

Umoja - Unity-Oneness-Harmony

A Newsletter produced by Disciples Women of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

August 2009

Healing of the Nations Reflections

On the opening evening of the General Assembly, more than 6,000 people packed the Indianapolis Convention Center for the beginning of the 2009 General Assembly. The opening speaker was the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale, the senior pastor of Ray of Hope Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Atlanta, Georgia. She reminded us that we were a piece of work.



CYNTHIA L. HALE
Senior Pastor

Hale added that because man and woman had been created in the very image of God, their intrinsic value as human beings was more than most people can imagine. "As awesome as the cosmos is it was not God's greatest work," she preached. "All of creation, though absolutely breathtaking, was not God's best work. God saved the best for last. We are His best."

The Women's luncheon is a multi-generational, multi-cultural event which had over 640 women and a few men in attendance. We were blessed with the Temples of the Light Dance Ministry from Light of the World Christian Church.

Rev. Ayanna Johnson served as First Vice Moderator. Marilyn Williams, IDWM Executive Committee, was elected as the new Second Vice Moderator. We applaud Rev. Ayanna Johnson for her dedication and



Ayanna Johnson,
Illinois

commitment and we affirm Marilyn as she steps into her new role.

Marilyn Williams,
North Carolina



Some of our GA Family



**2009-2010
Quadrennial Service
Project:
Human Trafficking:
Breaking the chains of
modern day slavery**

Take the first step to join Disciples women in breaking the chains of human trafficking by visiting our web site at www.discipleswomen.org and on the right hand side, clicking on "Human Trafficking" for downloadable resources, ideas and presentation.

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You are invited to be part of the next issue. It will focus on "Thanksgiving", more specifically on what makes a Disciples woman say "Thank You". Please take a few moments to email odw@dhm.disciples.org (put Thank You in the subject line) and let us know why you are thankful. It can be something big or something small, a once-in-a-lifetime experience or a daily occurrence. What every makes you smile or thankful is the perfect subject. First name and state will be included, if provided.

*This Woman,
Sheila P. Spencer*

Do have vision or passion for something that you want to see fulfilled on earth?

That is exactly the reason why God planted in within you to birth.

Instead of praying for God to raise someone else to lead you through it.

God looks straight at you and asks, "Why cannot you do it?"

You are that woman

Dear Sisters:

This was a special General Assembly. It was the first experience as a Staff person and that has an entirely different perspective. I enjoyed reconnecting with our sisters from all over and making new connections. The Women's luncheon was phenomenal. Over 640 women (and a few men) filled the Convention Center Ballroom. We had music, dance, fellowship and a spirit of unity.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you. During the luncheon I was commissioned by Patricia Bluit, the president of National Convocation Disciples Women and Adonna Bowman, the ODW executive director. But the surprise was the slide show, complete with pictures that began with pre-school and continued throughout my life. I was so surprised and my face showed it. My friend said that it was so apparent how embarrassed I was and it was cute. Okay, it's an honor to share my lifetime of pictures with over 600 of my closest friends. The commissioning served as a culmination of this past year. It was also a confirmation that I am where God wants me for this season of my life. Thank you.

Our bonds of friendship strengthen us. You are blessings. God has poured unique and distinct gifts inside each one of us. There are dreams and visions that have been placed in your heart because you are the one who is destined to birth

them. We have examples of women from all generations who have answered this call.

"Why cannot you do it?" was the response God gave to Caroline Neville Pearre when she prayed for God to raise up a leader to advocate mission. She was transformed and birthed a ministry that we are all a part of. If she had the cour-

age to step out and accept the call, we have that same courage.

You are that woman

*Blessings,
Sheila Spencer
Sheila P. Spencer*

Our Legacy, Eliza Cave

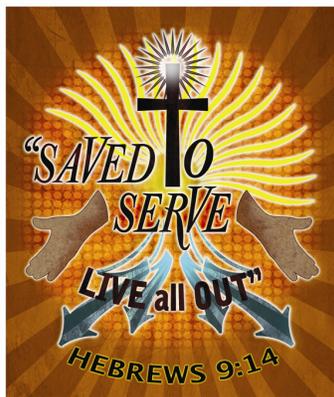


Eliza Husser Cave was born in Cross, South Carolina. As a third generation Disciple, her leadership experience began as Director of the Camp and Conference Program for the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ in South Carolina. She continued to use her gifts as the president of her state CWF and later as president to National Convocation Disciples Women. Her ministry continued with the Quadrennial Committee as the director of stewards. Eliza has been a community volunteer, retreat and workshop facilitator. She has a passion for women's ministries and education. In 2002 she was recognized as South Carolina Regional Disciple of the Year. Eliza Cave is featured in the third edition of Black Disciples Who

Make a Difference. She was honored during the National Convocation Banquet at General Assembly for her contributions to Christian education, women's ministries, and leadership. She continues to be a contributing member of Poplar Hill Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Cross, SC, which was founded by her grandfather, Hiriam Husser.

Thank you, Eliza Cave

**21ST BIENNIAL SESSION
OF THE NATIONAL CONVOCATION**



JULY 29 - AUGUST 1, 2010

National Convocation - The National Convocation held a meeting during the General Assembly. It was decided that the 2010 Biennial Session of the National Convocation will not be held in South Carolina. This decision was based upon the 10 year boycott that the NAACP has held in response to the confederate flag that is on state property. The group (including South Carolina Disciples) voted unanimously to honor the boycott and not have the event in South Carolina. We are thankful to our sisters and brothers in Christ from the Christian Church in South Carolina. They have always been faithful and supportive of what is best for the Body of Christ. The board is the process of searching for a new site location. We will share that information as soon as it is available. Please keep our 2010 gathering in prayer.

