2019 General Assembly Celebrates History, Looks Towards Future

Our 25th General Assembly was a celebration of our Church’s history. But we didn’t stop there. We also spent time casting a vision for how our Church can grow in the future.

At the Monday dinner, National Convocation shared “Standing on the Promises,” an artistic expression of the ministry’s history, written and adapted by Rev. Monique Crain Spells.

In two workshops, Rev. Drs. Michael Kinnamon and Jan Linn presented their new book Disciples: Who We are and What Holds Us Together, and invited Rev. Lori Tapia, Rev. Dr. Timothy James, and Rev. Chung Seong Kim, leaders of Obra Hispana, National Convocation, and North American Pacific/Asian Disciples respectively, to respond to how the book on Disciples’ identity does and doesn’t reflect the full diversity of our Church.

On Tuesday, Rev. Dr. Rick Lowery, president of the historical society, facilitated “Our Second 50 Years,” a conversation with the outgoing moderator team and General Minister and President Rev. Terri Hord Owens. The leaders discussed their hopes and plans for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as a new generation of leaders step in.

Tuesday’s worship service celebrated the Merger and Design, the 1969 documents that formed our denomination. The Disciples of Christ Historical Society shared a video full of interviews, photos, and testimonials from Church leaders, reflecting on our story.

That service featured two powerful sermons. First, Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale, senior pastor of Ray

*Continue on page 27. See GA.*

---

**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
Greetings and welcome to this issue of the Disciples Advocate!

Let me share this reflection on the theme, “The Provision and Empowerment of Preparation!”

The provision – the resources one needs – and the empowerment – the special ability one needs for fulfilling an assignment are made available through preparation. We study, we prepare so we can favorably meet the challenges and tests we inevitably face.

Champions are not crowned or given the championship trophy at birth. They rigorously prepare, they study, they work out, they do drills, they rehearse moves and they follow a demanding schedule with the goal of making it to the championship event.

Christ is the greatest champion of all time! Although he was the son of God, he set the example of the preparation it took to be the champion of our salvation. Christ lived life fully human and divested of the power of his deity. He relied on his communion with God, the heavenly Father. The Bible says in reference to Jesus – And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and humanity. Luke 2:52 [He] made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of humanity. And being found in appearance as a human, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Phil 2:7-8

Let me share the following blog from Mark Conner. It resonates with me to drive home the point of preparation.

At the age of 30 (Luke 3:23), Jesus began turning his attention towards his ministry to the people His Father had sent him to. Jesus’ preparation for ministry included his baptism in water (Luke 3:21-23), his relationship with his Father, the empowerment of the Spirit (Luke 4:1-2), and his defeat of the devil and his temptations (Luke 4:3-13).

Jesus prepared for 30 years for 3½ years of significant ministry. It has been said, that people today go to Bible College for 3½ years to prepare for 30 years of ministry. Proper preparation is essential.

Anything significant is preceded by intensive and thorough preparation (often behind the scenes). Things just don’t happen. In fact, the quality of the preparation determines the quality and success of events.

- A delicious meal requires hours in the kitchen when no one else is around.
- An enjoyable musical performance requires hours of practice and preparation.
- A superb sports performance demands hours of training and preparation.
- A doctor spends years studying before he or she ever take the tools and begins to operate (aren’t you glad!).
- A significant ministry of high impact also requires the same intensity of preparation. God often takes [God’s] time. The better the preparation, the more significant and lasting the impact. So in the spiritual. God prepares by [God’s] Spirit and we also must prepare.

God sent John the Baptist to “prepare the way of the Lord” (Luke 1:11-17, 76-80; 3:1-6) He was God’s prophetic messenger sent before the coming of Messiah “to make ready a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:27).”

Every significant event in the purposes of God is preceded by a time of intense preparation.

Common Misunderstandings about Ministry:
1. “Ministry is only for people who work on staff at the church.”
   This viewpoint misses the fact that every believer is in “full time ministry” wherever they may be – in church, in the marketplace, at school, in the neighborhood or at home.
2. “Significant ministry just happens.”
   This perspective misses the process that God uses to develop us over time and through many life experiences.
3. “You can’t minister until you’re perfect.”
   This attitude causes you to keep putting things off until “one day” and this can lead to you missing the opportunities for God to use you today. God doesn’t want you in “school” forever. Yes, we keep learning and growing, but we have to get out there and begin "doing" what we’ve been taught.

What has God been preparing you for?

Continue on page 12. See President.
Before our founding pastor at Heart of the Rockies Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Fort Collins, Colo., retired in 2015, he gifted our congregation with a written history of the congregation’s first 20 years, titled “Our Best Years Are Still Ahead of Us.”

We heard that as a commission.

That same year, we enlisted HOPE Partnership to engage a “mission pathways” process that inspired our congregation to imagine its future story. We identified five priorities for the next 5-10 years. Rather than a linear chart, we had yet another commission—to courageously experiment our way into the dreams God had for us.

