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The Disciples' Advocate

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Home Missions



What is Mission?

As church, we talk frequently about mission. Those conversations tend to focus on what we do. What if, instead of looking at mission first as an activity, we viewed it primarily as a character trait, a part of our identity as church? It's much easier, of course, to focus on doing. We like activity, inputs and outputs, and measurable results. We like solving problems and fixing things. Understanding what it means to live as mission people requires taking a step back and carefully considering



a fundamental question: what is mission? Here again we have an opportunity to differentiate between a way of being and a kind of activity. One tendency is to conflate mission with service (don't get me wrong, there is a connection). Another is to reduce mission to a series of goals and objectives ("our mission is to ..."). At its core, however, mission involves sending. Jesus was sent by

God. Jesus was sent in faith. And Jesus was sent to be in relationship with people, particularly those on the margins of society in his day.

As the body of Christ, the church is similarly sent. The mission church is sent by God, in faith, to be in relationship with others, particularly those on society's margins. How would it change your church's next mission meeting to start by asking who God is sending you to? How would it change your planning, to get to know people first and let the mission activity that you do together grow out of those developing relationships? If we stop looking for something to do and instead focus on building relationships with those outside the church, it would certainly impact the activity we pursue. It could even change us.

Josh Baird

Director of Disciples Volunteering

God's love overflows at Easter

Like good stewards of the multi-colored grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. 1 Peter 4:10

The grace of God is overflowing in the gift of Jesus Christ. Not only did God walk among us in the form of Jesus, but God continues to give us treasures unbounded through the power of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians

3:20-21 says, "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Our response to this great **generosity of God is overflowing** compassion, joy, faith, gratitude,

Continued on page 4. See Easter.

A New Year

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*Have you considered
making a gift to*



in your will?

If so, please contact

*Rev. Sotello V. Long
at*

(317) 713-2684

*DHM Equipping Disciples
for Christ*

Sotello's Inspirations

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. (b) **Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.** (b) And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. Psalm 37:1-11

Let me introduce you to a daily devotional Bible reading guide for 365 days a year. Above is a portion from the Sunday December 4, 2017 daily devotional reading that caught my attention. The call of Christ in any area of service or work is a call to "commit your way to the Lord!" To commit one's self according to one current definition is to pledge or bind (a person or an organization) to a certain course or policy. In this context it is a pledging or binding of one's self to the Lord.

I made the quality decision to commit my way to the Lord and I can testify that God has been and remains faithful to me in bringing this word to pass in my life. I was once on staff with Disciples Home Missions [then Homeland Ministries] as the Minister for Evangelism. Anne Updegraff Spleth was the President and I served with a team of colleagues operating out of what was then called the Center for Congregational Growth and Vitality under the leadership of Vice President, Jeff Wilson and subsequently

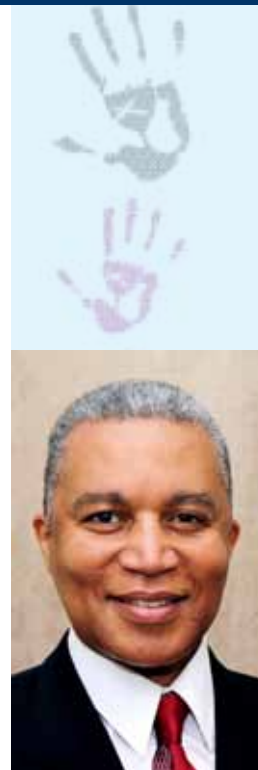
Vice President, Roger Pierce. I served the whole church and shared the gospel – the good news – of God's grace, compassion and love in ways to strengthen congregational life and witness. Then under new leadership and as a consequence of diminishing resources three other positions along with mine were cut. Through this painful journey, I stayed committed to the Lord. I asked for and was granted extended time for transition. God working through a board member at a subsequent meeting on my agenda of the Board of Trustees of the National Convocation led me to apply for the Regional Minister position in South Carolina. I was called by the search committee and before I could prepare for the follow-up interview I received a call extending me the notification that I was the choice of the search team to be presented as the nominee for Regional Minister. I served in the church based the vineyard of South Carolina for 14 years. I grew and broadened relationships in ways that prepared me for two most recent calls to which I responded to inviting me to greater service. One after due process said no, but the other, my brothers and sisters, said yes! It was yes to the call to come back to Homeland Ministries now doing business as Disciples Home Missions! The verse says commit your way to the Lord; trust also in Him; and He will bring it to pass!

God brought it to pass that one who once served alongside the likes of a Charles Webb, Jr, Janis Brown, Billye P. Bridges, Cathy Myers Wirt, Judy Turner, Grant Azdell, Bruce Foulkes and Suzanne Martin Brown would be given the blessing and privilege to lead what certain leaders call the denomination's "breadbasket ministry" Disciples Home Missions! I serve in honor of these as well as all of the persons who have touched my life along the way... to God be the glory and the best is yet to come!

God's love,



Sotello V. Long
President



Sotello V. Long

Read the Bible in a Year

DHM President, Rev. Sotello V. Long, shares this "Read the Bible in One Year" resource guide. Download it from the DHM Resources website and share with your congregation. www.discipleshomemissions.org/about-us/resources/



Disciples Home Missions' Office of Christian Vocations is offering Disciples Deacon and Elder Emeritus Pins and Clergy Pins. The pins are \$5.00 each, plus shipping. To place your order please go to: www.discipleshomemissions.org/clergy/search-call/online-store

Black Leadership Project Grant

The Black Leadership Project Grant provides funds projects that develop, nurture, and strengthen church leadership in African American congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The 2018 grant process is now open. The application deadline is May 31, 2018. Learn more and apply online at: www.discipleshomemissions.org/congregations/african-american-congregational-nurture/black-leadership-projects-grant.

Student Scholarships Application Period Closes March 15

Each year Disciples Home Missions (DHM) awards financial scholarships to seminary students who are preparing for ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples Of Christ). While amounts may vary according to need, student recipients usually each receive a \$2,000 annual award. All awards are sent directly to the students to help them pay for their education and related expenses. The deadline to receive applications for the 2018/19 academic year is March 15. Additional information and applications forms can be found online at: <https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/clergy/scholarships/scholarship-guidelines/>

As a part of DHM's commitment to help prepare more Disciples for lives of vocational ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), an important requirement for students seeking financial help through DHM's scholarship program is that they are in an "Under Care" relationship with a regional Commission on Ministry, or actively in the process of coming Under Care.

Disciples of Christ students preparing for ministry who want to apply to DHM for future scholarship aid to help defray ministry education costs should contact DHM for further information. Students seeking information about coming Under Care within the regional church should contact their regional minister. A student's home pastor or DHM staff person in the office of Search and Call can provide contact information.

Disciples Summer Internships

Christmount is accepting applications for Disciples Summer Internships. The deadline is March 15, 2018. Positions are available for Disciples Peace Fellowship, Disciples Volunteering, Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries, Disciples Home Missions, HELM/Disciples on Campus, NBA EXPLOR, Reconciliation Ministries, Green Chalice, Outdoor Ministries, SERF, GYC Adult, Bethany Fellows, Disciples Higher Education and more!

By combining specialized interns from a variety of Disciples organizations and institutions, we are creating a rich atmosphere brimming with opportunities to collaborate with one another in developing summer programs that connect the Disciples-dots like never before.

For information about Summer Internships and to receive an application form, contact Rob Morris, Executive Director or Jamie Brame, Program Director at 828-669-8977 or by email at: rob@christmount.org or jamiembrame@yahoo.com. Visit Christmount's website at: <https://www.christmount.org/work-volunteer>

Easter *Continued from page 1.*

and love. Supporting the General Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is one of the many ways that you are sharing your response to God's generosity. The work of these ministries overflows "from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth."

Whether it is Disciples Women sharing compassion through Woman to Woman Worldwide, or the Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries serving #LaObraNow with great joy, your support of the Easter Offering – and the core Disciples Mission Fund giving of your congregation – show that you recognize God's great generosity. You live out God's overflowing faith with the National Benevolent Association as it connects people and social services. You witness to the nations about the unity of God's people with the Council on Christian Unity. You help the Disciples of Christ Historical Society make a record of examples of God's power as you support Disciples Home Missions and Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation in creating new ways to live out God's call to serve.

