



# The VOICE of Disciples Men

ISSUE 3 VOLUME 2 Winter 2010

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### Executive Committee

#### President

Gary Ochs  
106 Edgewood Drive  
Bedford, IN 47421  
(812) 275-7241  
gocbsinlions@att.net

#### President Elect

Archie Jenkins  
1162 Highway 17  
North Guyton, GA 31312  
acjenk@yahoo.com

#### Pastor- Counselor

Rodney Hopper  
804 Summit Drive  
Rock Port, MO 644832  
rhopper@rtip.corp

#### Staff

##### Administrative Assistant

Lorna Hernandez-Ramos  
P.O. Box 1986  
Indianapolis, IN 46206  
(317) 713-2666  
or (888) 346-2631 ext. 2666  
lhernandez@dbm.disciples.org

It has been my privilege through the years to know men who are passionate about Men's Ministries in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). My father, Bob Johnson, was one of them. He loved being involved in men's ministries of any kind, whether at the Champion Christian Church in Warren, Ohio or the District 4 Men's Ministries or Men's Retreats and Mission projects through the Christian Church in Ohio. And going to "Sessions" every four years was always a highlight for dad. He loved Men's Ministries.

How exciting and deeply meaningful it was for me, then, when Jay Stevenson worked behind the scenes to establish the Men's Ministries Robert "Bob" Johnson Endowment Fund which will support projects of Disciples Men in perpetuity. It's also been my honor to contribute to that fund. An important part of dad's legacy is his generous work with Disciples Men.



I know that many of you reading this newsletter have also been involved in contributing to Men's Ministries Endowment Funds in honor of men who have lived faithful lives of service. Thank you for your thoughtful gifts.... gifts which will keep giving year after year after year to do mission and ministry.

In my work with the Christian Church Foundation I have the opportunity on a regular basis to be with generous people who want to make a difference with assets which they have accumulated. Among them are men who give gifts to the Men's Ministries Endowment Fund AND who have included Men's Ministries in their end of life plans. In fact, the plans which they have put in place will offer, by far, much larger gifts to support this ministry they love at the end of their lives. They support Men's Ministries during their lives with their time, energy and treasures. And they will support Men's Ministries with their end of life gifts... again, which will keep on giving in perpetuity. Their gifts will be an important part of their legacy.

**What gifts will you offer? What will your legacy be?** Please know that my colleagues and I at the Christian Church Foundation are available to talk with you about your plans and help you to follow your passions. If you would like to put a plan in place to support the future of Men's Ministries as well as possibly other ministries important to you, please contact us at: 1-800-668-8016 or you can reach me by e-mail at [rjohnson@ccf.disciples.org](mailto:rjohnson@ccf.disciples.org).

Randy Johnson  
Christian Church Foundation  
Vice President, Southeast Zone

# “DISCIPLES MEN SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE”



**“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood”.**  
(Acts 20:28).

This verse is perhaps the richest description of the Christian leader’s responsibility in the entire Bible.

Have you ever thought about the fact that others depend on your leadership? Challenging questions for all Disciples Men to consider this year:

1. Are you reaching out to others in your community as a Disciple?
2. What are each of us really doing to help others in need; Those people who may be living in our local neighborhoods? One example might be a Literacy Program – Disciples Men helping people to read. As I was passing a highway bill board sign, it said ... “1 out 5 people cannot read.”
3. What service programs do we have set-up to encourage other Disciples Men’s groups across America to use as they reach out to others?
4. When was the last time your church conducted a community needs survey? To find out maybe what the current needs may be! If not, please do ..... Just a simple one page community survey may give you several new ideas for your church’s involvement.

My father, two Sunday school teachers, and two men from my church in Louisville, Kentucky set the

leadership examples early for me. I was in the seventh grade of school during this time. Their involvement and dedication were obvious in the way they could organize, speak with everyone, present church business and work with others. Each one served the church in different ways: as an elder, deacon, Sunday school teacher, board member, choir director, etc. Each one set a fine Christian example for me to follow as a young boy.

Remember, we all are Called to Learn and Grow in Christ before we can Lead Others! A quote by Margaret J. Wheatley, “It has been argued that leaders are not evaluated based on the numbers of followers they lead, but instead on the numbers of new leaders they develop.”