Since that time, we’ve reimagined our structure for day-to-day ministry. We’ve shifted from a committee model to seasonal leadership teams that create a blueprint for study, worship, fellowship, and service for a 6-8 week season in the church year. Along the way, high schoolers and nonagenarians study scripture together and listen for what God is saying to our church.

We paid off our mortgage two years early, in time to celebrate our 25th anniversary—and to imagine the next big thing God has for our remaining 9 acres of land.

We combined our two Sunday morning worship services into one to allow us to start a Tuesday evening service that meets around tables in a local non-profit restaurant. As bread is broken, lives are made a little more whole.

The prophet Jeremiah reminds us to whom our plans really belong—the God who promises us a hope-full future.

Melissa St. Clair, Senior Minister
Heart of the Rockies Christian Church
Fort Collins, Colorado

It’s Not MAG-ic, it’s Ministry!

“Pick a card... any card.” The deck is fanned out before the person taken slightly off-guard. They choose with a sense of excitement, wonder, and a little worry about what is to happen next. They stare at me with expectation. Then? Nothing. They continue to look at me. Nothing. They look at their card, they look back at me. Nothing.

I finally say, “It is not MAG-ic, it’s ministry.” They laugh as their nerves settle. I continue to explain, “Each of these cards has a different quote. I encourage you to figure out ALL of the quotes and discover the voices, ministries, and writings that are leading the way in bringing all ages back together in intentional ways. They are posted together on our social media. It is difficult, however, once separated, to bring the WHOLE deck back together. You know, you can’t play without a full deck.”

Some people would respond, “I have been playing without a full deck for years.” I would remind them that the church community has been doing that as well. Get it? Do you get it? While there is humor, the consequences have been any-

Continue on page 28. See MAG.
The mission of All Peoples Community Center is to empower individuals. How do we empower individuals to grow to their full potential to support their families and their community? The Small Business Entrepreneurship Program. In collaboration with other non-profits All Peoples hosted a 5 week series workshops for small business owners and individuals with a dream of owning their own business. Twenty-six participants enrolled and twenty graduated from the program.

During the final week of the program, participants attended “Shark Tank” and had an opportunity to pitch their business proposal to a panelist of judges. Graduation took place on Wednesday, July 31, 2019, and awards were given to the top 5 “Shark Tank” business ideas along with a check for $750 to assist with the start-up of their business.

Dominga, was selected as one of the winners because she clearly defined her financial projections, and marketing strategy, along with a draft of her business plan. Dominga was long awaiting an Entrepreneurship Program for Spanish speakers in her community. She was one of the first to

The Small Business Entrepreneurship Program

Brown and Pereira families at Capitol Hill Christian Church during General Assembly in Des Moines, Iowa.

Brown and Pereira families at Capitol Hill Christian Church during General Assembly in Des Moines, Iowa.

Hana Brown and Feliberto Pereira, Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries at Capitol Hill Christian Church during General Assembly in Des Moines, Iowa.

The Disciples’ Advocate
Domestic Violence and Mass Shootings – Lethal Combination

Domestic violence and gun violence go hand in hand. We are calling on Disciples congregations to recognize the urgency of these virulently growing evils in our communities and engage compassionately and wisely. National Benevolent Association (NBA) in tandem with Disciples Women and Families and Children’s Justice ministries are gearing up to help.

You may be surprised to learn that there have been nearly 20 mass shootings so far this year (at this writing). The majority of them are domestic violence attacks that receive little national attention compared to high-profile public shootings. In July alone, 13 people were slain in three killings involving domestic violence or drugs in Missouri, Wisconsin and Washington.

The FBI and others count killings as “mass” if they involve four or more fatalities, not including the killer. Seventy-seven people have died this year in mass shootings that include family violence and other events, while 26 people were killed in mass shootings in public places.

At the UN Commission on the Status of Women we heard repeatedly that women and girls are ‘unequally-born’ with less rights and lower expectations. Vulnerabilities of women and girls and male entitlement were recurring themes for the systemic oppression of and violence toward women and girls. Any time we can convince ourselves that another human being has less worth than ourselves it becomes easier to inflict pain and suffering on them. We are encouraging women to reclaim the power they already have through self-defense classes and building coalitions to amplify their voices. Beyond personal responsibility is the need for systemic and public changes to address these vulnerabilities.

The relationship between domestic and mass shootings is often missed because of the dehumanization of the victims. The majority of mass shooters have a history of domestic violence.

You may be surprised to learn that there have been nearly 20 mass shootings so far this year (at this writing). The majority of them are domestic violence attacks that receive little national attention compared to high-profile public shootings. In July alone, 13 people were slain in three killings involving domestic violence or drugs in Missouri, Wisconsin and Washington.

The FBI and others count killings as “mass” if they involve four or more fatalities, not including the killer. Seventy-seven people have died this year in mass shootings that include family violence and other events, while 26 people were killed in mass shootings in public places.