But those are not all the ministries your Easter Offering and core congregational support for Disciples Mission Fund empower! Your sharing reaches around the globe to partners feeding the spirits of the hurting in all corners of the world through the Division of Overseas Ministries (Global Ministries). Your assistance counts when the National Convocation and North American Pacific/Asian Disciples serve their communities with specialized ministries. Higher

Education and Leadership Ministries use your resources to care for students following their call, both in undergraduate and graduate programs. Your support enables Communication Ministries to spread the word about how all Disciples are sharing the love of God overflowing. You are a part of all of these ministries and more. (Find stories about these ministries at disciplesmissionfund.org on the Easter offering page.)

This year, the Center for Faith and Giving is offering curriculum for Eastertide that explores our response to the overflowing love of God. It takes the Stewardship Study Document presented at the 2017 General Assembly and makes it applicable to our individual situations.

And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1:9-11

Find out more about Disciples Mission Fund and the Easter Offering at disciples-missionfund.org

Cherilyn Williams

Assistant Vice President for Marketing and Communication, Office of General Minister and President

Overflowing



Photo left: Disciples Home Missions (DHM) staff with Rev. Sotello V. Long, President of DHM center, sporting his newly consecration stole presented by former president Ron Degges. From left: Kathy Watts, Lisa Hubbard, Wilma Shuffitt, Brenda Tyler, Sotello Long, Marissa Ivey, Lonna Owens and Chesla Nickelson.

A Year in Christmount Programs

No matter what season of the year it is, Christmount is here for you, with conferences, camps, retreats, and a place in the mountains for your personal retreat as well. With 31 motel rooms, two cottages, camper cabins, a group lodge, RV spots, and tent sites, we have housing possibilities for every need and budget.

January finds Christmount offering a College Retreat, Winter Fun Weekend, and Meditation & Prayer Retreat. College fellowship groups, youth, and adults will find something for them at the Winter Fun Weekend, from snow activities to hiking and playing in the mountains. The Meditation Retreat is for those seeking a more disciplined spiritual life and wanting to spend time appreciating the simplicity and quiet embrace of the winter mountains.

As spring approaches, Lexington Theological Seminary headlines the annual Elders and Deacons Workshop. This is an event for both veteran and new elders and deacons. With very little training outside the local church for elders and deacons, Christmount offers a workshop enhancing this ministry of social justice and hands-on work!

Each spring, Christmount offers Alternative Spring Break mission trips for college groups. Working with local mission groups (Asheville Youth Mission, Habitat for Humanity, Manna Food Bank, and others), Christmount provides the perfect environment to launch discussions focusing on the systemic issues of injustice and inequality in our world today.

Come breathe some springtime air into your life at our Spring Yoga Retreat, which focuses on both exercise and lifestyle. It's an event that enhances your spirituality as well as your flexibility!

May begins to heat up with events. Week

of Wonder Adult Work Camp prepares the grounds for the busy summer season. A new event for college-age young adults is the College Canoe Trip, which combines fun on the river with camping! And for College Chaplains and those who lead campus ministries, a Disciples College Chaplain's Summit is a chance to get together, share your ministry with others, and relax after a busy school year.

May showers bring June campers! With camps sponsored by Christmount (Camp Sunshine, Camp Lakey Gap) and the Christian Church in North Carolina (Junior, Chi-Rho, and CYF), it's hard to find a place that's not in use! Campers hike, swim, sing, worship, play, and learn. They play in the creeks and climb mountains, and along the way, deepen their faith and learn how to be closer to God and one another.

Camp Lakey Gap for people with Autism holds six week-long sessions during the summer. With an amazingly well-trained staff, professional autism consultants each week, and all sorts of fun and educational activities, Camp Lakey Gap is a unique camp experience for autistic individuals a chance to be at camp while caregivers and families



Monica DePoy & Margaret Vann at Week of Wonder. Photo provided by Christmount.



Camp Lakey Gap. Photo provided by Christmount.

have an opportunity for some rare respite.

June is also where to find the Music Workshop, an event for people who love choral singing. In addition to choral music, there is a bell choir, worship, talent sharing, and participation in worship at First Christian Church, Black Mountain. It's Christmount's oldest event!

Continued on page 11. See Christmount.

DISCIPLES CENTER for PUBLIC WITNESS

Ecumenical poverty Initiative

Millions of children and adults in the U.S. live in poverty in the wealthiest nation in the world. There's often not enough to eat or enough money to make it from paycheck to paycheck.

We're working together to change that.



*The poverty experienced by so many in the United States is not God's vision for a just society. Be a part of the movement to end the scandal of poverty in our nation. EPI works with Christians of all denominations to fulfill our faith mandate to care for the poor, sick, vulnerable and marginalized. We educate people of faith about the causes and consequences of poverty, and advocate for its abolition. **Join us today.***

For more information, visit www.faihtendpoverty.org

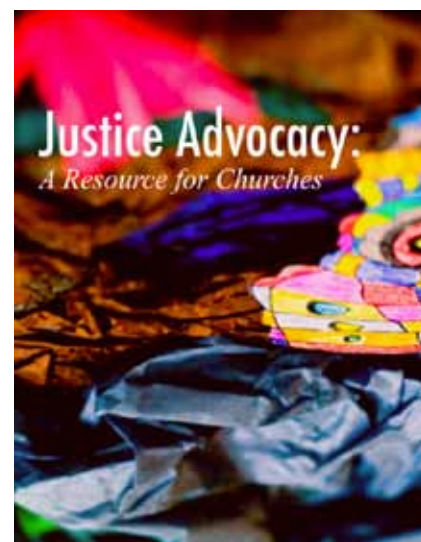
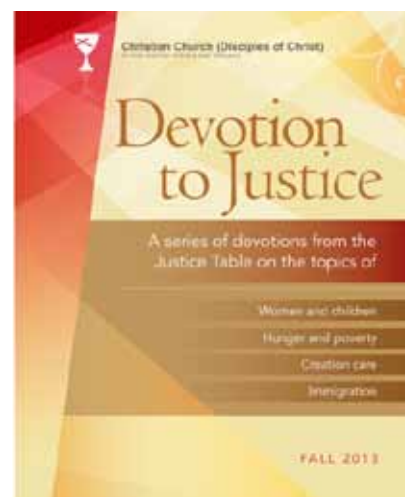
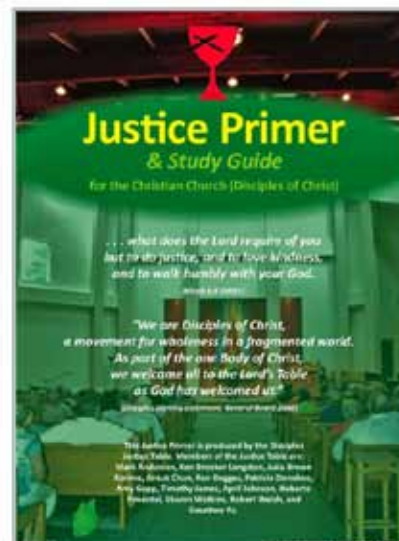
JUSTICE PRIMER: www.djan.net/jp.pdf

JUSTICE DEVOTIONAL: www.djan.net/jd.pdf

ADVOCACY GUIDE for CONGREGATIONS:
www.disciplesadvocacy.net

SUPPORT the MINISTRY of the CENTER:
www.centersupport.org

Disciples Center for Public Witness
5 Thomas Circle
Washington, DC 20005
www.disciplescenter.org



Public Witness

In the United States, there are three main approaches to the role of the Church in public life. The first approach is (ib) Christian nationalism. (ib) In this theocratic approach, the Church dominates the state, the flag is nearly identical with the cross, and the nation rivals even replaces the Church as the primary location of God's saving activity.

The second approach is (ib) Christian isolationism. (ib) In this sectarian approach, Christian faith is entirely personal and God's saving activity is limited to the Church. Any responsibility by the Church for the welfare of society is almost totally ignored or rejected, and any involvement by the Church in the public life of the nation is condemned as "too political."