Goals are very important to setting up objectives! Goals are also crucial for targeting opportunities and action plans, and strategizing on going from one point to another in personal life as well as ministry. Goals are tools to assist growth and to better our call to Christ and our service to one another. Responsibilities at home, in business, in church, or in the community require men to be leaders, and the GCDM must continue to be dedicated to equipping men to provide leadership, based on a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and sound Biblical principles applied to every area of life.

*May your Christmas sparkle with moments of love, laughter and goodwill, And may the year ahead be full of contentment and joy.*

*Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

*Gary Ochs*

Bedford, IN  
President General Conference Disciples Men Executive Committee

# “KICK OFF”

The Men’s Ministry of the Hispanic Southeast Convention, Disciples of Christ has started a campaign to “Kick Off” its next retreat, to be held at the Christian Church Conference Center, **Ocala, FL from March 18-20, 2011.**

The retreat was announced recently at the Convention’s annual assembly with the theme “**Llenando el Vacío**”; the translation is filling the void or emptiness. This theme touches at the core of all men, from all cultures and generations. Its of no surprise that men have lost some of their purpose and identity, not only in being men but above all else in being Christian men, leaving many of us on the side lines while the game goes on.

The result is that you see us in church on Sundays, but you would be pressed to see more than 2 or 3 of us during the week, participating in that other stuff that we don’t feel part of or understand. We’re not knocking it. Every activity that the church is involved in has a direct impact on the Kingdom of God and it’s mission critical. We just really don’t get it.

The “**Kick off**” is only the beginning and we have put together a leadership training plan based on **Man in the Mirror’s no man left behind, calling it “reaching all men”** and with the endorsement of the individual church pastors, we will spend one on one time with the chosen men’s ministry team and assist them with the game plan.

## Key Points for reaching all men:

1. Knowledge that the ministry belongs to Christ.
2. 100% Pastoral endorsement.
3. Clear understanding of local church’s mission and a purpose for men to be part of and contribute to the promotion of this mission.
4. Have a leadership team – 1 person is not a team.
5. Understand the different types of men that come to church.
6. Create momentum.
7. Capture and Repeat.
8. Discipleship
9. Establish and give priority to developing “**Relationships**” above all else.



Without a doubt we have to be more goal oriented and systematic about our men’s ministry building. It’s no secret that we as men are good at doing one specific thing at a time. That’s what “reaching all men” is about, one man at a time, one church at a time and building relationships among us and in Christ all the time.



*Efrain Rivera*

Men’s Ministry President Hispanic Southeast Convention, Member of Iglesia Cristiana Hispana (Discipulos de Cristo) del Norte de Orlando.

# What's Going On with Disciples Men?



*The Ohio Disciples Men's Fall Retreat*

The Ohio Disciples Men's Fall Retreat was a time of Inspiration, Relaxation, Fellowship, Spiritual Insights and Good Food. The weekend adventure theme was **"David: The Man, The Legend"** presented by Felix Ortiz.



*Some of the outstanding cooks preparing part of Saturday night's dinner*

The Michigan Disciples Men's Fall Retreat this year was held at the beautiful Crystal Conference Center overlooking Crystal Lake in Frankfort, Michigan. Featured speakers were Rev. Dr. Frank Gilliard, Rev. David Dickinson and Minister Wardle Council. From 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 and Matthew 25:21 the weekend theme was **"Are you in the game with Jesus or are you a spectator?"** A big thank you to Rev. Eugene James for organizing this year's retreat. Fun, food, fellowship and just a wonderful weekend was enjoyed by everyone.



*The Michigan Disciples Men's Fall Retreat*

GCDM Executive Committee President, **Gary Ochs**, attended the retreats on this page. Don't forget to talk to the members of the executive committee when you see them at your retreat. They want to meet you!



*The Indiana Bedford Disciples Men Retreat*

The Bedford, Indiana Disciples Men's Retreat was attended by over 30 men with a theme of: **"Google, Garmin or God? ..... Where do you look for answers?"** Ed Huckleberry from The Valley, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Louisville, Ky. was the retreat leader.



*Dean Phelps, Minister of Indiana Church Multiplication performed during the retreat.*



*Ralph Wesley at the Capital Area Regional Assembly*



*Pictures from Capital Area Regional Assembly*



*The men participating gathered around the Kamp bell tower*

The 2010 Nebraska Men's Retreat was held at Kamp Kaleo, Burwell, NE on August 20-21 with 26 men participating. The Resource Leader was Jay Stevenson, former President of the GCDM. His topic was

**“Sharing Our Faith: Reaching Across The Generations”.**

He discussed the characteristics of various generations and led the men in seeking ways to attract the different generations.