At the UN Commission on the Status of Women we heard repeatedly that women and girls are ‘unequally-born’ with less rights and lower expectations. Vulnerabilities of women and girls and male entitlement were recurring themes for the systemic oppression of and violence toward women and girls. Any time we can convince ourselves that another human being has less worth than ourselves it becomes easier to inflict pain and suffering on them. We are encouraging women to reclaim the power they already have through self-defense classes and building coalitions to amplify their voices. Beyond personal responsibility is the need for systemic and public changes to address these vulnerabilities.

The relationship between domestic and mass shootings is often missed because of the dehumanization of the victims. The majority of mass shooters have a history of domestic violence.

All Peoples Community Center will celebrate our 77th Anniversary on September 26, at the Sheraton Grand Hotel. I am excited about our nominees this year. Sam Joo will receive the Dan Genung Visionary award. Sam is the Director of the Magnolia Community Initiative. The Joe Ide Community Spirit Award is being presented to Pastor Eddie Anderson of McCarty Memorial Christian Church in Los Angeles. We will also celebrate our youth recipients of the first annual Geraldine Morgan scholarships. We are working on a few other surprises to lift up the work of All Peoples and acknowledgements of those persons who have been long time supporters.

-- Saundra Bryant

Tickets are available at https://allpeoplescc.org/event/gala-2019/
Disciples Scouting Introduce Key Objectives in New E-newsletter

National Association of Disciples Scouting and Scouters (ADSS) launched an e-newsletter to friends of scouting in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). A welcome to introduce everyone to ADSS and the four key objectives:

1. to encourage our congregations to partner with such national youth-serving agencies as Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts USA, and Campfire USA to extend their programs of positive moral development and community service,

2. to promote the Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.) as an effective and engaging Christian Education resource,

3. to support adult leaders like you, and to recognize outstanding leadership with P.R.A.Y.’s God and Service Award, and

4. to help local congregations develop more effective youth leaders.

ADSS is an organization of volunteer leaders that cooperates with both Disciples Home Missions (DHM) and national youth serving agencies such as Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, Campfire USA, and which encourages the use of the P.R.A.Y. programs and emblems as a Christian Faith Formation resource for youth.

ADSS believes that the congregation’s ministries with children and youth can be enhanced through partnerships with these youth serving agencies, which emphasizes the development of positive moral values and social responsibility through a variety of activities, including a strong focus on service.

You are invited to join our membership in the Association, as we seek to provide a network of support for adult leaders in scouting and other youth serving agencies.

Email Scott Thayer, Minister of Agencies Serving Youth, at sctthayer@gmail.com for a membership application and additional information.

Fulfill your Duty to God requirements for all ranks in Boy Scouting and the Adventure requirements throughout Cub Scouting with the P.R.A.Y. Program. Consider offering a class where appropriate. Start now to be able to complete the work and recognize youth as part of Scout Sunday celebrations in February.

The P.R.A.Y. program is a Bible-based religious emblems program designed to bring children, youth, and families to Christ. Throughout one’s Scouting experience, the curriculum helps young people grow stronger in faith and service to God with hands-on activities like pizza, GAMEboxes, and more! The middle school awards ("God and Church" medal pictured here) help youth learn the history and structure of their church as well as the worship and outreach programs of their local congregation. The adult awards enable congregations to recognize individuals for outstanding service and ministry through the scouting program. For details on the P.R.A.Y. programs and emblems see page 7 or visit www.praypub.org.

Scott Thayer,
Minister of Agencies Serving Youth
Disciples Home Missions

Richard Jones, Acting President
National Association of Disciples Scouting and Scouters
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Jesus and Me (Grades K-1)
Children will be introduced to Jesus as the Son of God, but in familiar terms so that young children can see Jesus in their own everyday experiences. This curriculum uses the “Jesus Scroll Craft” as a hands-on component. After every lesson, children will create a new page to extend their scroll. The scroll will be an interactive way to not only retell the stories of Jesus, but to enter into the story and relate to Jesus.

SECTION 1: Jesus Was a Storyteller
SECTION 2: Jesus Was a Teacher
SECTION 3: Jesus Was a Friend
SECTION 4: Jesus Was a Healer

God and Family (Grades 4-6)
The God and Family program will help children understand the importance of family and God’s role in a healthy family. Children will compare families and “pizza,” and they will make a pizza as they study how families can grow together in God’s love.

1. CRUST-FOUNDATION - We are God’s Family
2. SAUCE - Family Heritage, Spiritual Heritage
3. TOPPINGS - Our Talents and Gifts Strengthen Our Families
4. CHEESE - In God’s Family We’re Loved No Matter What! Because We’re Loved, We Follow Rules
5. BAKE - Being in God’s Family Helps Us When Things Are Tough
6. EAT, SHARE, ENJOY! - In God’s Family, We Share as a Response to God’s Love

God and Me (Grades 2-3)
Children will become best friends with Jesus and tell their story of “God and Me” together. Children will make a game in each lesson and keep their games in a GAMEBOX (God And Me Exploring BOX). These games will reinforce the Bible lessons and provide opportunities for families to explore God’s love together.