The third major approach to the role of religion in public life is (ib) Christian public witness. (ib) In this approach, the Church recognizes and affirms its role as an agent of positive transformation in society. While

avoiding partisan politics, the Church is very actively involved in the public life of the nation by helping to shape both public opinion and public policy — and doing so in such a way as to respect both the constitutional principle of church-state separation and the religious diversity of the nation.

As our name makes clear, the Disciples Center for Public Witness adopts the third approach to the role of Christianity in public life: Christian public witness. We invite you to join us as we attempt faithfully to apply our denomination's vision of true community and passion for justice to public policy issues and concerns: www.disciplescenter.org

Rev. Dr. Ken Brooker Langston

Executive Director

Disciples Center for Public Witness

Director, Disciples Justice Action Network

A congregation's home is a special, holy place - a place where God and meaningful ministry are the central focus.

Unless they're not. Has your church building — perhaps too large, costly to maintain, in a location that no longer fits — taken center stage away from ministry?

We can help you develop a building and financing plan that enables your congregation to use holy place to serve God's ministry, and not the other way around.

Disciples Church Extension Fund is called to help your congregation use God's House to do God's work.

Let's start planning together today!

For information, contact us at 800.274.1883. • En español 866.534.1949 • info@disciplescef.org

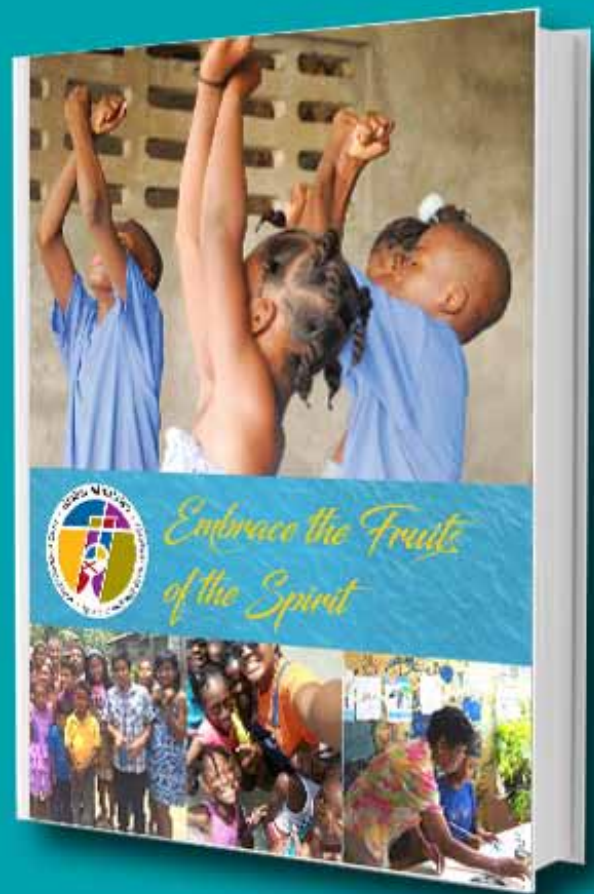


Embrace the Fruits of the Spirit

The Caribbean Initiative

Embrace the Fruits of the Spirit is a new children's curriculum designed to help children discover the fruits of the spirit and how to apply them in their daily lives while exploring the Caribbean.

Each lesson contains a letter from a child in a different part of the Caribbean, a story from the Bible that shows a fruit of the spirit, a craft, a game, and a song. Connect your children to Global Ministries' Caribbean Initiative and help them see how their faith is connected to real children in the world today.



**Download your free
copy today:**

globalministries.org/embrace

Winds of Resilience and Hope in Puerto Rico

There is no doubt that, after the damage caused by Hurricane Maria on the island of Puerto Rico, there is a different wind blowing there. I would dare to say that God's own movement of the Holy Spirit, is being incarnated in love, solidarity, and accompaniment of our Church with brothers and sisters there. General Ministries of our Church, such as Week of Compassion, Global Ministries, the National Office for Hispanic Ministries, and the Pension Fund, among others, have made generous contributions to provide for the needs of pastors, congregations, and communities. Thanks to the combined efforts of the General Ministries of the Church, partners in Puerto Rico joined in sharing their own resources to provide tarps, water filters, compensation for ministers, care for bedridden patients, and repairs of ecclesial and community facilities. Also, our leadership in the U.S. has maintained constant communication, prayer, and support with their counterparts in the Church in Puerto Rico. In the specific case of Global Ministries, financial resources have been channeled to accompany the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Puerto Rico (ICDC), the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, the United Evangelical Church of Puerto Rico and its ministry of health, the Ryder Hospital.

Throughout this process, we have witnessed the strength that God has given to the pastoral and lay leadership of the churches in Puerto Rico. Non-profit organizations, along with men and women of good will, have collaborated and provided supplies and services in places where the federal gov-

ernment and its local counterparts have not yet reached or provided assistance. Pastors and laity have joined efforts in channeling resources to support areas where there are Disciples and United Evangelical congregations and in places where there is no ecclesial presence of them. "This crisis has turned pastors into social workers," pointed out the Reverend Miguel A. Morales, General Pastor of the ICDC.

Global Ministries directs its next efforts to accompany partners across the island through the next stage of solidarity: long-term recovery. Amanecer 2025, another of our partners in Puerto Rico, has developed an initiative of community organization and technological equipment to provide clean energy through renewable sources to a community of 200 families in the town of Naranjito, Puerto Rico. The idea is not only to provide for the current need for electricity (more than three months after the hurricane, 45% of the island does not have electricity, including Naranjito), but to equip the community for future storms as well as achieve self-sustainability there.

There are winds of innovation, solidarity, resilience, and hope for the people of Puerto Rico. It is up to us to keep our hearts open and to accompany partners on this journey of profound transformations on the Island of Enchantment.

For Spanish translation go to page 28.

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

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

www.facebook.com/discipleshomemissions • www.discipleshomemissions.org



New Minister of Youth-Serving Ministries Named

Rev. Scott Thayer is the new Minister for Youth Serving Ministries, assuming the leadership role that had been held for many years by The Rev. Robert Thornton. The chief goal of this ministry is to strengthen relationships between Disciples churches and national youth organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., Campfire Boys and Girls, and American Heritage Girls. We seek to do this by encouraging more congregations to charter youth serving units and by offering resources for spiritual growth such as the curriculum from P.R.A.Y. (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth). We are in the process of revitalizing the National Association of Disciples Scouters so that we might offer more national and regional activities to our youth, such as encampments and

other exciting events. We want to continue our Disciples presence at national youth gatherings, such as the U.S. National Boy Scout Jamboree, and to offer an attractive information booth at the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). We are currently pursuing partnership connections with other religious bodies and with P.R.A.Y. For more information, or if you wish to join the National Association of Disciples Scouters, please contact The Rev. Scott Thayer at scythayer@gmail.com, or call (304) 830-1393.

Scott Thayer
Lecturer in Religious Studies &
Interim Director of International Studies
Bethany College
Bethany, West Virginia



Scott Thayer

NBA Funds 21 Projects

Through its Mission and Ministry Grants Program, the National Benevolent Association of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is granting a total of \$150,250 to 21 Disciples projects and ministries working with older adults and at-risk children and youth.

Read the full story here: <https://www.nbacares.org/stories-and-news/2018-grantees-announced>

In June 2017, the NBA announced the launch of this new grant program, making purpose-restricted funds available for distribution through grants to Disciples congregations and health and social service ministries. The NBA Grants Committee accepted and evaluated applications through the fall, and grant funds are now being distributed to selected projects for use in 2018.

This year's grantees are located across 12 Disciples regions and 4 areas. Of the 21 selected projects, 14 are focused on at-risk children and youth; 5 are focused on older adults; and 2 are intergenerational, serving both communities.

"Disciples ministries across the life of the church are called in innovative, relevant ways to work with and serve 'the least of

these' — reaching out to neighbors, those on the margins, young and old, and truly being the church," says Mark D. Anderson, NBA

President and CEO.

"These Disciples are creating communities of compassion and care every day, and we are grateful for the opportunity to lift up

and support this good work through NBA Mission and Ministry Grants."

Find frequently asked questions and more information about the NBA Mission and Ministry Grant Program at nbacares.org/grants.

