverly Ledwon at retirement reception



Beverly Ledwon, Chesla Nickelson, Regenia Smith and Pat Donahoo

Justice for Children

I am delighted to introduce myself to you through the Disciples' Advocate. As I am beginning my work as Disciples Home Missions' Coordinator of Justice and Advocacy for Children and Families. I feel the spirits of my Disciples forbearers fluttering around me. To serve you in this capacity is to come home to my roots and live out the "feisty" activist spirit of my great-great grandfather, the Rev. Otis Harrison Gould, who ministered with Alexander Campbell and my great aunt Annie Gould, who served as Dean of Women first at Hiram College and then Chapman College. Now, I suspect that they could scarcely imagine what it means that I have just started a Justice For Children blog (www.disciplesjustice4children.org) or put together a new online Kids2Kids intergenerational project guide to help families and churches understand and respond to the Flint Water Crisis, (www.docfamiliesandchildren.org/#!kids-to-kids/cy43) much less that I have posted about them all over Facebook, but surely activist pastor the Rev. Albert Pennybacker, who baptized me at Shaker Heights Christian Church some 50 years ago, knows what an important justice and advocacy ministry DHM is launching online through its Family and Children's Ministries "for just such a time as this."

The simple fact is that our hi-tech, networked, fear mongering media driven world calls parents, caregivers, teachers and grandparents to wake up and start media literacy and faith-based justice advocacy at home and church at an early age. Hope is a pick and shovel virtue which needs us to "dig in"! Our families and children need intimate, honest caring cross-generational relationships in which young and old alike can appreciatively share their core values, hopes and dreams, as well as their feelings, experiences and concerns. We need these same relationships across cultures, races

and religions as well and I believe that it is our job in faith communities to initiate these relationships.

Won't you join me? I know that the way is not easy, so please know that your feedback - comments and concerns - are as important to me as what I write and create. I hope some of you will join me in my GA workshop next summer so we can chat face to face.



Kate Epperly

I am blessed to be a frequent after school caregiver for my 3 and 5 year old grandsons as well as a pastor of a small church (www.christianuniontruro.org) so rest assured, your challenges are mine. So, let's journey together in helping our children and grandchildren creatively work through their fears and frustrations by learning about justice issues and how to make a difference in the world Jesus-style. It is never too early (or too late) to help children partner with God and Jesus and a quest for "shalom (healing and wholeness, peace and justice for all God's children).

In partnership with other ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) my goal is to provide you with faith-based educational and advocacy resources for a variety of relevant concerns such as racial and economic justice; welcome for immigrants and refugees; eco-justice; equal employment justice (especially for persons with disabilities), and prevention of gun violence, non-violent communication and action and peacemaking. Please plan to connect with me either by my blog or at kepperly@dhm.disciples.org.

*Rev. Kate Epperly, Coordinator
Justice and Advocacy for Families and Children's Ministries
Disciples Home Missions*



National Refugee Welcome Campaign

With over 60 million people displaced worldwide and nearly 20 million refugees,

We invite you to join the National Refugees Welcome Campaign

that seeks to provide hope in the midst of the largest refugee crisis the world has faced since WWII!

Faith communities from multiple backgrounds, refugee resettlement organizations, refugee and human rights leaders, and organizations that work with refugees have formed a partnership to provide a vibrant welcome to refugees among us, and to encourage our country to continue to respond to the world's crisis by offering hospitality to most vulnerable refugees in need.

The **goal** of the Refugees Welcome Campaign is to provide opportunities for refugees to share their experiences with faith and community groups to:

- build friendships among diverse cultures and faiths
- strengthen public and private welcome of our refugee neighbors
- promote refugee integration and leadership
- celebrate refugees' community contributions

Take the next step and join the Refugees Welcome initiative today! www.refugeesarewelcome.org

We invite you to consider hosting events to welcome refugees!

We encourage you to contact: Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries

at sstanley@dhm.disciples.org or (202) 957-7826, for further support and information about how to welcome refugees in your area and state. Also for more information about how to sponsor refugees near you and how to support immigrant rights in you area.



Word

Continued from page 6.

your congregation or denomination is moving; discontent with your Pastor and his/her leadership style; discontent with all those new people coming through your doors; discontent with children running through the halls; discontent with babies crying in worship; discontent that the church does not seem like the same church you joined thirty or more years ago; discontent that we are growing older and grayer and do not know what to do to turn things around; and/or, that we do know what to do but refuse to do it.

It is no accident that the first name given to those who followed Jesus was that they were followers of 'the way' or 'the road.' They probably had just as many complaints as the Israelites and as we do. But when they found the way and the road, it became for them their hope. It is what moved them forward. As my colleague, friend, and retired church executive, Don Sarton would say, it is what moved them 'onward.'

I love that great story about the Mission Board Executive who was talking to the great Livingstone, of Stanley and Livingstone greatness, who were missionaries to the continent of Africa. The Executive said, "Dr. Livingstone, is there a good road to where you are? If so, we have a couple of men who would like to come and help you." David

Livingstone replied: "If they need a good road, don't send them. I need men who can come, road or no road." I often think that our women would have not thought twice as to whether there was a road or not. By the way, Disciples Women did just go. They helped give rise to our Disciples missionary movement!