*Rev. Scott Taylor leading a song session*



*Sunday session with speaker Tom Jewel, Oklahoma Regional Minister*

**“Grounded in the Word”**

DISCIPLES MEN OF WEST VIRGINIA

Retreat: Oct 8-10 at Cedar Lakes Conference Center, Ripley, WV



*Thad Allen, West Virginia Regional Minister*



The Arizona Regional Assembly was held October 22 & 23 at Sun City Christian Church. Pictured above are the Disciples men who attended the Starting or Re-vitalizing your Disciples Men’s Group workshop. The host church is noted for the 69 Religious Art Carvings on the doors.



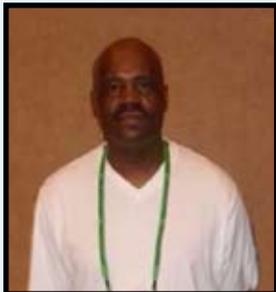
“The Doors” of the church and chapel were manufactured especially to display art carved in wood – biblical scenes and portraits of religious and lay leaders. The Gospel in Wood is perhaps one of the most beautiful displays that is to be found anywhere in the world.



A special thanks to Kevin Prahar, Pastor of Park Avenue Christian Church for all his help.

*Gary Ochs*

## GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER



*Howard Coleman*

Greetings! My name is Howard Coleman. I am currently a member of the General Conference of Disciples Men Executive Committee where my area of accountability is to serve as liaison for the Southwest Region. In addition, I serve as a member of the Men’s Gathering 2012 Planning Team.

I am a member of the Warren Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Dallas, Texas. At church, I have the opportunity to serve as voice chair, deacon and adult Sunday teacher. Professionally, I work as a teacher and basketball coach.

It is a joy and an honor for me to be featured in this issue of The Voice of Disciples Men, and it is my hope that little by little we get to know each other better.



*Kevin B. Prahar*

Welcome!

We would like to welcome Kevin B. Prahar as the newest member of the GCDM Executive Committee. Kevin is Minister at the Park Avenue Christian Church in Tucson, AZ and is very active in the life of the church. Kevin has proven leadership skills and a strong devotion to men’s ministries, and is planning to attend Lexington Theological Seminary’s new online seminary option early in 2011. He will replace Paxton Jones, Member At Large who resigned earlier this year after outstanding service.

Kevin has been married for 17 years to Carol Friesen and is the father of a blended family with four children and nine grand-children. Some of his interests are writing, reading, hiking, bowling, and woodworking.

# Cookin' for Mission goes:

# BACK TO THE FUTURE



It's true, we're going 'back to the future'! 'To the future' because this program continues and offers men's groups a great opportunity to do fundraising while building community through service. Cookin' for Mission remains the same; it can range from the traditional pancake breakfast to a great Southwestern BBQ! But it will also be 'back' - back to the Grant Program rather than funding the four DHM Mission Centers as we've done for the last few years.

With the recent changes at DHM, that Mission Station support continues directly from DHM. Disciples Men will now be able to go back to the Grant Program where Men's Fellowship groups on the local level can request grant funds for specific local projects. Over the years, these grant funds have refurbished local Church Camp facilities, build playgrounds for neighborhood children, etc. Who knows what projects Men's groups all over the country will come up with!

So it's 'back to the future' for Disciples Men's Cookin' for Mission! Fire up those griddles and grills men, and look for exciting news and tips in future newsletters and on our website.

*Scott Taylor*  
GCDM Executive Committee

Go to <http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/pages/men-cookinformission> to download a copy of the Cookin' for Mission brochure and "survival kit".



## UP COMING EVENTS

### February

February 26  
**Winter Men's Rally, First Christian**  
Nebraska City, NE, Topic TBA

### March

March 7-10, 2011  
**37th Annual Black Ministers Retreat**  
Wichita, KS

March 18-20, 2011 "Kick Off"  
Tampa, FL.