The application for 2019 funds will be available later in 2018. For additional questions, please email grants@nbacares.org.



2018 NBA Mission and Ministry Grantees

Does your church feel stuck in neutral?
Are church offerings going down while costs
keep going up? What is God calling your
congregation to do and be in this time and place?



New Beginnings Assessment Service can help you assess options for your church's ministry and make bold decisions for the future. While many congregations face tough questions about their survival and sustainability, many are also finding courage and support as they initiate a **New Beginning**.

Hope Partnership for
Missional Transformation
 800.274.1883
 en español 866.534.1949
newbeginnings@hopepmt.org

Learn more at: www.hopepmt.org/transform

Christmount *Continued from page 5.*

Mid-summer includes two weeks of mission camp with Asheville Youth Mission (AYM), as well as Christmount Work Camp. The AYM work projects take place around the local community, while a week at Christmount Work Camp features projects around Christmount. All these camps include evening programming by the Summer Camp Staff, including activities from our Disciples Summer Interns, total group recreation, and worship.

Camp Brooke for Middle School Girls, held the week of July 4, is a camp for girls only, led by the women of the Camp Staff and volunteers. It offers girls guidance as they move through the often-confusing years of adolescence,

giving girls good role models as well as "a fun, week-long sleep-over!" (as one camper described it).

The S.O.I.L. Conference is in its second year. "Social Opportunities for Intentional Living" is an inter-generational event that gives church groups the opportunity to share their social justice work with other groups. It focuses on ecology, racism/reconciliation, hunger/food insecurity, and poverty.

The Youth Leadership Camp trains young people (and adults) in the areas of public speaking, leading worship, recreation, small groups, and planning events. It's especially aimed at youth who hope to become Regional and General youth leaders. Campers will get to practice what they've learned by assuming leadership roles during the week of camp!

Beginners Camp invites young campers and their parents to experience the camp life! Together we will camp in cabins, live in family group, make crafts, sing (all the time!), worship, swim, hike, play, and make the scriptures come alive. Parents participate as



*Counselors give campers individual attention.
 Photo provided by Christmount.*

Continued on page 17. See Christmount.



Standing Rock Reservation 2018

Disciple youth and elders are invited to gather June 10-16 to experience and learn about indigenous justice on the Standing Rock Reservation. There are a limited number of spaces for this gathering. Scholarships available on a first come basis.

Contact:
Laurie Pound-Feille
(817) 307-1323
laurie.pound-feille@fcmpls.org
or
Bill Spangler-Dunning
bsdumw@gmail.com

Winter Talk 2018

Life and death, honor and dishonor, imprisonment and freedom, honesty and lying, creation and destruction are often used words on the reservation. Such words made their mark at Winter Talk.

The force of those words arrived in force with the un-arrival of Chase Iron Eyes. Iron Eyes was this year's Winter Talk keynote speaker. Iron Eyes, Standing Rock Sioux and an attorney, was a leader in last year's water protector movement near and on the Standing Rock reservation. As a leader he spoke, organized, led, and supported thousands of protectors who stood against environmental and ecological racism.

However, standing in favor of Creation in the face of political and business opposition has a tendency to get Native people in trouble. Imprisoning the masses is one way to attempt to shut down opposition and that was used at Standing Rock. The other, as history has shown through figures like Dr.

Martin Luther King, is to imprison leaders of change. Importantly, pivotal leaders of a movement. Such is the case with Chase Iron Eyes.

In the days and weeks leading to Winter Talk, Iron Eyes and the Lakota Peoples Law Project were busy preparing to defend Iron Eyes against charges brought by the North Dakotan government. In the end, Iron Eyes was unable to attend Winter Talk due to that defense work.

The loss of Iron Eyes at Winter Talk is more than the loss of a keynote speaker at one event. The loss is indicative of the relationship between North American indigenous people and the corporate life of Disciples. Today, Disciple congregational knowledge of their historical local tribes is so low it is statistically non-relevant. While some Disciple Regions have made inroads toward bringing about greater awareness

Continued on page 13. See Talk.



Talk *Continued from page 12.*

of indigenous tribes and issues of justice, understanding indigenous justice issues in Canada and the US linger in infancy.

Participants at Winter Talk grabbed with these realities in light of last summer's passage of the resolution Repudiation of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery: A Call to Education and Action at the General Assembly. This time of conversation led to consideration of resolution "be it resolved" items. While folk found the items interrelated, two rose to the top. One is the need to find ways to educate Disciples pastors and laity on first steps that might lead to creating a relationship with a local Tribe or indigenous peoples. Second, was to find avenues of raising awareness throughout the Church as to the historical impact the Christian Doctrine of Discovery has had on

Disciple theology, polity, and congregational identity.

Yakama Christian Mission, staff and Council, were tasked with helping congregations, regions, and the General Church grapple with such issues of indigenous justice. If you want to begin moving your place/organization of faith toward deeper relationship with the indigenous landscape contact the Mission and begin a conversation on how this might be done in your particular context.

Rev. David Bell

Yakama Christian Mission

dave@yakamamission.org

(509) 969-2093

Yakama Reservation Learning and Serving Trips

This Spring and Summer Worktrip participants will Learn about issues of Indigenous Justice and will work to restore health to the Yakama Landscape.

Foodbank Garden
Annual Duck Count
Wild Horse Count
Gathering of Sage

Yakama Christian Mission
Toppenish Creek Valley
(509) 969-2093
dave@yakamamission.org
<https://yakamamission.org/registration/>

Woman-to-Woman Worldwide

Did you start your new year partying or quietly at home?

Did you plan for months what you would be doing when the ball dropped in New York or did you not really think about it until December 31?

Were you sure to observe your family's traditions that promise health or wealth in the new year?

Whether you had no traditions or multiple traditions, whether you were home or at a party or in Times Square, what really makes the difference in your observance of the change in calendar is who you are with... who it is that is on the journey with you.

Our companions on the journey make the difference. The best companions are often those with whom we have shared values and goals. In the fall of 2017 a group of seven women journeyed to India for the Woman-to-Woman Worldwide visit that is a partnership between Disciples Women and Global Ministries. These women had varied backgrounds and geography and understandings of what they would witness as they visited the ministries happening with our global ministry partners. You might not guess that this group would form a community.

The group was challenged by what they

witnessed. The group met with women and children who had been trafficked or whose parents had been trafficked and were now finding ways of living normal, healthy lives. It was difficult to hear the stories of danger and injury and horror. It was difficult to look into the eyes of a small girl knowing that we had not been able to protect her from unspeakable things. In the midst of all this, these seven very different women became a community...they united and found themselves understanding one another better, hearing each other's stories, feeling each other's pains.

This group has a new understanding of the people of India and the struggles they face and the work that is being done alongside them. They will be spending the new year sharing that information with other women and telling the stories of the women and children they met. These women have also built a new community among them and are now hoping for a reunion to reconnect with sisters they have built a community with.

How might you build a community that will accompany you on the journey?

*Rev. Patricia Donahoo, Executive Director
Disciples Women*



The delegates for the 2017 Woman-to-Woman Worldwide India journey are shown here meeting with a group of women from the Swadhina Organization for Women and Children. The delegates learned about the Swadhina program, prayed together, shared a meal and exchanged small gifts and contact information.





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IGLESIA CRISTIANA (DISCIPULOS DE CRISTO)

Celebration of Life and Legacy for Two Former DHM Staff

DHM celebrates the life and legacy of two former staff persons who passed away in 2017.

Rev. Tom Wood, an ordained Disciples of Christ minister, he served churches in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Colorado before coming to Indianapolis to join the denomination's national staff. He served 30 years before retiring in 1991 as Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of the Division of Homeland Ministries.



Tom Wood

Lorraine Pitman served on the International Staff on the Division of Homeland Ministries and served as Co-Director of Family Education with her husband Frank Pitman for the Department of Christian Education. They shared responsibility in the development and support of and gave dual leadership to a broad range of programs and resources for family ministry, parent education, intergenerational education. She received a Master of Arts Degree in Marriage, Family and child counseling.



Lorraine Pitman

Disciples Mission Fund connects you to vital work

You are there when a missionary volunteers with Global Ministries, moving across the world to teach children attending school for the first time.