If we are to move forward as a church it is imperative that we stop looking through the rear view mirror of what has been and start looking through the front windshield of what is yet to be. Kierkegaard would challenge us to take a 'leap of faith' into the future. Cicero would call us to gaze to that 'somewhere beyond the stars.' And it is our faith that calls us to walk forward into uncertainties of all kinds with the surety that God is with us always, even to the end [Matthew 28:19,20].

We know what kind of church we have been. We also know what kind of church we are. The question is: What kind of church is God calling us to become? We can only discover this as we move forward into God's future. I do hope you enjoy this issue of The Disciples' Advocate and articles about all the ways our church is moving forward to glorify God, serve humanity, and replace the discontentment of this age with a hope that is eternal.

*Moving forwardly yours,
Ron*

Pre-Convocation Lay and Clergy Leadership Institute

24th Biennial Session of the National Convocation

July 21, 2016

Cost for the Pre-Convocation Event is \$50

(includes breakfast and lunch)

July 21, 2016 - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sheraton Overland Park Hotel at the Convention Center

6100 College Blvd., Overland Park, KS 66211

(Kansas City area)

nationalconvocation.org to register



Thursday Session I (10:15 am - 12:15 pm)

Thursday Session II (1:15 - 3:15 pm)

Clergy Institute

- Preaching and “Public Health:” Serious Preaching in Dangerous Times, the Rev. Dr. Brad R. Braxton, Program Officer for Religion in the Public Sphere at the Ford Foundation in New York, New York.

Lay Leaders Institute

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

- Coaching: The Key to Unlocking Hindsight, Insight and Foresight
- 21st Century Congregations Must Have a Transformational Leadership
- The D-n-A Experience: Discerning & Affirmed in Your Call
- Do You Hear the Call? Opportunities to Serve with Global Ministries
- Hello? Living into Your Call



Dr. Brad R. Braxton

Young Adults

- Mobilizing for Change in the 21st Century

National Convocation 24th Biennial Session

July 21 to 24, 2016

Friday Workshop A (3:20 - 4:20 pm)

Workshop B (4:30 - 5:30 pm)

Saturday Workshop C (10:00-11:00 am)

Workshop D (11:10 am - 12:10 pm)

Workshops Include:

- Black Lives Matter - The Revolution and Resolution
- Black Men's Health “Taking Control”
- From One to Another: Creating a Legacy Society
- Giving in to the Yearning: Writing the Stories of Relevant Engagement and Sustainability for our Congregations
- Disciples Colleges and Universities: Heritage and Opportunities
- How to Develop a Heritage Moment: Celebrating Black History Every Sunday
- Maximizing Social Media for Ministry
- Prayers, Pills, Principalities: An Honest Conversation Addressing Mental Health in the Black Church
- Reassembling Dislocated Lives - Women's Struggle after Sexual Violence in Eastern Congo
- The Resurgence of Radicalism in the Black Church
- Villains, Visionaries, and Victims: Women Who Transcended Vulnerability
- Your Pension Fund Benefits

Young Adults

- To Pimp A Butterfly
- Tradition vs. Traditionalism



Visit: nationalconvocation.org to register and for program and speakers information for the Biennial Session

You Are Called By Name

Sessions '16 @ TCU

Hang Your Hat in Fort Worth

July 8-10, 2016



Speakers include

Todd Adams Alvin Jackson Newell Williams Warren Carter Rita Nakashima Brock.

Song leaders include Dean Phelps and John Malget.

- **Come** if you are a man who wants to rediscover this God who calls us by name.
- **Come** if you are a man who wants to learn how to build better Men's Fellowship Groups.
- **Come** if you are a young man who is looking at Texas Christian University as your future school. (\$100.00 Scholarships are available)
- **Come** if you are a parent of someone looking at Texas Christian University.
- **Just COME!**

Agenda includes

- **Hearing** about *"Being a Man in the Local Church"* from Todd Adams and *"Three Big Mistakes Churches Make"* from Newell Williams.
- **Workshops** both introspective and practical, repeated so all can participate. We will learn about *"Soul Care"* with Rita Nakashima Brock and *"Fiduciary Responsibility"* with Todd Adams.
- **Optional activities** will include: a bus tour of Fort Worth, a walking tour of the TCU campus, or a mission project at a local food pantry.
- **Alvin Jackson** will rally us at the beginning and lead us in Sunday morning worship with proclamation and hope as we set off for home knowing that we have been called by name and with new experiences to share where we hang our hats.

For more information and to register go to:

SESSIONS2016.org

Green Chalice to Bring a Hope-filled Creation Care Message to 4,000 Youth this Summer.

An estimated 4,000 youth are expected to attend the National Youth Event (www.uccpages.org/nye) of the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) July 26 to 30 in Orlando, Fla. In partnership with Blessed Tomorrow (<http://blessedtomorrow.org>), Green Chalice Ministries (www.greenchalice.org) will be there to listen to the hopes and fears of our young people and to share fun, practical, spiritual and theological experiences. Green Chalice staff will offer four workshops including *Faithful Disruption of our Changing Climate*, *We are Just getting Warmed up*, *Christian Discernment*, *Prayerful Art and Climate Change*.