SECTION 1: God Created Me
SECTION 2: Jesus is God’s Gift to Me
SECTION 3: I Can Talk with God
SECTION 4: Because God Cares for Me, I Can Care for Others

God and Church (Grades 6-8)
The God and Church program will be a journey to meet Jesus, worship God, and witness and minister for Christ. Participants will create a video or a photo album to share their faith journeys with others.

UNIT I - My Journey: Meeting Christ
• Meeting Jesus, the Person
• Meeting Jesus, the Son of God
• Meeting Jesus, the Head of the Church

UNIT II - My Journey: Worshiping God
• Learning how Christ Worshiped God
• Exploring How My Congregation Worships God
• Discovering How I Can Worship God

UNIT III - My Journey: Witnessing and Ministering for Christ
• Learning How Christ Witnessed and Ministered to Others
• Exploring How My Congregation Witnesses and Ministers to Others
• Discovering How I Can Witness and Minister to Others

God and Life (Grades 9-12)
The God and Life study is based on the life of the Apostle Paul as recorded in Acts 9:1-31.

SECTION 1: God calls all kinds of people.
SECTION 2: God doesn’t expect us to do it on our own.
SECTION 3: Each of us must make a personal response to the call of God
SECTION 4: God gives strength to face adversities.
SECTION 5: God can accomplish great things through those who are willing to do God’s will.

Four-Star Recognition
A special recognition is available for young people who complete the four core programs in the P.R.A.Y. series: God and Me, God and Family, God and Church, and God and Life (Jesus and Me does not count toward the Four Star Award). Start now: students cannot go backwards to earn younger awards!

VISIT WWW.PRAYPUB.ORG FOR INFORMATION AND TO ORDER BOOKLETS ONLINE.
The Disciples Chaplains Association was on board and active during the Des Moines General Assembly.

Workshop sessions for Institutional and Federal Chaplains were well attended by those who are already endorsed for chaplaincy ministry and others who were seeking information.

Presenters and panelists in each workshop shared their expertise and answered questions about opportunities and challenges serving in specialized ministry outside the bounds of a local congregation.

Many of our Disciples Army, Air Force, and Navy Chaplains wore their dress uniforms on Monday of the Assembly as a way to help the Church know and remember that these great Disciples clergy are a vital part of our witness around the world.

Disciples Chaplains Association also sponsored a gathering off-site from the Assembly Hall for networking, checking-in, and building community.

For information about the process of endorsement as a chaplain please contact the Disciples Chaplain Endorsing Officer, The Rev. Dr. Tom Yates, at tyates@dhm.disciples.org or Anne Marie Moyars, DHM Ministry Associate for Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministry at amoyars@dhm.disciples.org.

Our Disciples Chaplain community is engaged daily in vital, life-affirming, hands-on ministry that makes a difference.”

Rev. Dr. Tom Yates
Disciples Chaplain Endorsing Officer
Disciples Home Missions

“Disciples Chaplains at General Assembly

Photo above: Chaplain Ana Wilson presenting at the Institutional Chaplains Workshop. Photo below: Chaplains Alexis Waggoner and Tiann Morgner presenting at the Federal Chaplains Workshop. Both workshops were held on Sunday during the General Assembly.

Photo left and below: Disciples Endorsed Chaplains gathered on Tuesday during General Assembly at Bubba’s Southern Comfort.

Disciples Men are Preparing the Way

The Office of Disciples Men (DM) works alongside the General Conference of Disciples Men to prepare and empower men to be vital and lifegiving members of the church.

At the General Assembly, DM introduced The Jesus Way: A New Ministry with Men. The Jesus Way equips men to live life in a way that reflects the principles and priorities by which Jesus himself lived. On this journey each man grows to understand how God has gifted him. Then, each man strives to build his life on these principles and priorities in ways that make life better for all around him, his realm of influence. And, each man will rediscover God’s claim upon his life and engage in active citizenship within the whole realm of God. Disciples Men is currently planning the training sessions which will empower congregational leaders to facilitate The Jesus Way in their local congregations. Please contact the DM office if you are interested in leading The Jesus Way in your congregation.

Registration is now open for Sessions 2020, to be held July 10-12, 2020 on the TCU campus. Visit the DM page of the Disciples Home Missions website for more information on Sessions 2020. It promises to be a transformative weekend as we prepare ourselves to care for our siblings in Christ. 

Rev. Dr. Alex Ruth
Associate Director, Disciples Men
Disciples Home Missions

Global Ministries Awards of Affirmation
Presented at General Assembly

Global Ministries is pleased to announce the following Awards of Affirmation that were presented during the Global Ministries International Dinner at the 2019 General Assembly in Des Moines Iowa:

**Southern Asia:**
Reverend Dr. Mery Kolimon, Moderator of the Protestant Church in Timor (GMIT) in Indonesia, was recognized for how she enables the GMIT to be a sanctuary for victims of human trafficking, domestic abuse, and forced migration.