You are there when a new church plant holds its first service, after a year of preparing and building with Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation.

You are there when youth build community at a regional church camp each summer.

You are there because of Disciples Mission Fund (DMF). This common mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada is a vehicle for connectedness and transformation across the life of the Church.

When you, or your congregation, give to DMF, you are making the love of God real for people in your community, and around the globe.

Around half of the total support given to DMF is shared with your region. That partnership means your gift to DMF sup-

ports ministries across your regional Church – through camp scholarships, leadership training, and annual events.

The remaining share of DMF support is distributed across a wide range of general ministries across the U. S. and Canada, and beyond. This collaboration means that your gift to DMF supports the vital work of the Church in every way imaginable – through theological education, missionary support, and community development, to name a few examples.

When you give to DMF, you are joining in the loud declaration that Disciples are a movement for wholeness in this very fragmented world.

Disciples Mission Fund is a tangible expression of our love for one another, and, indeed, the world, supporting more than 70 ministries of wholeness throughout the United States and Canada. When our ministries succeed in saving lives and spreading the Gospel, you succeed with them.

Support Disciples nearby and far away – give to Disciples Mission Fund.



Develop a “Sense of Place” for Earth Day Sunday

The Bible is full of beautiful language and theology for celebrating God's creation. Yet sometimes, in the rhythm of the liturgical year, it can be challenging to find a specific time to focus as a church community on the theme of creation. Earth Day Sunday provides just such an opportunity. Each year, in partnership with the Green Chalice Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Creation Justice Ministries provides a toolkit to celebrate Earth Day Sunday. This year, Earth Day conveniently falls on Sunday, April 22. The 2018 theme is “Sense of Place.”



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the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Creation Justice Ministries provides a toolkit to celebrate Earth Day Sunday. This year, Earth Day conveniently falls on Sunday, April 22. The 2018 theme is “Sense of Place.”

The toolkit will provide reflection material about living in harmony with local ecosystems and watersheds, rightly sharing places with a diversity of people, and respecting the cultural and historical heritage embedded in places. The resource is written to be useful year-round. If your church's calendar is already full for April 22, the resource may also be helpful for the World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation on September 1. Find the resource at www.creationjustice.org/place and find other related materials at www.creationjustice.org/earth-day-sunday.

*Shantha Ready Alonso, Executive Director,
Creation Justice Ministries*

Christmount Continued from page 11.

cabin counselors and family group leaders.

As the youth camping season draws to a close, an adult camp, Theology on Tap, will explore a portion of the almost thirty different breweries in the Asheville area. With tours and tastings, as well as theological reflection and other activities, this should be a treat for responsible beer lovers in a camp atmosphere!

Women's Discovery Retreat is Christmount's September offering. This is a women's retreat co-sponsored by Women for Christmount, who have held the event since the 1980's. The event features continental breakfast, a wine and cheese social, and some of the best speakers around. It's a perfect getaway after the kids are back in school, or for any woman looking for a good retreat.

October is leaf-season and is one of the busiest months at Christmount. Our Young Adult retreat takes place in early October. It's an event for post-college-age young adults and who are looking for a retreat with others their age.

Modeled after Chautauqua in New York, Chautauqua Comes to Christmount has four central areas of activity: spirituality, educa-

tion, the arts, and recreation. From concerts to tours to some of the best speakers on the circuit, there's plenty to find of interest at this new event!

As the year begins to wane, Thanksgiving is celebrated with the local community as well as visitors to the mountains with a free feast featuring the traditional southern fare. When family reunions are staying here, we include a Thanksgiving worship before the meal.

The winter season begins with An Appalachian Advent, helping prepare us for the hopeful, joyful season of Christ's coming again into our hearts, minds, and lives. Combining the spirituality of worship with the fun of shopping, musical concerts, and fellowship around the fireplace and Christmon tree, An Appalachian Advent sets the perfect tone for Advent.

In addition to offering programming to enhance your spirit, Christmount offers resources to help you plan and host your own event in a beautiful mountainous setting. Contact us for more information: info@christmount.org, and be sure to check out our web site, www.christmount.com, as well as following us socially on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter!

*Rev. Jamie Brame, Program Director
Christmount*



Indianapolis Welcomes Seminarians

More than 30 Disciples students from 16 different seminaries converged on Indianapolis at the invitation of Higher Education and Leadership Ministries in October.

"I attended the Seminarians Conference in Indianapolis with trepidation, praying that God would show me whether the Disciples truly are 'my people' and whether I am called to this tradition or not. After three days spent in laughter, prayer, and blessed communion, I came away from the conference feeling deeply affirmed that these are my people, this is my church, and that I am exactly where I am supposed to be," said Margie Quinn, a student at Duke Divinity.

Staff from the general ministries of the Church shared information about what their various ministries do, but the students were also able to be resourced for their own ministry through workshops in entrepreneurial ministry, transformation, LGBTQ issues, personal money management and more. In addition, they were able to spend time with General Minister and President Terri Hord Owens and hear from Rev. Dr. Frank Thomas, among other Disciples leaders.

Michele Moreland, attending Ashland Theological, found the connection to the larger Church helpful. She said, "Thank you to all of you compassionate leaders for the insightful sermons, prayers, and informa-

tive presentations. I feel 'trained up in the way I should go!'"

A Disciples Seminary Foundation - Claremont student, Iyana 'Yani' Davis, said, "The conference proved to be a dynamic experience. I feel so much closer to the heartbeat of the church and I am so excited to continue my work with Disciples of Christ (Christian Church)."

Both divinity houses, several Disciples Seminary Foundation partners, Disciples schools (Lexington, Christian Theological, Phillips, Brite) and other regional seminaries were represented.

Meredyth Johnson from Brite Divinity said, "This conference was very helpful for me to connect better to the larger church. I first joined a Disciples church in my senior year of high school and have spent time answering God's call to ministry and learning more about the church that helped me to hear it. It was wonderful to learn more about the ministers and ministries of the Church while seeing where I fit into that picture both now and in the future. There is so much happening and so much more coming!"

*Jon Barnes
Director of Higher Education &
Communications, HELM*



Students attending the 2017 Seminarians Conference and HELM staff gathered for a photo outside of the Disciples Center.

LTS Conducting Research about Bi-Vocational Ministry

Looking ahead, a significant number of today's theological students see bi-vocational ministry on the horizon. According to annual questionnaires of the Association of Theological Schools, 25% of students entering graduate theological education in the United States and Canada in 2013-2016 anticipate entering bi-vocational ministry after graduation. Another 37% are uncertain about bi-vocational ministry and haven't ruled it out. This means that 62% are considering the possibility of bi-vocational ministry. Looking specifically at students identifying themselves as Disciples of Christ, an even higher level of interest is indicated. Among Disciples students entering theological education in 2013-2016, 66% are considering the possibility of bi-vocational ministry.



Lexington Theological Seminary, through the work of the "Conversations on Stewardship and Finances" Project, funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc., and in partnership with the Christian Church in Kentucky, is conducting research to understand the implications of bi-vocational ministry. In a 2015 survey of active Disciples ministers in Kentucky, 40% of respondents identified themselves as bi-

vocational. The survey showed that bi-vocational ministers and single-vocation ministers have different experiences and congregational needs, yet both express equal levels of satisfaction with ministry. In 2016 interviews within congregations led by bi-vocational solo pastors, both pastors and congregational leaders describe more benefits than drawbacks to having bi-vocational ministers.

In 2018 it's time to broaden our horizons and fully appreciate the diversity and depth of all ministers' experiences. Understanding the unique gifts and challenges of bi-vocational ministry and preparing students for such ministry benefits them and the Church they serve.

Rev. Kristen Plinke Bentley

Project Director, Conversations on Stewardship & Finances

Lexington Theological Seminary

Blog: TCU DOcket

Greetings to all of you on behalf of Texas Christian University's Disciples on Campus! My name is Kelsey Cobbs and I have the honor and privilege to serve as the President of TCU Disciples on Campus for the 2017-2018 school year. The Disciples students, faculty, staff and friends extend a warm welcome to our neighbors across the country, wishing you a happy New Year. One thing we would like you to see this year from us is the TCU DOcket, our blog. The Docket gives students an opportunity to write about what matters to us. Sometimes blogs are written about current events and social action, others are written about theology and Christology, and others are written about personal experiences that inform how we see the world around us. Some even take the form of devotionals with prayers and nuggets of wisdom and spiritual guidance. The best thing about this publication is that there are no wrong answers. We write our reflections with our hearts and our minds, sprinkled with hopes and aspirations for the world around us. We hope that those who take the time to read the things we have to say can carry something with them in their own journey, and that connection will come back around as we walk in this life together.