Green Chalice will also be present in the TIE HALL the Theological, Interactive, Educational (TIE) Experience. Drawing from the creativity found in the Disney experience, this year the exhibit hall will be totally interactive shifting the space from the passive experiences of the past into a wonderland of spirituality, justice, arts and creation care. The youth event will strengthen connections of faith, justice,



and creation care. These intersections of justice and creation care have been written and spoken about for many years. Recently Pope Francis offered wisdom that is inspiring to young and old alike in the Encyclical "Laudato Si'" (http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html). "We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature. "(5/24/15, Pope Francis- Laudato Si', no. 139)

This summer Green Chalice and our youth will explore the best ways to address caring for God's people and God's creation at the same time.

Scott Hardin-Nieri
Associate Minister of Green Chalice
Disciples Home Missions

Christmount Calls New Executive Director

The Rev. Rob Morris has been named as the Executive Director of Christmount beginning July 5.

Morris currently serves as Senior Minister at Ridglea Christian Church, Fort Worth, Texas. He has also served as Associate Minister at Hillyer Memorial Christian Church in Raleigh, N. C., and as Manager for Lake Brownwood Christian Retreat in

Brownwood, Texas.

Rob is an ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He earned his MDiv at Duke Divinity School and Bachelor of Arts at Texas Christian University.

Rob will succeed Michael Murphy, who retires July 2, 2016 after serving 33 years at Christmount, 18 of those years as Executive Director.



Rev. Rob Morris

Christmount is a retreat, camp, and conference center for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) located in Black Mountain, N. C.

Weave Us Together



Association of
Disciple Musicians

2016 Summer
Conference

July 17-22, 2016
University of
Evansville (Ind.)

www.adm-doc.org

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- Support for Clergy & Lay Leaders
- Faith Formation & Education
- Justice & Advocacy
- Scholarships & Grants
- Ministry Resources for Women, Men, Children, Families, Youth & Young Adults

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Army Chaplain Ministers in Anbar Province

It was raining. In the Anbar Province of Iraq, one does not expect rain to be the defining feature of the day, but here we were, hiking through the mud on Easter Sunday, in sideways rain. Private First Class Miller, the Chaplain Assistant, carried a full combat load and weapon while I, the chaplain, carried my well-worn chaplain kit, stole, and Bible. Efficiently and carefully we moved from gun to gun. Arriving at each emplacement, I would chat with the Soldiers who have been manning it 12 hours a day, 7 days a week for months; I would remind them that it was not just Sunday but Easter Sunday and ask if they would like to have communion.

The religious Soldiers were happy to celebrate with me; others, who do not claim a religious faith, were fine just watching. All the Soldiers were glad I came on that day. It was a moment of joy and sacred normalcy on an otherwise dreary day watching the sky for incoming rockets.

I have spent three Easters in Iraq over the years. Each one has been unique with a different setting and in a different place. The call of a chaplain is to provide for the free exercise of religion as guaranteed by the US Constitution for all the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Department of Defense civilians in their assigned unit;

perform the rites and sacraments of their ordination; and advise the commander in the areas of religion, morale, morals, and ethics. This mission exists whether I am at home (currently at Fort Campbell, KY) or here, in Iraq. This Easter, while my Soldiers fight yet another enemy in this place, I am still trudging through the mud to bring the presence of God. The setting may change and the enemy may change but we will still be here, present, for all.

*Chaplain Jonathan R. Fisher
Fort Campbell, Kentucky*



Moving Forward Putting Mission First!

Momentum: force of movement; impetus, as of a course of events

Running efficiently toward a goal requires building momentum - putting aside bulky gear and staying focused. The Mission First! pilot is a little like "run(ning) with perseverance the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). It is a two-part pilot project to help us focus on our goal of showing God's love in the world (a.k.a. mission) and making our structures more nimble for this new day.

Mission focus: The work of the Mission Gatherings from the spring and continuing this summer and fall is meant to listen to God's call as we hear it through the congregations and ministries across the life of the Church. (See the website for a gathering near you.) In December, the Mission Council will spend several days sifting and discerning the rich results of the discussions at the gatherings. An emerging focus will be shared with the Church as a way of connecting and organizing our work together.

Nimble structures: Since the General Board meeting in the spring of 2015, the Administrative Committee has been serving as a proto-Governing Board (as called for in the Mission First proposal) - smaller in

number than the current board, but seeing to the ministry of administration. In this way, we are putting our new wine of mission into fresh wineskins so both will be preserved. (Matthew 9:17)

Timeline: This pilot project of focus and administration will be evaluated at the February 2017 meeting of the full General Board. If it is judged to be a good way forward, there will be changes to our governing document (The Design) that will renew the way our ministries relate in covenant. Those changes will come before the 2017 General Assembly. We will be putting Jesus' words into action - "...those who lose their life for my sake will find it. (Matthew 16:25)"

This lighter, focused way of being Church together can propel us forward as we serve for love of the God who sent God's only son to save the world. (John 3:16)

To learn more about Mission First, go to <http://missionfirst.disciples.org>



The 21st century church is TRANSFORMING.

Join the hundreds of congregations already in TRANSFORMATION.

Disciples Home Missions is working toward the 2020 Vision of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to transform 1,000 congregations.