**Europe:**
Perichoresis, a ministry of the Evangelical Church of Greece, was recognized for its courageous and humane response to the influx of refugees to Greece since its establishment in 2016.

**Latin America and the Caribbean:**
Reverend Daniel Romero of the Daniel F. Romero Center in San Diego, Calif., and Tijuana, Mexico, was recognized for his participation in creating the general design of Global Ministries, as well as for his activism in defending the rights of migrants and asylum seekers at the U.S./Mexico border.

**Middle East:**
Al-Ahli Arab Hospital, a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem in Gaza, was recognized for its crucial ministry of healthcare in one of the most densely populated and de-developed places in the world.

**Africa:**
Reverend Dr. Francois-David (“Franck”) Ekofo Bonyeku of the Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo was recognized for his lifelong prophetic witness.

**East Asia and the Pacific:**
Dansalan College, an educational ministry of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, was recognized for its resilience and dedication to carry on its important bridge-building mission to educate all of God’s children.

**Mission Personnel:**
Reverends Joan and Allan Eubank were recognized for their almost 40 years of service in Thailand beginning in 1958.

Global Ministries gives thanks for the mission and witness of these awardees and celebrates their ministries.
The Provision and Empowerment of Preparation: Global Ministries at Summer Camp

Summer Camp season has just ended, and it’s no stretch to say the best camps were the most prepared. Planning for a one week summer camp entails recruitment of good counselors, musicians and coordinators, in addition to writing or selecting the curriculum; not to mention the amenities of the camp site and hundreds of other details are in order. Summer camp can be a spiritually enriching and life transforming experience for many campers, but the lack of adequate preparation and few resources can make it a negative experience for everyone involved.

Global Ministries enhanced summer camps this year by assigning its mission co-workers to various camps across the country. Since each camp is different, camp directors utilized mission co-workers in different ways; some used them as counselors directly responsible for a small group of campers, others used them as chaplains to address the whole camp, or as keynote speakers to set the tone each day in accordance with the theme. Regions were grateful for the opportunity to have campers hear great mission stories, and Global Ministries got the opportunity to influence young campers who could dream perhaps to become future Global Ministries Interns (GMIs) themselves.

Campers responded to this new camp resource. Many wanted to know about the lives of young people in the country where mission co-workers served. Camp is a place where the church transfers its values and prepares young people for witness and service to all people…the whole world. This year, Global Ministries mission co-workers helped make the camp experience more powerful, as they wove mission stories together with the curriculum to create an enriching exchange on God’s work in the world.

Paul Turner, Global Ministries Mission Co-Worker, Democratic Republic of the Congo

People-to-People Pilgrimage to Ghana 2020

The Global Ministries’ People-to-People Pilgrimage Program and Africa Office invite you to join this pilgrimage of learning, presence, and solidarity in Ghana – a diverse, rich, and vibrant country of the West African region. This pilgrimage will take participants through the Great Accra, Volta, Central, Northern, and Coastal regions of Ghana. Participants will be immersed and exposed to issues of human trafficking, refugees, and migration, as well as the work for women’s empowerment and development, and Christian-Muslim relations. The program will include worship at a local church, visits to partner organizations and their projects, cultural experiences, sightseeing, and more. For guidelines, cost, and registration information, go to https://www.globalministries.org/pilgrimage_to_ghana_2020.

Spaces are limited. Submit your registration today!
Light a Candle with Children: “The Hearts and Voices of our Young People”

Sept. 23 to Oct. 20, 2019

Over the past few years there has been a significant change in the prayers and devotions we share each fall as we prepare with many others for Children’s Sabbath (Children’s Defense Fund) on October 20th, 2019.

Many churches, individuals, and families have used the devotion to light a candle for children. The true prayer we need answered in finding ways in which to light a candle with children. It is easy to participate in Light a Candle with Children. 40 weekdays prior to Children’s Sabbath, Ministries Across Generations will post devotions, reflections, and resources in several social media locations (http://lightacandle.blogspot.com, https://www.facebook.com/LightaCandleforChildren/ and see page 29). You are welcome to actively participate during the times scheduled, or go back during another church season. Light a Candle has been active for years and the information, prayers, and insights are always available to use online.

Light a Candle WITH Children is an advocacy & prayer vigil project that invites congregations to join in prayer and devotions for our children. The vigil begins four weeks before the National Observance of Children’s Sabbath sponsored by the Children’s Defense Fund, Washington, DC. Thousands of congregations from multiple faith groups unite during Children’s Sabbath weekend to simultaneously witness for children through prayer, education, and worship.

This year’s theme for Light a Candle with Children: “The Hearts and Voices of our Young People” Sept. 23 to Oct. 20, 2019

Continue on page 29. See Candle.