We are a community of people who believe that with the New Year comes new opportunities to rise to the challenge of leaving the world a little bit better than we found it.

Kelsey Cobbs

President

Texas Christian University (TCU)

Disciples on Campus 2017-2018



Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt Holds Wise Practice Event Focusing on Anti-Racism

The saying, “You don’t know what you don’t know,” is often heard in higher education. In 2005, Dean Mark Miller-McLemore started an annual continuing education event called Wise Practice. It is held each spring after the completion of finals and before graduation.

The Divinity House brings in outside leaders to resource what our graduates told us were three key areas in which they had not received enough training through traditional coursework. The trainings typically center on one of the following: stewardship and finance, conflict, and the “sacramental ministries” —how Disciples do weddings, baptisms, and funerals. Wise Practice is always led by experienced and expert ministers.

Last May the Divinity House community held a day long Anti-Racism, Pro-Reconciliation training. Glen Stewart, Interim Director of the Congregational Immersion Project for the DDH, invited April Johnson, Minister of Reconciliation for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), to provide the leadership for the event. Every Disciple student, the DDH staff and a number of local clergy participated during the day.

Participants explored and discussed the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) definition of racism, “Race prejudice plus the misuse of power by systems and institutions.” Dialogue revolved around the mission of Reconciliation Ministry which is to “implement structural change to address historic fractures caused by racism and the systems that perpetuate it. It is the goal of our shared work to foster life-giving community within our church and in relationship with the whole family of God.”

*J. Gottman, Director of Development
Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt University*



The Pension Fund of the Christian Church hosted the Disciples Center fall building -wide in Indianapolis. Participants packed snack bags for 120 kindergarteners at Chapelwood Elementary in Wayne Township. The snack bags were delivered on a Friday, which was also school picture day. It was very difficult to find a moment where all 120 students could be photographed with their bags BUT the staff agreed this was the PERFECT way to keep the kids entertained after their pictures had been taken awaiting other classes to be finished and the regular school day schedule to resume. Chapelwood was extremely grateful to receive the donation as the school is 80% free/reduced lunch. This really helps to stretch food dollars in the building and makes for a lot of smiles during the day! (Photos provided by Rev. Todd Adams, President of Pension Fund)

Chapman Offers Labyrinth Experience on Mondays

The Office of Church Relations has a 36 foot wide canvas Chartres labyrinth that is unfolded on Mondays in the Wallace All-Faiths Chapel in the Fish Interfaith Center at Chapman University in Orange, Calif. We encourage its use by students, faculty and staff, as well as any visitors to the university. Mostly it is used for individual walks, but I do facilitate group walks on occasion.

At the Interfaith Center we support people from all of the major world religions as well as those who have no spiritual tradition. Labyrinths are not a tradition of any particular religion, so it is a meditative experience that is comfortably accessible to diverse groups.

I have found that college students quickly take to finding deeper meaning in this spiritual practice. In an environment that really emphasizes brain work, many students find it very difficult to get out of their heads and pray or meditate. That is why this walking meditation is particularly effective in this setting.

Here is one student's story: A Message to Chapel staff from McKenna Payne, '18

I wanted to write and say thank you for the labyrinth meditation yesterday.... as we learned, the labyrinth experience is a metaphor for the way we go about our lives. Before the walk, I had not paid any attention to the way to get into the center of the labyrinth, and did not realize that there was only one way in and the exact same way out. At the point when people from

the center started walking back, I thought I accidentally skipped a part and turned right back around, never actually making it to the middle of the labyrinth.

At first, I was concerned that the metaphor was that I was skipping over the heart of life and laughed at myself for not making it all the way to the center. Last night



I had the realization that making it to a particular "center" or point is not what is important, but rather it was about finding my own center. I believe this has a lot to say about how many of us go throughout our lives: trying to make it to a certain point in life, but not always enjoying the journey or present moment.

I learned this and a lot more from that meditation, so I wanted to say thank you very much for sharing that with us!!

*Rev. Nancy Brink,
Director of Church Relations
Chapman University*

Leadership Fellows Applications Open

Leadership Fellows Program applications for the 2018-2019 academic year will be accepted starting January 16, 2018.

For full details and qualifications, visit www.helmdisciples.org/apply.

Applications for PhD Scholarships

HELM provides two scholarships:

- The Jones Scholarship recognizes Disciples PhD students in religion who are ordained or in the process of ordination and who will provide leadership in the church.
- The Dickerson Scholarship recognizes Disciples Women pursuing a PhD in the field of religion.

Visit HELMDISCIPLES.ORG/SCHOLARSHIPS for full eligibility requirements and application procedures.

Campus Ministry Reaches Community, Students

Drury University's Matthew 25 Project gives students an opportunity to grow and serve in ministry in their own backyard. The faith-based student organization highlights Drury's identity as a church-related institution.

"Drury is really good about having service opportunities for us on campus," says Matthew 25 Project president Madeline Clark, "but we wanted this to be different because people are doing this with their faith."

Matthew 25
project

The project seeks to give students monthly opportunities to serve "the least of these" by volunteering in their community. It draws its vision from the words of Matthew 25 verses 35-36: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, (36) I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me."

One recent outreach took students to the Green County Juvenile Justice Center. While there, they were able to provide dinner, play games, and serve as positive role models for the children they met. Students hope to return to the center to foster lasting, positive relationships there.

Each service opportunity is accompanied by a Bible study that encourages students to reflect on why God has called them to serve in that particular fashion. Additionally, the Matthew 25 Project hosts a series of Life Talks each semester where members of the Drury community speak about their faith journey and the role God plays in their life. In this way, the project hopes to enrich the lives of not only those it serves, but also the students who serve with it.

"Service is a way I really enjoy getting involved with my faith. Being able to be a part of these service projects has really changed everything for me at Drury," Clark says. "It's given me such an amazing opportunity and it's something that I'm proud of and it's something that I enjoy being a part of."

Mike Brothers

Executive Director, University Relations

Drury University

What's in a D.Min. Degree? Practical Ministry, Advanced Study

For those actively involved in vocational ministry, a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) program can greatly enhance a pastor's ability to effectively lead a congregation by connecting advanced biblical and theological study with practical application in the ministry setting.

The D.Min. program at Lexington Theological Seminary is designed to enhance pastors' capacity to critically interpret and engage contemporary cultures as a means to give fresh expression to the gospel. The program equips pastors to transform congregations for effective ministry.

Learning goals for graduates of the program are:

- a basic acquaintance with a range of approaches to interpreting contemporary cultural contexts, and facility in at least one approach;
- facility in integrating advanced work in the classical theological disciplines with the critical interpretation of culture in service to the church's articulation of the gospel.
- a basic acquaintance with a range of approaches for re-imagining organizations and institutional practices that are informed by the critical interpretation of cultures, and facility in at least one approach.
- a basic acquaintance with approaches to leading organizations through adaptive change, especially those relevant to empowering congregations.

Designed on a cohort-based model, the degree provides significant learning in an on-going community of peers. Class schedules will stretch over 15-18 months in a pattern adapted to the rhythms of pastoral life. Courses take places online as well as in on-campus intensives.

The program concludes with a final project that addresses a problem, issue or question in the ministry and mission of the church in the contemporary world, using what students have learned in the program about a cultural analysis, congregational analysis, theological reflection, and leadership through adaptive change.

For more information about admission requirements of the program at LTS, one of the most affordable available, contact Rev. Erin Cash, admissions director, at (859) 280-1249 or ecash@lextheo.edu.



The Rev. Tanya Tyler and Dr. Jerry Sumney serve at the Communion table during the annual graduate Communion service at Lexington Theological Seminary.