Join the growing list of churches engaging in the transformation process:

www.discipleshomemissions.org/transformation



A ministry of the Office of Evangelism & Congregational Transformation



DHM's Spring Board Meeting



Lon Oliver opening the DHM Board Meeting with a word from God!



Candyce Black, Chair of DHM Board of Directors, presenting Huberto Pimentel with a retirement gift from DHM!

DHM's Spring Board Meeting. It was a spirit filled meeting jammed pack with information and reports on all the work being done through DHM staff. The Mission Center Directors were gathered prior to our Board's meeting time and we were fortunate to be able to fellowship and share a meal with many of them as their meeting adjourned. We were blessed to send off Pastor Huberto Pimentel as he retires from the office of Central Pastor for Hispanic Ministries and thank him for his tireless work and many hours spent with our Board. The highlight of this meeting for many however was our trip to Cane Ridge Meeting House, where we were regaled with stories of our Church's early beginnings. Our time in Lexington was hosted by the fantastic staff at Lexington Theological Seminary. We were given a tour of their new campus location and was blessed to have their President Dr. Charrisse Gillette bring words of greetings and then Rev. Dr. Donald Gillette brought a powerful word for our group's closing worship.

Candyce Black
Chair, DHM Board of Directors
Malden, Maryland



Gilberto Collazo, President of Hope Partnership, making a presentation to the DHM Board of Directors!



DHM Board Closing Worship and Communion with Drs. Charisse and Don Gillette, II!

EAD for Global Peace with Justice

Ecumenical Advocacy Days' 2016 gathering "Lift Every Voice! Racism, Class & Power" was held in Washington, D.C., April 15 to 18. The weekend was full of dynamic speakers including Disciples ministers the Rev. Dr. William Barber and the Rev. Amy Gopp who preached about our responsibility as people of faith to fight against racism and sexism in all its variations. The plenary sessions and workshops focused on voting rights, global trade justice and lifting the voices of the unheard.

The gathering culminated with "Lobby Day." Faith leaders went to the offices of their congress person with two concerns: will you support the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015? and please defeat the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement.

The ultimate goal of Ecumenical Advocacy Days is in its full name, Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice.

You can learn more at www.advocacydays.org



Photo above from left: Sheila Spencer and Chesla Nickelson at the office of Indiana Representative Susan Brooks.



Photo above from left: Amariah McIntosh, Chesla Nickelson and Sheila Spencer. The Indiana team for Lobby Day.



Photo above: "Lobby Day" at the Ecumenical Advocacy Days gathering.

Black Ministers Retreat Honors Memory of Elder Patricia Parker

Ministers and lay leaders from around the country came together March 8 to 10, 2016 in Jackson, Miss., for the 42nd annual Black Ministers Retreat of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The three-day event of renewal and fellowship was hosted by local congregations United Christian Church and Christ Tabernacle Church.

Attendees participated in continuing education courses, workshops, and daily worship on the retreat theme, "Ministry for the Long Haul: Self-Care and Sustenance." Participants also had the opportunity to visit the historic Medgar Evers House Museum in Jackson with a tour facilitated by Ms. Minnie Watson of Tougaloo College.

The 2017 event will take place in Hannibal, Mo., March 7 to 9, at Willow Street Christian Church. For more information, visit www.discipleshomemissions.org/black-ministers-retreat.



BMR 2016 was dedicated to the memory of Mississippi pastor, Elder Patricia Parker.



Looking intent at the 2016 BMR is the Rev. Dr. John R. Foulkes. (Photo taken by DHM President, Ron Degges)



The Rev. Zedrick Clayton and the Rev. Dr. Ann Pickett Parker - tag team preachers for the 2016 BMR.



Worship at the 2016 Black Ministers Retreat in Jackson, Mississippi.



Guest choir from East Percy Christian Church, Greenwood, Mississippi.



The Rev. Dr. R. Wayne Calhoun, Sr., making announcements.



The Revs. Cherisna Jean-Marie and Shanay Scott.



Historic home of Civil Rights leader, Medgar Evers.



Curator Minnie Watson at the Medgar Evers Home.



DHM staff share about the ministries and programs of DHM.

Moving Forward...Literally!

How does it feel when it's time to pick up the tabernacle and go? First Christian Church in Naples, Fla., would tell you that it feels scary, bittersweet, energizing and empowering all at the same time. And, it takes courage. They would also tell you that, for them, the journey has been worth it.

Once a congregation of about 30 mostly retired seniors worshipping in a 22,000 square-foot building, First Christian Naples knew that they needed to make decisions about their future direction while they still could. So, they called in Hope Partnership to provide their New Beginnings Assessment Service, which is designed to help a congregation assess their strengths and opportunities as they seek to answer the question, "What is God calling us to do and be in this time and place?" After going through the New Beginnings process with months of discussion, reflection and discernment, the church decided that their Holy Place would be wherever the congregation could be together to connect with God and best connect with neighbor.

As they discerned, the congregation also sought counsel from Disciples Church Extension Fund (DCEF) to help them consider their options related to relocating their Holy Place and ministry. DCEF helped them with the sale of their "too-much-for-them" building, at the same time encouraging the congregation to consider something other than building ownership while they lived into being Church in a different way and location. The congregation heeded that advice and after selling their facility to the Chabad Jewish Center, they rented space in a school and later in a ballet studio in

an area that was a better fit for them.