President

Jesus’ Preparation for Ministry, April 08, 2016
Blog from Mark Conner’s Space - “Thoughts on Life, Leadership and Spirituality”
https://markconner.typepad.com/catch_the_wind/2016/04/jesus-preparation-for-ministry.html

“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” — Benjamin Franklin

“Champions do not become champions when they win the event, but in the hours, weeks, months and years they spend preparing for it. The victorious performance itself is merely the demonstration of their championship character.” — Alan Armstrong

“It’s better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one, than to have an opportunity and not be prepared.” — Les Brown

“Being wholly given over to God now is the essential and best possible preparation for future service.” — James Montgomery Boice

Some people are making such thorough preparation for rainy days that they aren’t enjoying today’s sunshine. — William Feather

There is a time to prepare and a time to play. Strive to live a balanced life!

God’s love,

Sotello V. Long

Rev. Sotello V. Long, President
Disciples Home Missions
KEEP UP YOUR DISCIPLES CONNECTION
(and your 501c3 nonprofit status)
Submitting a year book form online between JANUARY and MARCH 15, 2020.

• Reminder postcard will arrive with PIN number in January
• Go to disciples.org/yearbook to fill out the form before March 15
• Order your copy of the year book by May 15 for delivery in the summer

What could be easier? Disciples Mission Fund enables congregations and individuals to channel resources simply - to be shared across the life of the Church. Your ongoing core support of DMF ensures your region and general ministries have consistent income.

Special day offerings are supplements directed to specific ministries at Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

For more information, go to disciplesmissionfund.org
To change supply orders for special day offering materials, e-mail supplies@disciples.org

STAY CONNECTED!

• SUBSCRIBE to Disciples News Service weekly e-letters at disciples.org/dns
• ORGANIZE an identity study with materials on disciples.org/our-identity
• INCLUDE Disciples Mission Fund in your congregation’s budget

Follow our Facebook pages
Disciples (christianchurchdoc)
Disciples Local Impact (ministry stories)
Disciples Exchange
(program ideas/resources)

Follow us @DisciplesNews
Disciples Celebrates Work of Peace Interns

Disciples Peace Fellowship celebrates the wonderful work of the 2019 DPF Peace Interns: Courtney Sells, Heidi Holgate, and Elsie Croasdale. After a weeklong training event in Indianapolis, Ind., (where the Peace Interns met with leaders from throughout the denomination and took part in preparatory trainings like Boundary Training and Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation Training) these three remarkable young women spent the summer traveling from Disciples Church Camp to Disciples Church Camp sharing the gospel imperative for peace and justice.

All told the 2019 Peace Interns were a part of 24 Camps across 21 Regions! They served on camp staff for CYF and Chi Rho camps and led workshops on Toxic Masculinity, Emotional Resilience, LGBTQI+ inclusivity in the church, and Intersectionality. Following this life changing summer Courtney, Heidi, and Elsie will now return to school (Centre College, Western Kentucky University, and Eureka College, respectively) to complete their Senior years.

We hope you will join Disciples Peace Fellowship in lifting up a word of thanksgiving and gratitude for their work as Peace Interns and ask God’s continued blessing upon their work and witness for peace and justice in the world!

DPF will begin receiving applications for the 2020 Class of Peace Interns on December 1. You can learn more about the Peace Intern Program by visiting www.disciplespeace.org/how-to-apply or by emailing our Director of Mission Support and the Peace Intern Program, the Rev. Brian Frederick-Gray, at dpfintern@gmail.com.

The Good Shepherd—Reflections from CW&W Trainers

Here is a story about one of our Trainers, Nancy Owens, experience with The Good Shepherd Parable:

Four words that no one ever wants to hear. Four words that suck the air out of your lungs. Four words that strikes terror in your heart. Four words our son and daughter-in-law heard. Four words that struck our entire family—Hard.

Drew was then an eight-year-old enjoying his summer vacation. Days of ball, fishing, swimming, and camp. Then in July he got a stomach virus. It got worse. The nausea became violent. Trips to the pediatrician didn’t help. Finally, terrible pain led to him being admitted to the hospital. Tests revealed that his colon had kinked. Immediate surgery removed the affected part.

Children Worship & Wonder

So What Exactly is Children Worship & Wonder?
Children Worship & Wonder is faith formation worship centered approach with storytelling, ritual, and fellowship that is used with children in churches to help them deepen their relationship with God.

Disciples Home Missions regularly schedules Children Worship & Wonder Story Teller Training events at churches around the country.

See our Story Teller Training Schedule or contact us at www.docfamiliesandchildren.org/contact if you are interested in hosting a training for your area.
First and foremost, the General Youth Council would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the General Assembly for passing our resolution, GA-1926: “The Spirit of Active Listening,” and the overwhelming support of all those whom spoke in favor. We are truly blessed to be a part of this great big Disciples of Christ Family, and look forward to continuing our mission to be a voice for the Youth, whom continue to be an integral part of the present, and future, of the Church.