March 19, 2011 **Cookin' for Mission**  
Proposed date

### March

March 25-27, 2011 GCDM Executive  
**Committee and Men's Gathering 2012**  
Planning Team meeting  
Bethany College, WV

March 26, 2011

**Mid-Winter Rally & Buffalo Feed**  
sponsored by First Christian, Grand Island, NE,  
Speaker: Dr. Ronald J. Allen, Professor of Preaching  
& New Testament, Christian Theological Seminary,  
Indianapolis, IN (and former Co-Pastor, First Christian,  
Grand Island)

### April

April 30, 2011 **Nebraska Men's Spiritual**  
**Retreat**  
First Christian, Ashland, NE,

### April

April 29 -May 1st., 2011  
**Virginia Disciples Men Retreat**  
Front Royal, VA

### July

July 9-13, 2011  
**Disciples General Assembly**  
**"Tell it!"**  
Nashville, TN

Tell us about up coming events, gatherings and retreats. And don't forget to send us pictures as well!



## A Special Thank You...

In order to meet the demands of decreased funding, Disciples Home Missions made the difficult decision of releasing Tod Iseminger from employment as Minister for Leader Development, along with several other employees. Tod has served the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) through Disciples Home Missions for several years with distinction and dedication in the youth, men and clergy wellness programs. We would like to thank Tod for his service and pray that God will open doors of opportunity for him.

**Tod**, you'll be truly missed!

Thank You!



### Men's Gathering 2012

At this gathering which will be held at Bethany College in Bethany, WV from **July 13 through 15, 2012**, men of all ages will come together to enrich their spiritual lives, enjoy great fellowship and make a difference in the lives of others. See you there!

Go to <https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/pages/Men-Gathering2012>  
for promotional videos and poster.

# “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens”.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

On October 8th I got up early to travel to a **Ripley, West Virginia**. There at the Cedar Lakes Conference Center, the men of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of West Virginia held their annual Disciples Men retreat. I'd committed to attending the event several months back for the purpose of promoting a **2012 national men's event**. I knew I was going to miss my newborn son, but didn't know what to expect this, my first time being away from he and Kim since his birth. I tried to put the best face I could on the decision



of keeping my commitment. Kim was very supportive of my going, but was also able to voice her wish that I'd not go. I wasn't as understanding as I should have been.



I arrived at the retreat early that Friday afternoon in time to help out with some set up, provide some promotional materials, signage and just get settled in before the official kick-off of the weekend event. The facility was great and I found my room very comfortable and accommodating. So, I decided to take about 30 minutes of downtime to catch some well deserved nap time to recharge. The sleep time was fulfilling; more so than I expected. So much so, that as I groggily awoke to the alarm I'd set on my cell phone I thought I heard the new, but already familiar sound of my son's baby cry.

Those first few moments of disorientation and unfamiliarity with the surroundings of my room and the sounds I thought I was hearing was really a strange feeling, but as I began to realize where I was I also began to realize how much of an impact he's already had on me; any father knows what I'm talking about.

Friday evenings fellowship gathering and presentation was great. I was able to meet and talk with many old and new faces.

Some of the men knew about the birth of Gabriel, but most did not. After talking with 'mommy' and thinking about 'lil' man' I decided that I'd not stay for the entire retreat time. The power nap sounds of Friday afternoon resounded throughout the rest of my time with the very gracious and hospitable Disciples Men of the Mountaineer state.

As I gave my brief Saturday morning presentation to the men, I concluded by recalling my Friday afternoon experience. I shared that I was so happy to be a father of a beautiful son who I hope to someday bring to events such as theirs. I felt the emotion of my voice as I thanked the men for their time and

support. What a great group of men, happy for me and so understanding of my decision to make my stay brief.



I was back home by late Saturday afternoon. It truly was a great and joyous weekend for the West Virginia men...and for me. I certainly look forward to more fellowship opportunities with this group.

*Ray Gryder*

Member of the Men's Gathering 2012 Planning Team



## Mark your Calendars:

- General Conference of Disciples Men Assembly Meeting
- Disciples Men Luncheon

# Tell It!

Repete yo! • ¡Dilo! • 들려 주어라!

# Tell It!

Repete yo! • ¡Dilo! • 들려 주어라!

## 2011 General Assembly

SATURDAY, JULY 9 - WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2011

BRIDGESTONE ARENA • NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

REGISTER ONLINE TODAY!



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General Conference of Disciples Men  
130 E. Washington Street  
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46204-3645

# The VOICE of Disciples Men

DESIGNED BY:

MALANGA AND STUDIO

ILLUSTRATION GRAPHIC DESIGN T-SHIRT DESIGN DIGITAL ART  
poylolo@gmail.com • 386-473-9681

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