During their four years as renters, the church's outreach ministry grew. At the point where they were serving several thousand people a month at their food pantry, the congregation determined that ultimately they could operate more efficiently and effectively in their own space. With part of the proceeds from the sale of their original building and after a careful search, the congregation recently purchased and renovated a former piano gallery on the north side of Naples. This unconventional facility gives them the flexibility to do worship, children's programming, food and other outreach ministries, group meetings and to share space with another local congregation —

all in the same debt-free Holy Place. (Money left over after the purchase and retrofitting is invested with Christian Church Foundation, providing a stream of income for the church.)

The building, which the congregation has named The Current – Home of First Christian Church Naples, is now the Holy Place that the growing congregation envisioned, a Place where a blend of older and younger disciples from all walks of life and at several points in their faith journeys come together to worship and to engage in community and mission. Says Rev. Michael Junkroski of the church's own journey, "We believe we have set in motion the kind of plans that will maximize our potential for success. We have chosen to live by the motto, 'Go bold or go home.'"

*by Disciples Church Extension Fund
and Hope Partnership*



Photo above and below: New sanctuary at First Christian Church in Naples, Florida.



Photo above: Food pantry at First Christian Church in Naples, Florida.

Moving for Wholeness in the Disciples Home Missions Virtual 5k



Photo right: DHM staff participates in a Virtual 5k in Indianapolis. From left: Ron Degges, Lonna Owens, Jessica Kramer, Anne Marie Moyars, Kathy Watts, Erin Cody, and R. Wayne Calhoun Sr.



Family & Children's Ministries and General Youth Council are happy to share the results of the FIRST EVER Disciples Home Missions 5k! We had over 550 runner/walkers register and raised over \$11,100 dollars for the Disciples Mission Fund Easter Offering!

Walkers and runners of all ages registered to participate in March, and then completed their walks (or runs) at various locations around the country.

Some churches are still planning their walks (or runs) for later this summer as the weather warms up. If you have yet to share photos with us you can do so online at facebook.com/disciples5k or use the #disciples5k tag



Photo top left: Rev. LaTaunya Bynum, Regional Minister, Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada. Photo left corner: Advance Conference Spring Retreat at Camp Christian in Ohio. Photo bottom center: Sarah Renfro and Kelley Dick of Geist Christian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. Photo right corner: West Point Christian Church, West Point, Virginia. Photo top right: First Christian Church, Greensboro, North Carolina.

Move *Continued from page 1.*

shown through the love of Jesus Christ.

You may have already taken the first step by joining the General Youth Council's literal movement for wholeness (in the DHM Virtual 5k), but how can we spread the movement at home? How can we continue to facilitate the inclusion within the Lord's Table rather than creating our own table and prepare believers for baptism? How can we establish a welcoming environment for visitors? And most importantly, where are the areas of brokenness in our home regions that are in desperate need of wholeness? I strongly encourage you to contemplate these questions during the month of March and during your walk with us as we work together to strengthen our "movement for wholeness in a severely fragmented world."

Chelsea Martin, Moderator,

General Youth Council

(This article was first published in March 2016 at docfamiliesandchildren.org in promotion for the Disciples Home Missions Virtual 5k: Moving for Wholeness)



Central Christian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana



Good Shepherd Christian Church in Macedonia, Ohio



Independence Christian Church, Independence, Kentucky



*Yale Avenue Christian Church,
Tulsa, Oklahoma*



First Christian Church, Greensboro, North Carolina



*Norm Williams, Retired
Minister and Air Guard
Chaplain*

A Good Problem to Have



Have you heard what Disciples are doing? We're speaking up for refugees, planting churches in immigrant neighborhoods, standing behind undocumented leaders, and so much more. It's amazing.

As we develop real relationships with families from around the world, sooner or later someone is going to ask a legal question. How can I become a citizen? How can I bring my family to the U.S.? How can I apply for asylum? This is an honor. For many immigrants, the questions of immigration and documents are some of the most personal and pressing. If someone is sharing these struggles, it is a statement of trust. It is a good problem to have.

But when someone places his or her trust in us, we need to make sure we are worthy of it. There is an abundance of misinformation and a dearth of affordable legal services. It is natural for us to want to help, to try to get answers for people, or to help with their cases. We might be all they have. But the wrong help can hurt.

Even something as basic as telling someone which immigration forms to fill out is unauthorized practice of law unless you are an immigration lawyer or a representative accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals. Sadly, I have witnessed immigrants deported on account of something as simple as applying for citizenship—because someone tried to help.

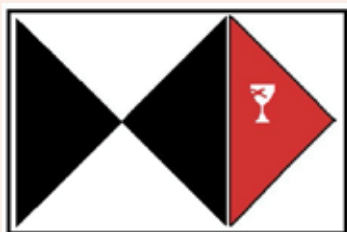
I don't share this warning because I want to dissuade us from helping or because I think immigration lawyers somehow need more business. It is because I want our ministries and churches to be safe places for people, to provide help and not harm.

There is so much we can do, though. When you earn someone's trust and start getting questions, please reach out to Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel for help. Then find more ideas at disciplesimmigration.org.