**GYC Applications are NOW OPEN!!**

In case you missed it, applications to be a part of the General Youth Council for the 2020-2022 term are now OPEN! Anyone interested in becoming a member, or an adult sponsor go to [Tinyurl.com/GYCAplication](http://Tinyurl.com/GYCAplication), or click the first link that pops up when you google “GYC Application” and follow the instructions given. Applications will be open until September 30, 2019.

**EXCITING NEWS on the 2020 “It’s Real!” Event at TCU**

The General Youth Council looks forward to be joining our friends at North American Pacific-Asian Disciples (NAPAD), the National Convocation, and Obra Hispania in 2020 at Texas Christian University for their first ever “It’s Real!” Event. We are hopeful to see you there!

**Connect with the GYC**

Make sure to follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram under our handle, [@DOCYouthVoice](https://twitter.com/DOCYouthVoice) for more insight on the ministries of the General Youth Council. If you want to get in contact with us, please feel free to reach out! You can also email us at [DOCYouthVoice@DHM.Disciples.org](mailto:DOCYouthVoice@DHM.Disciples.org).

---

**Meet the General Youth Council**

**2017-2019 Term: (Graduating Members)**

- Shalom Cobb, Charlotte, North Carolina
- Patrick McCarthy (GYC Moderator, 2019) - Clayton, North Carolina
- Kathleen Varon - Jacksonville, Florida
- Sophie Won (GYC Secretary, 2018, 2019), Los Angeles, California
- Kendall Weir., Albany, Oregon

**2018-2020 Term:**

- Brittani Bullock, Indianapolis, Indiana
- Paola De La Cruz, San Benito, Texas
- Ela Johnson (GYC Vice Moderator 2019), Fort Collins, Colorado
- Kielani Likisap, Missouri
- Colby Shock (GYC Historian/Social Media), Vero Beach, Florida
- Khotso Moore, St. Louis, Missouri

**Adult Sponsors:**

- Jeff Champneau, Norman Oklahoma
- Trayce Potter, Eulicid, Ohio
- Randy Kuss, Indianapolis, Indiana
HELM Announces 2019-2020 Leadership Fellows and PhD Scholarships

Higher Education and Leadership Ministries (HELM) works with the wider church and higher education partners to develop and nurture Christian leaders who are transforming church, society and world. Two ways this work is undertaken is in the provision and empowerment of preparation through leadership development programs and scholarships.

Leadership Fellows Program

The Leadership Fellows Program is for undergraduate students and aims to develop leaders through an intentional focus on four major areas: Community, Transformation, Global Engagement and Mentoring. Selected from an expansive pool of extremely qualified applicants, an incoming class of eight students has been selected to join the Leadership Fellows Program. HELM is excited to announce the 2019-2020 incoming class of Fellows and congratulates them on their acceptance into this program!

Emma Drake will be attending Chapman University in the fall, majoring in Spanish. She hopes to go on international pilgrimages, especially to Central and South America, and enjoys playing the piano and singing in the church choir. She is a member of First Christian Church in Smithfield, Missouri.

Will Matherly will attend Kansas State University in the fall, pursuing a degree in architectural engineering. He has been a church camp counselor for the last four years and has participated in five mission pilgrimages with his church. He was in the International Baccalaureate program in high school and captained the wrestling team. He is a member of First Christian Church in Topeka, Kansas.

Patrick McCarthy is from Clayton, North Carolina and attends St. Paul’s Christian Church in Raleigh. He has served on the Regional Cabinet for Youth Work (RCYW) in North Carolina and the General Youth Council, where he currently serves as the moderator. In the fall he will attend Mid-Atlantic Christian University.

Ehret Nottingham, from Loveland, Colorado, will be attending Colorado State University in the fall. He has been involved in politics for the last three years, leading his school and town in several student demonstrations which resulted in two bills passing in the state legislature. He has also been involved in several school bands, the National Honor Society and Spanish Honor Society, and is an Eagle Scout and member of the Order of the Arrow. He is a member of Heart of the Rockies Christian Church in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Sophia Patchin will be attending the University of Northern Iowa with a double major in music education and bassoon performance. During high school, Sophia was a member of National Honors Society, National Council of Youth Leadership, and Mentors in Violence Prevention. She is a member of the Altoona Christian Church in Altoona, Iowa.

Grace Wagnon is a member of Central Christian Church in Indianapolis where she has been a deacon, worship leader and a delegate to the Regional and National Assembly. Through her congregation, she helped found the Youth on Race program. Outside of church, she is involved in her community and school, serving on the Indianapolis Mayor’s Youth Leadership Council,

Continue on page 18. See HELM.
Preparing and Empowering Your Spiritual Growth

Spiritual growth does not just happen—it takes preparation to empower the soul. DSF Discover offers online opportunities that help individuals and groups nourish their spiritual growth. DSF Discover is a program of Disciples Seminary Foundation that offers a variety of online offerings to laity, clergy, and groups.