Bethany



CHURCH BASED AWARDS

Disciples of Christ Student Scholarship: Bethany College offers a scholarship in the amount of \$16,000 to students who are members of the churches affiliated with the Campbell-Stone Movement, including the Disciples of Christ (DOC), and the United Church of Christ (UCC). A letter documenting church membership must be submitted by the church pastor.

Students who accept this award agree to attend eight Sunday services at Bethany Memorial Church per semester.

Alexander Campbell Religious Leadership Award: This \$5,000 scholarship is competitive and conditional. To apply students must submit an essay affirming their commitment to religious leadership and describing their experience as religious leaders. They must also ask two people who know them well in their capacity as religious leaders to submit letters of recommendation. One recommendation must come from a pastor. Although this is not an academic award, most successful applicants will have maintained a high school GPA of 3.0 or better. Applications should be filed on or before March 1. Notification of awards will begin April 1.

Students who accept this award agree to complete one course in both Hebrew Bible and New Testament; participate faithfully and regularly in the Religious Leadership Mentor Program, which includes a semester project; complete a Religious Leadership Internship; and agree to attend eight Sunday services at Bethany Memorial Church per semester.

Son/Daughter of Minister: \$1,500 scholarship to students whose parents are a DOC or UCC minister.

BETHANY COLLEGE OVERVIEW

Bethany College is a four-year private liberal arts institution affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Bethany also provides students with various faith-based opportunities outside of the classroom. The Chaplain and Director of Church Relations serve as mentors for students as they engage in religious leadership activities, participate in community projects, and explore spiritual growth opportunities.

EXTERNAL AWARDS:

Higher Education Leadership Ministries

(HELM) Leadership Fellows: An opportunity for students with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), to network with each other, to encounter innovative and inspiring leaders, to prepare themselves for leadership in rapidly and radically changing religious environment, and to add additional value to their undergraduate educations. Along with the other benefits, fellows will receive a scholarship.

The Phillips University Legacy Scholars

Program: The legacy program assists undergraduate students who attend or wish to attend any of the 17 colleges and universities affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Students are awarded annual renewable tuition scholarships of up to \$5,000, based upon academic achievements and leadership in their church, community, and academic environments.



Pastor Jean-Marie
Dean of the Chapel

APPLY ONLINE:

www.bethanywv.edu/apply

CONTACT:

Kate Throckmorton

DOC Liaison

kthrockmorton@bethanywv.edu

WWW.BETHANYWV.EDU/FINANCIALAID

A Look at the Book

History is fleeting. When you watch the news today, you can switch the channel on your television and yesterday's concern can seem like old news compared to the tragic "breaking news" today. Regardless, it can all be forgotten quickly. Learning from the past and treasuring positive victories can help us to find context in the events of life today.

What was life like for your parents... grandparents? What were their fears, what caused celebration? How long did they have to wait to hear "the latest news"? Has the history of previous generations been captured so it can be shared with today's youth and toddlers in the future? The book, *Rocking Chair Conversations: History and Reflections of the Journey and Ministries of African American Disciples West of the Mississippi*, is an effort to capture and share important morsels of African American disciples' history before it is lost forever.

One of the greatest joys of this book project was bringing the bearers of parts of the "move west" oral history together in one place. They came from Missouri, Oklahoma, Denver, Kansas, California and Texas, all states west of the Mississippi where new churches were planted. They brought with them, unrecorded but important morsels of history of the African American disciples journey in ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in their states. Time already past, has demonstrated the critical importance of this 2010 gathering, as three of the participants are now deceased. We were blessed to receive their contributions, captured during this event, as without this meeting, it is likely their historical insight

would be lost forever to current and future generations of disciples.

As you visit the pages of this book, you will find that there was risk for these followers, in moving into unknown areas to establish disciples' churches (to the ends of the earth). Horse drawn vehicles or the train were the most common options for travel during these early years. At that time, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Alaska and Hawaii were not yet states. You may find them on a turn of the century map (1900) each as a "territory" and parts of what is now Oklahoma was listed as "Indian Territory."

You can only imagine what it must have been like, leaving what was familiar (even with its own risks) and traveling to new, unknown places to spread the good news of Jesus Christ. This was their own choice and their own call to ministry. *Rocking Chair Conversations* offers a new look into the historical archives that were previously unknown. Maybe learning this history will offer a model to make positive modifications to the way we spread the good news of Jesus Christ today.

The Disciples Historical Society has also informed that *Rocking Chair Conversation* records black Disciples contributions to the church and society and will also be placed in the Oscar Hayne Exhibit, an exhibit located in the National City Christian Church in Washington D. C.

A limited number of books, for a limited time can be purchased by visiting this website: lcartandculture.mysimplestore.com

*Rev. Lonnie Graves
Concord, California*



Rev. Titus James, T. J. Liggett and George Jacobs enjoy an outdoor lunch while Rev. Liggett shares historical morsels about Jarvis Christian College.



Jesse Jacobs, Rev. Dr. Tamara Nichols Rodenberg, Lonnie Graves and George Jacobs embrace time together to share and capture stories at a gathering that is now recorded history. The Jacob brothers bring segments of disciples history in Southern California.



When Conversations Were Key

Today I would venture to say our expectations for receiving information and answers, is that it should be "instant." In addition, you might even add that it must be "entertaining... even shocking" to achieve a sense of value for some. Much communication today is now shared via cell phone. You

can post, tweet or text with very little interpersonal interaction and emoji's have replaced body language.

It was just a few generations ago (prior to 1950) that the radio was the

medium that brought people together in clusters to hear the news of the world, listen to tales and legends and dance or relax with the smooth sounds of Count Basie, Ethel Merman, Frank Sinatra and other crooners of that era. The beauty of, even this meeting around the radio, was that when the program was over, the gathering in-and-of-itself was an invitation to continue conversations with personal thoughts and ideas.

Imagine this: Grandparents in the living room or on the porch in the cool evening air, rocking a child to sleep and recounting what they had just heard on the radio. It is likely the conversations would continue

with other events of the day, or someone might expand the time of sharing with "I remember when..." or maybe later, while they were still together, someone would ask for a favorite family story to be told, once again.

This method of sharing is known as the oral tradition in which memories and methods were passed on from generation-to-generation. This was/is common in many cultures and was especially important in the African-American tradition when laws of the south, prevented slaves from being able to read or write.

A few years ago, through grants from the Oreon E. Scott Foundation and the Black Leadership Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), we were blessed to identify a few older disciples living west of the Mississippi, who have been the holders of important African American Disciples history, bring them together, and once again have "Rocking Chair" conversations. This time, the stories and information was captured and is a part of a historical compilation of the history and reflections of the journeys and ministries of African-American Disciples who moved and lived west of the Mississippi. There is now a first volume of *Rocking Chair Conversations: History and Reflections of the Journey and Ministries of African American Disciples West of the Mississippi*. It is so very important to make every effort to retain the history, learn from experiences in the past, and find ways to strengthen the church for the future.

*Rev. Lonnie Graves
Concord, California*

Book Corner

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| • Journey Toward Wholeness
A Story of Recovery from Bipolar Disorder (available from DHM) | Mary Alice Do |
| • Rocking Chair Conversations | Lonnie Graves |
| • Women Religion Revolution | Xochitl Alvizo
Gina Messing |

25TH BIENNIAL SESSION NATIONAL CONVOCATION

CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

JULY 19-22, 2018
Birmingham, AL



A CALL TO ACTION:
Onward Christian Soldiers

To fight against

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*Be Strong, and let us fight
bravely for our people and
the cities of our God*
2 SAMUEL 10:12

Hyatt Regency – Wynfrey Hotel
Birmingham, Alabama

REGISTER ONLINE!

www.nationalconvocation.org

Children's Disaster Services

Did you ever wonder who attends to the hearts and souls, minds and bodies of children during times of major disasters? Well, let me tell you, Disciples Home Missions is there. We are blessed to partner with the Church of the Brethren in a unique ministry called Children's Disaster Services (CDS). This includes a network of trained volunteers and partners across the country which, since its founding in 1979 has involved more than 3,100 volunteers who have cared for more than 87,800 children in response to hundreds of disasters such as floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, ice storms, tornadoes, mudslides, terrorist attacks, and aviation incidents. (CDS partners include: American Red Cross; Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) - Disciples Home Missions, National Benevolent Association, Week of Compassion; United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), Child Life Disaster Relief; and additional members of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.