Tana Liu-Beers

Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel

Disciples Home Missions



North American Pacific
Asian Disciples

19th Biennial NAPAD Convocation

Be Reconciled In Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

August 3 to 6, 2016

Raynor Park Christian Church, Sunnyvale, CA

- Worship
- Exhibits
- Educational Workshops
- Panel Discussions

Pre-events being planned:

- Continued Education
- Anti-racist Training

Keynoter

- *Rev. Dr. Soong-Chan Rah*
Milton B. Engebretson Professor of Church Growth and Evangelism at North Park Theological Seminary.

Worship preachers

- *Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins*
General Minister and President for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- *Rev. Dr. Bernard (Chris) Dorsey*
President of the Higher Education and Leadership Ministries
- *Rev. April Lewton*
Vice President of Development and Marketing for the National Benevolent Association and former NAPAD moderator.

For additional information visit www.napad.net/convocation



2017
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Indianapolis
JULY 8-12



UNO / YOUNN / 하나 / UN
JOHN 17: 20-21

Join
thousands of
Disciples as we:

- Dive into John 17:20-21, "...that they may all be **ONE**..."
- Elect a new General Minister and President
- Find out the results of Mission First!
- Explore ideas with others
- Learning communities include Innovation, Worship, Stewardship and Justice

REGISTRATION OPENS JULY 2016 at <http://disciples.org/ga>

 [Facebook.com/groups/docgeneralassembly/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/docgeneralassembly/)

 twitter.com/DisciplesGA

We Love Hearing About Your Hands-on Missions!



Photos above and below: Christian Men's Fellowship of First Christian Church in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, started the Yam Jam in 1998. At that time farmers could not market sweet potatoes which were too large, too small or damaged so they were left in the field. Volunteers came together to glean the potatoes and donate them to local food banks. Then a farmer in the area, Richard Tyson, donated about three acres and the equipment to harvest them. The gleaning crew reached about two hundred and the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina was called to assist with distribution. Since then the harvest has been divided between local projects and the Food Bank. In Fall 2015 59,000 pounds were donated with about thirty churches and groups participating in the harvest. <http://www.fccrockymount.com/#!yam-jam/d1boq> (Photos provided by Milton P. Fields, Rocky Mount, North Carolina)



Photo below: New Bethel Christian Church Drama team and Angel Praise Dancers collected old eye glasses for recycling for the Lions Club in Greenville, Alabama. The Lions Club "Recycle for Sight" program provide eyeglasses for indigent and low income individuals. (Photo provided by: Disciples News Service)



Photo below: New Bethel Christian Church Angel Praise Dancers donated school uniform polos, baby clothes and baby food to Greenville DHR. The Praise Dance Coordinator, Melissa Sias Robinson, emphasize to the dancers the importance of giving back to the community. Pictured back row from right to left is Rev. Tommie L. Means Pastor, Bernadette Robinson, Kendra Robinson,



front row from right to left, Natasha Mack, Lisa Butts, DHR, Martasia Savage, Ja-liah Mc Means, and Daisha Mack.



The Interfaith Community of Environmentalist Youth (ICEY) - a group of Christian, Jewish and Muslim teens from across Indiana - gathered in Indianapolis for an educational retreat and a day of service winterizing the homes of elderly and low-income residents on the city's Eastside.

Organized in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, YES (Youth Empowering Sustainability): A Statewide Interfaith Environmental Kick-Off took place at Eastgate Christian Church in Indianapolis.

The youth participated in workshops to learn what they need to help their congregations care for the Earth, cut their energy use and start interfaith youth environmental teams in their own cities. Youth who participated in the overnight event saw first-hand that they can make a difference and can gain new skills to put that knowledge into action.

After the workshops, teams of youth went out to houses in the community to winterize homes and do minor repairs.

The ICEY teens who've organized this event have already led and presented at public events, engaged media and legislators, and weatherized homes. They are eloquent about why they feel that taking action to care for the Earth and curb climate change is important.

According to Zakaria Dabdoub: As a part of my religion, we are supposed to take care of the Earth. A verse from our holy book, The Quran says in Chapter 6 verse 165 "Humans are guardians of God's Creation," also in Chapter 30 verse 40, God says "We should not create disorder/ pollution."

Tamar Moss explains, "As a Jew, I believe it is our responsibility to take care of the world God gave us. What we do here in the U.S. affects people all over the world. Why should we in the developed world, with our air conditioned houses, multiple cars, 100-inch televisions, why should we have power to contribute to the disasters and lives of people on the other side of the world?"

Claire Shea quotes Pope Francis as saying, "When man turns his back on the Creator's plan, he provokes a disorder which has inevitable repercussions on the rest of the created order." "We must understand," she adds, "that we as a people have a duty to protect our world through big and small acts ... We must begin by understanding that we are all in this together. That we as a world got ourselves into this mess. It wasn't one city or country, it was us all. So we must, as a



world get ourselves out. We must set aside our differences - political, physical, social, and become one."

Participating teams of youth came from a wide range of congregations from Gary to Jeffersonville. They include: Progressive Community Church in Gary, New Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church in Merrillville, the Islamic Center of Bloomington, Cumberland Baptist Church, Englewood Christian Church, and Eastgate Christian Church on Indy's Eastside; a set of congregations in Carmel, and First Presbyterian Church in Jeffersonville.