WWW 2008—Israel/Palestine by Patricia Q. Bluit

Note: For the full beginning of the story & pictures regarding Patricia's experiences see November 2008, page 3 and May 2009, page 3.

Our journey began on Monday, September 28, 2008, in Newark, New Jersey, where sixteen women from around the U.S.A. would gather for this life-changing trip.

We continue the story on Monday, Oct. 6, 2008, we visited the Women and Childcare Society, St. Nicholas Church Oasis Cooperative. This cooperative sold hand made purses, bible markers (they were very beautiful), scarves and bags. We toured Sheppard's Field and the Church of Nativity where we saw the Grotto of the Nativity. The church was a beautiful sight to see.

We visited Badil Aseela Women's cooperative and toured a refugee camp in Dheishe and attended a lecture by Bernard, Director of Department of Service for Palestinians and Refugees.

The next morning we were off to Hebron

to visit the Palestine Women's Cooperative, Idna Women's Cooperative. We had lunch the women from the cooperative and visited Christian Peacemakers Teams in Tuwani and the Tuwani Women's cooperative. Evaluation at Sabeel with Samia, Cedar and Selwa. The women talked about more struggles for Palestinian women.

Wednesday morning we were off to visit Bir Zeit University. Followed by a visit to the House of Parables with Father Ra'ad who lead us to a house that was 300 years old. There he told us parables from Jesus birth, last supper, the resurrection of Jesus and His revealing himself to his disciples. Father Ra'ad sincerity and his reconstruction of the events made me feel like I had witnessed everything standing there. Everyone was quiet and attentive to his every word he spoke.



Thursday, Oct. 9, 2008, we departed for Jalazoun to visit the Jalazoun camp and YWCA program. We met Aza, she told us a story about her two sons that were attending the university. There was a protest at the university and her sons were arrested and sent to prison. They are 23 and 24-years old and she prays that she lives to see them get out. Her 14-year old son was arrested at their home and detained for hours before he was set free. Everyone was touched by her story and I thought about my grand nephews-teenage African America young men living in the USA.

After hearing all of those stories and seeing the wall that separates Israel from Palestine, *my prayer is that some how the wall dividing Israel and Palestine will come down just like the Berlin wall came down in peace and in the 21st Century.*

Johannesburg, South Africa Reflection by Lashaundra Smith



Johannesburg is very similar to any cosmopolitan city in the United States of America. There is a diverse population of Indians, Xhosa, Zulu, Ethiopian, English, Zimbabwean, Chinese, Brazilians and African-Americans to name but a few. Just like any other large

city the economic stratification is quite apparent. One township could house the affluent and the next those who are barely making ends meet.

On one of the most disturbing nights that I had here, I showed up to Riverlea UCC (Southern Africa) in the backseat of a top of the line Mercedes to preach a sermon of hope to those who were either homeless or residing in 'informal settlements'—basically squatter camps populated with small makeshift tin homes. I felt a great sense of guilt for my fortune in comparison to their misfortune.

Many of us hear about the reality of this camps and poverty but do not know how to help. Our immediate attempt to lessen the pain of their despair is to give charitable donations because the root of the problem seems too difficult to tackle. That is how I felt that night—helpless and overwhelmed. Imagine how they felt.

I took no pictures of them because they deserve to be more than ads for poverty in South Africa besides I will not forget their faces. From this, I hope that a bridge may be built between ministers in the States and ministers in South Africa that we may learn how to help one another in a respectful reciprocal relationship. After all there is only one body of Christ. It just happens to span across continents.



2008—2010 Officers of the
National Convocation Disciples Women

President	Patricia Bluit (Southwest)
1st Vice President	Pamela Dubose (Mississippi)
2nd Vice President	Marilyn Williams (North Carolina)
Immediate Past President	Daisy Chambers (North Carolina)
Member at Large	Karen Barrett (California)
Member-at-Large	Kathy Davis (Virginia)
Chaplain	Almetia Brown (South Carolina)
Secretary	Brenda Etheridge (Michigan)
Treasurer & Staff	Sheila Spencer (Office of Disciples Women)



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Connection Section



Have you registered for Quadrennial Assembly 2010?

No? You don't know why you should go and you don't know how or where to register?

The why is easy—you will meet with 3000 like-minded Disciples Women for worship, workshops, work-projects, and wonderful fellowship. It is part of the Disciples Women's tradition since 1957, when we were "Constrained by Love". Now is the time to "Awake, Awake".

To participate, please visit www.quadrennial.org. Registration is fast, secure, and easy. If you or your group do not have online access, registration forms and info may be requested from the QA office by calling (888) 346-2631. Children's programs and husband focused activities are also available.

Stay connected with African-American Disciples Women -If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter, please e-mail us at odw@dhm.disciples.org; include "African American Disciples Women Newsletter" in your subject line; you will be added.

Sister Share

Help us fill this space... We want to hear your joys, concerns and how your Women's ministry is transforming lives. **God is awesome!** Share what He has done for you or your group at odw@dhm.disciples.org.



Join us in celebrating the ordination of Ann Pickett-Parker.



Ann's ordination was July 24, 2009, at the Mississippi Christian Missionary Convention meeting. She is co-pastor of New Generation Christian Fellowship in Pascagoula, Miss., and vice president of International Disciples Women's Ministries. At the 2009 General Assembly, The National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) honored Ann as one of two women for her contributions to Christian education, women's ministries, and leadership.



Great Dates

November 8 to 23, 2009 Woman-to-Woman Worldwide
Venezuela and Colombia

June 23 to 27, 2010 Quadrennial Assembly
Greensboro, NC

July 28 to August 2, 2010 National Convocation

[www.disciples.org/
convo](http://www.disciples.org/convo)

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