Kathleen Fry-Miller, CDS Associate Director, reports that Children's Disaster Teams were sent to most of the multiple disasters from which our nation has suffered in the past months including going to Southern California following the wild fires, and to Puerto Rico, Haiti and Nigeria. It is important to note that there are professionals affiliated with each team to support and give guidance to volunteers.

After undergoing a rigorous screening process, volunteers participate in specialized experiential training to learn how to work with children after a disaster and if chosen to serve, are capable of mobilizing rapidly and responding both locally and nationally. They arrive to a disaster location with a "Kit of Comfort" made by wide ranging groups of church volunteers across the country. These kits contain carefully selected toys that promote imaginative play.

Volunteers give children individualized attention and encourage them to express themselves, thereby starting the healing process. In addition, CDS provides respite, education and individualized consultation for parents about their child's unique emotional needs after a disaster.

Through consultation or workshops specifically tailored to each situation, CDS also works with parents, community agencies, schools or others to help them understand and meet the special needs of children

during or after a disaster.

The basic training 27 hour workshop includes learning how to provide comfort and encouragement to children by offering the healing young children need in traumatic situations. They learn to create a safe, friendly environment that gives children the chance to engage in therapeutic play activities designed to relieve stress and calm fears. A workshop includes a simulated shelter experience (an overnight stay) and will be provided to any group of 15 or more adults interested in working with children after a disaster. Although many volunteers are motivated by faith, CDS' training is open to anyone over 18 years old. Participants completing the course will have the opportunity to become certified Children's Disaster Services volunteers.



The workshops are helpful for anyone anticipating coming in contact with children who are distressed by experiencing personal disasters (such as when a friend moves away, a pet dies, etc.) Many of the concepts taught in the workshop are appropriate to use at those times as well as after disasters.

Providing care to families and children in a disaster situation is a special calling which is not for everyone. However, if you would be interested in being trained to potentially participate on a Critical Response Child Care team, there are several workshops coming up in this spring:

March 23-24 in Shreveport, La., hosted at the Shriners Hospital for Children. Contact Tommie Hazen at 318-222-5704, 318-780-8351, or thazen@shrinersnet.org

April 14-15 at La Verne (Calif.) Church of the Brethren. Contact Kathy Benson at 909-593-4868 or 909-837-7103

April 20-21 at Trotwood (Ohio) Church of the Brethren. Contact Laura Phillips at 937-837-3389, 937-371-1668, or LPGardenlady@aol.com (This workshop is full. If you would like to be placed on a waiting list, please send an email to: cds@brethren.org)

*Kate Epperly
Coordinator, Justice and Advocacy
for Family and Children's Ministries*

*Kathleen Fry-Miller, Associate Director
Children's Disaster Services*

Vientos de resiliencia y esperanza en Puerto Rico for English translation see page 9.

No cabe duda que, luego de los daños causados por el Huracán María en la isla de Puerto Rico, otros son los vientos que han estado soplando allá. Me atrevería a decir que el propio Espíritu Santo de Dios ha estado soplando, traducido esto en amor, solidaridad y acompañamiento de nuestra Iglesia para con nuestros hermanos y hermanas allá. Ministerios generales de nuestra Iglesia, como lo son el Fondo de Pensiones, la Semana de Compasión y la Obra Hispana han hecho contribuciones generosas para proveer para las necesidades de los pastores, congregaciones y comunidades. Gracias al esfuerzo combinado de los Ministerios Generales de la Iglesia, se han enviado toldos, filtros de agua, compensación a ministros, atención a enfermos encamados, reparaciones de facilidades eclesiales y comunitarias así como la comunicación constante con el liderato de la Iglesia en Puerto Rico. En el caso específico de Ministerios Globales, se han canalizado recursos económicos para acompañar al Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, al Centro Cristiano de la ICDC, a la Iglesia Evangélica Unida de Puerto Rico y a su ministerio de salud, el Hospital Ryder.

En todo este proceso, hemos sido testigos de la fortaleza que Dios mismo le ha brindado al liderato pastoral y laico de las iglesias en Puerto Rico, así como a las organizaciones sin fines de lucro y hombres y mujeres de buena voluntad, que han colaborado y ejercido sus Buenos oficios en lugares donde todavía

el gobierno federal y su contraparte local no han llegado o brindado servicio. Pastores y laicos han unido esfuerzos canalizando recursos de apoyo tanto en los lugares donde hay congregaciones Discípulos y Evangélicos Unidos, como en lugares donde no hay presencia eclesial de ellas. “Esta crisis ha convertido a los pastores en trabajadores sociales”, apuntaba el Rvdo. Miguel A. Morales, Pastor General de la ICDC.

Ministerios Globales encamina sus próximos esfuerzos de acompañamiento a la recuperación a largo plazo. Amanecer 2025, otra de nuestras contrapartes en Puerto Rico, ha desarrollado toda una iniciativa de organización comunitaria y equipamiento tecnológico para proveer energía a través de fuentes renovables a una comunidad de 200 familias en el pueblo de Naranjito, Puerto Rico. La idea es no solamente proveer para la actual necesidad de energía eléctrica en dicho pueblo (a más de tres meses del azote del huracán todavía el 45% de la isla no cuenta con servicio eléctrico, incluido Naranjito), sino equipar a la comunidad para futuros eventos atmosféricos así como lograr la auto sostenibilidad de dicha comunidad.

Hay vientos de novedad, de solidaridad y de esperanza para el pueblo de Puerto Rico. Está de nosotros y nosotras abrir nuestras alas y acompañarles en el trayecto de profundas transformaciones que la Isla del Encanto comenzará a vivir en este contexto.

Rvdo. Angel L. Rivera Agosto

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Being with Jonathan

The detainee smiled at me from behind a reinforced glass window and concrete block walls: "Hiya, how're you doing?" He sounded like someone I'd met recently. The conversation we had was similar, too – What have you been up to? Where are you from? Do you have family? And so on. Jonathan (I've changed his name here) could have been, literally, my California neighbor.

That was one of many things that made me pause and reflect as the NBA's Prison and Jail Ministries Peer Group visited Stewart Detention Center in the small town of Lumpkin, Ga. We went to be present with people we consider our neighbors, and to hear their stories about immigration and detention.

Stewart Detention Center has capacity for 1,900 detainees, and it is almost always full. The third largest U.S. federal detention center, Stewart is run by CoreCivic, formerly Corrections Corporation of America (CCA). CoreCivic gets paid per detainee, per day, making a very substantial profit from this warehousing of human beings.

Everyone in our NBA group waited for hours to have just a few minutes of conversation with detainees who'd asked our host organization, El Refugio, for visitors. What is the value of disconnection and isolation?

Who benefits?

Jonathan said he didn't have much money to call his family in Africa and that he couldn't afford a lawyer. Now this former student and oil company worker waits to be deported.

Jonathan's story is his own, and now it is part of mine. I have a fresh perspective on the intersections of punishment and profit that I've seen so often in my restorative justice ministries. And I have hope that our denomination is starting to promote and provoke sacred conversations on the intersections of immigration, deportation, racism, and privilege in our communities and our nation. I give thanks to God for the courage and initiative of the NBA in re-focusing our hearts on the immigrant and the stranger who are, in fact, our neighbors in God's world.

Learn more about NBA Prison and Jail Ministries at nbacares.org/prison-and-jail

*Rev. Nora Jacob
Restorative Justice Minister,
UrbanMission Community Partners
NBA Incubate Partner and Member of the NBA Prison
and Jail Ministries Peer Group*



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Donations to Disciples Home Missions in 2017 were also received for the following ministries: **All Peoples Christian Center, Black Ministers Retreat Scholarships, Chaplains, Disciples' Advocate, Disciples Men, Disciples Men Cookin' for Mission, Disciples Volunteering, Disciples Women, Disciples Women Social Action Project for Human Trafficking, Women to Women Worldwide, Kids to Kids, Farm Worker Ministry, Family and Childrens Ministry, Green Chalice, Inman Christian Center, Just Women, 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 38.

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