Social Witness task force has first meeting

Members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) recently met as the Social Witness Task Force in Indianapolis. This group was formed in response to the 2015 General Assembly resolution GA-1524 which called for “the Office of General Minister and President, Disciples Home Missions, and Division of Overseas Ministries, to convene a balanced broad-based and inclusive task force . . . for the purpose of bringing to the 2017 General Assembly . . . a jointly sponsored process for discussion of and education about important religious, ethical and social issues.”

At the gathering, committee members shared how they understood the role Sense of the Assembly resolutions play in different expressions of ministry, and the impact they have in congregations. Sense of the Assembly resolutions can play a powerful role in supporting the work of international partners in vital ministries and provide congregations with opportunities to discuss and engage in pressing social issues. Various ministries of the church use these resolutions to facilitate and guide their work.

The Task Force will continue working over the next several months in order to meet the guidelines of GA-1524 by:

- Reaching out to diverse groups who were not present at this meeting to solicit input in how the Sense of the Assembly Resolution process may be addressed,

- Sharing the work of the Task Force with the whole church, and
- Drafting and submitting a proposal prior to the deadline for the 2017 General Assembly.

Please pray with the Social Witness Task Force as they work to discern a process that will help the church to hold unity and justice in a mutually reinforcing way that allows the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to involve the depth and breadth of the church in its witness for wholeness and justice.



Photo left: Front row (left to right) Ron Degges, Evangelina Perez, Twanda Wilson, Fiyori Kidane, Katherine Raley, Sekinah Hamlin Sullivan. Back row (left to right) Paul Tche, Sharon Watkins, Tom Morse, William Bauzo, Mark Johnston, Jeff Goodier, Richelle Himaya, Robert Cayton, Scott Kinnaird, Rebecca Littlejohn, Dean Phelps, Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder. Not pictured: Charisse Gillette, Shannon Dycus, Pam Holt, Julia Brown-Karimu, Ken Brooker Langston.

Pray, Learn, Engage through the Middle East Initiative

The Middle East Initiative is already more than half-way through – don’t miss out on these great resources!

One of the best ways to get involved is by joining one of the monthly webinars featuring partners from across the Middle East. The webinars are a wonderful resource for study and prayer groups looking for new material. There have already been a dozen amazing presentations covering a wide variety of topics including: Palestinian Christians call for peace, the work of partners in responding to the refugee crisis, experiences of mission personnel in the region, and the history of the Armenian Church (the oldest in the world). You might also be interested in Dr. Walter Brueggemann’s presentation on his recent book *Chosen?: Reading the Bible Amid the Israel-Palestinian Conflict*, which provides a Biblical perspective on the present situation.

All of the webinar recordings are available to stream at your convenience at www.globalministries.org/middle_east_initiative_webinars (you can also

register for upcoming events on the same page).

You’ll also want to take advantage of the monthly Bible studies shared by partners. These short reflections demonstrate the importance of faith in the lives of our global partners as they hold on to the hope shared in the Gospel, like when Jean Zaru of the Ramallah Friends Meeting states in her Bible study, “Standing in the shadow of empire, Mary sees and bears witness; she sings to God, the savior. She sings her full-throated confidence in God’s deliverance for the captives, release for those living under lawless oppression. God will, Mary sings, turn the world upside down, bring down mountains, and raise valleys. God will bring down empire and raise a new human community of all God’s people. God will restore balance, equality, and well-being to humankind.”

Global Ministries hopes that these new perspectives bring a richer understanding of faith to you and your Bible study group. They are freely available at www.globalministries.org/meinitiative#pray





Photo left: 2016 Winter Talk Panel at Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Oklahoma, From left: David Bell, Ken Brooker Langston, Ron Degges, and Linda Two Hawk Feathers James.

Photo right: David Bell and Law Professor, Robert Miller, discussing the Doctrine of Discovery during Winter Talks at Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in January.



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Photo above: Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, her staff, and All Peoples staff and parents during the congresswoman's visit to All Peoples Community Center in Los Angeles, Calif.

Congresswoman Roybal-Allard commented in her January newsletter, "I toured the All Peoples Community Center, which provides important social services to the people of South L.A. As we work to strengthen our communities, facilities like All Peoples are critical to caring for the well-being of our residents, and making them more educated and engaged."



Photo left: Vincent DeMarco and Patty Johnson and photo right of Amy Schumer and Vincent DeMarco at the White House in Washington, D.C., during President Obama's remarks on common sense gun safety reform. You can read the president's speech at: www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/01/05/remarks-president-common-sense-gun-safety-reform DeMarco is the National Coordinator of Faiths United To Prevent Gun Violence.



DHM staff members of the Pro-Reconciliation Anti-Racism team recently attended a showing of Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird." The photo above are a few of the actors who came on stage after the show to answer questions from the audience.



Photo above: Ron Degges, President of DHM, appeared on No Limits and answered caller questions on how to respond to the refugee crisis. Check it out and have a listen! www.wfyi.org/programs/no-limits/radio/syrian-refugee-controversy The show aired on Dec. 17, 2015.



Moving Forward in Education

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has been dedicated to education and leadership since its inception as a movement in the early 1800's. While higher education institutions have changed over the centuries, the values of thinking rationally, clearly and ministering to the world around continues in our Disciples affiliated theological institutions, colleges and universities.

Many of our institutions are undergoing significant changes with new leadership. Four Disciples institutions are under the guidance of new Presidents: Culver-Stockton College, Hiram College, Barton College, and Bethany College, all beginning in the last two years. Most recently, Drury University, in Springfield, Mo., announced Dr. J. Timothy Cloyd to serve as their 18th President beginning July 2016. Chapman University's long-time President, Jim Doti, will step down in August to return to teaching.

While Disciples institutions have never shied away from change, with new leadership come fresh ideas and new opportuni-

ties to maintain relevancy and competition in the higher education market. Many schools continue to expand and build in order to meet the needs of the students, faculty and staff. Lynchburg College recently underwent a \$12 million renovation project of their Drysdale Student Center and Culver-Stockton College added a new Recreation and Wellness Center. Growth and expansion is also happening inside the classrooms.



Midway University in Midway, Ky., announced its newest MBA program offering a focus and coursework specific to Bourbon and the tourism industry that surrounds it. Such a unique program

piques new interest while also capitalizing on growing industries.

As our Disciples institutions navigate the often-bumpy terrain of higher education, they move forward in ways that are critical to maintain vitality, creativity and relevancy, while maintaining the Disciples values of service and learning.

Rev. Hollie E. Woodruff

*Director of Development & Communications
Higher Education & Leadership Ministries*



Dr. J. Timothy Cloyd

An advertisement for the Christian Church Foundation. The background is a light blue sky with many US dollar bills falling from above. In the bottom right corner, there is a close-up of a smiling woman with short, dark hair, wearing a white turtleneck. The text is overlaid on the image in a bold, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom, there is a small logo of a chalice and the text 'CHRISTIAN CHURCH FOUNDATION'. Below that, in a smaller font, is 'Helping Disciples Make a Difference'. At the very bottom, there is contact information: 'info@ccf.disciples.org (800) 668-8016 www.christianchurchfoundation.org'.

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solve this equation.



For more information about services that help your congregation **create, re-create, fund** and use **Holy Places** for ministry, visit www.disciplescef.org.

For more information about services that **empower and equip** leaders to guide congregations through formation or transformation, visit www.hopepmt.org.

800.274.1883 / En Español 866.534.1949

You are invited to ¡Missionworks!

¡Missionworks! is a unique experience for pastors, mission board members, and anyone interested in mission to connect with the global work of the church. Over the weekend of August 26 to 28 you will find out how to build on your congregation's existing passion for mission and receive tools for sharing about God's mission in the world.

Global Ministries is also excited to be joined by:



Bishop Munib Younan
of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in
Jordan and the Holy
Land.

Bishop Younan will be delivering a keynote Saturday morning on the importance of protecting Christian communities in the Holy Land, and share ideas on how American Christians can share in the important advocacy work being done.



Rev. Johnson Mbillah
of the Programme
for Christian-Muslim
Relations in Africa

Rev. Mbillah will be presenting a keynote Saturday afternoon on the current situation of Christian-Muslim relationships in Africa and sharing how the Christian communities in Kenya and Nigeria have responded in the aftermath of violence to work towards reconciliation.

¡Missionworks! will be held at the Marten House in Indianapolis, Ind., from August 26 to 28. For more information and to register visit globalministries.org/missionworks

¡Missionworks! will help you to:

- **Pray** - Discover music, prayer, and worship resources that will connect your congregation to life-giving partner ministries.
- **Engage** - Learn first-hand from international partners, missionaries, and Global Ministries staff about issues affecting communities around the world and how your congregation can work together to address these challenges.
- **Celebrate** - Hear the Good News of how the global church is making a difference in the world through your support and efforts.



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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 published by Disciples Women's Ministries. Place your subscription or have individual copies delivered to your door. Contact Just-Women@dhm.disciples.org.

News and Notes -- monthly newsletter that is sent out to Disciples Chaplains. Visit: www.discipleshomemissions.org/chaplainsnews-notes/ 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.wellfed-spirit.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, 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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With gratitude and appreciation, Disciples Home Missions lists the people and organizations who made donations to our mission work. With our general ministry partners, we promote diversity, growth, renewal, and leadership throughout the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These gifts make our work possible.

Donations to Disciples Home Missions in 2015 were also received for the following ministries: All Peoples Christian Center, Association of Disciples Musicians, ADM Music Clinician Endowment, ADM Tom Wood Worship Chair Endowment Fund, ADM Vera Enz Fund, Black Ministers Retreat Scholarships, Chaplains, Disciples' Advocate, Disciples Men, Disciples Men Cookin' for Mission, Disciples Volunteering, Disciples Women, Quadrennial Assembly, Disciples Women Social Action Project for Human Trafficking, Women to Women Worldwide, Evangelism, Fred Craddock Preaching Scholarship Fund, Kids to Kids, Farm Worker Ministry, Inman Christian Center, Refugee and Immigration Ministry, Star Supporter Fund, Yakama Christian Mission and Youth. A separate list of donations to Disciples Peace Fellowship follows on pages 37 to 39.

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*Correction: In the Winter Issue, "Disciple Summer Mission Trips
Announced for 2016" on page 6, the photos identified as in Arizona
should have been Arkansas.*