One exciting way to prepare your spirit is our free 1-hour trainings. Simply go to www.dsf.edu/discover, and you will find a host of free resources appropriate for individuals or groups. These trainings provide short, impactful opportunities to engage a specific topic of spirituality. For instance, discover how to approach your finances faithfully with Bruce Barkhauer or transform your local community with Sandhya R. Jha.

Further empowerment is available in short courses. These courses are approximately 5 hours total and are self-paced. These accessible courses allow individuals and groups to expand their spiritual horizons in dynamic ways. Three courses are available now with instant access upon registration.

1. “True Inclusion for Jesus Followers” with Brandan Robertson to find out what diversity can really look like in churches
2. “5 Steps to Prepare Your Church for the Disaster You Never Saw Coming” with Rev. Caroline Hamilton-Arnold to discover exactly what role your church will have in the event of a natural disaster
3. “5 Ways for Women to Empower Women Globally” with Rev. Dr. Pat Donahoo for women to become empowered and empower others—perfect for a Disciples Women’s group to explore together

Visit www.dsf.edu/discover for the full current roster of offerings.

Rev. Dr. Katy E. Valentine
Director, DSF Discover

Partnering to Prepare

A train rumbled by outside with perfect timing. The group was just completing a risk assessment inventory as part of a disaster preparedness training. “I guess we should consider the possibility of a train accident, since the tracks are 20 yards away,” said one participant. “Our whole town is at risk of flooding,” noted another. Meanwhile, conversations throughout the day revolved around “The Big One”—the major earthquake that scientists say is overdue in the Pacific Northwest.

The question around disasters is not if something will happen but what and when. Disasters, large and small, will happen in every Region. When they do, our congregations can offer vital care and resources for members and their communities.

As the saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Multiple studies confirm that preparedness and mitigation efforts result in significant return on investment. In addition to the practical benefits of preparation, communities of faith have another motivation: advance planning helps us help others. In the critical moments, days, and months following a crisis event, established plans save precious time and resources and make responses more efficient and effective.

To assist Disciples congregations in this preparation, Week of Compassion and Disciples Volunteering have developed a model Regional Disaster Preparedness and Response Training. This training—offered live or remotely—helps congregations understand the basic patterns of disaster recovery, consider the risks in their contexts, and begin developing congregational disaster plans.

To host a training in your Region or congregation, contact:
Caroline Hamilton-Arnold, Associate Director for Domestic Disaster Response, Week of Compassion—caroline@weekofcompassion.org or Josh Baird, Director, Disciples Volunteering—jbaird@dhm.disciples.org.

Rev. Josh Baird, Director, Disciples Volunteering
Parker Palmer wrote it takes a long time for someone to become the person they are meant to be. At Lexington Theological Seminary, we believe this kind of becoming is best done in community with peers and mentors. Thus, the Thriving in Ministry Project at LTS seeks to help pastoral leaders become thriving congregational leaders in ways that enhance the vitality of the congregations they serve. Through the Thrive peer groups and the Pathways Mentoring Program, LTS aims to support graduates in years one through five of congregational ministry.

LTS graduates in congregational ministry are invited to participate in Thrive Peer Groups. The Thrive experience includes:

- convening LTS graduates in a three-year peer community;
- learning from experienced ministers through visits to their ministry sites; and
- embracing congregations as full partners in the conversation on clergy well-being and congregational vitality.

Involvement in Thrive Peer Groups will offer graduates mutually supportive relationships with ministry colleagues. These relationships will strengthen their sense of pastoral identity and smooth their transition from seminarians into pastoral leaders.

The Pathways Mentoring Program includes:

- quarterly meetings of graduates and mentors;
- developing a mentor database and identifying resources to encourage effective mentoring; and
- attending conferences that focus on strengthening effective mentoring relationships and building peer-to-peer relationships.

Becoming the pastoral leader one is intended to be is a lifelong journey, one that LTS shares with its students and alumni. We are grateful to Lilly Endowment Inc. for supporting this ministry with a $1 million Thriving in Ministry grant.

Dr. Charisse Gillett, President
Lexington Theological Seminary
Lexington, Kentucky

Sam Wilkinson is from Thorntown, Indiana. In high school he was a member of a Kiwanis Leadership Academy and was also on the track & field and football teams where he was a 3-time Varsity Letter Winner and a team captain for the undefeated state champion team this past season (2018). In the fall he will be attending Taylor University in Upland, Indiana, where he will be double majoring in Business Management and Christian Ministries as well minoring in Sports Management. He attends First Christian Church in Lebanon, Indiana.

Hamin Yang is from Claremont, California and was part of his school’s swim team for three years and school orchestra from elementary school all the way to his senior year of high school, playing the violin. He loves to swim and hike at Loch Leven Camp and Conference Center, where he works. In the fall he will be attending UC Irvine to study Biomedical Engineering. He attends First Christian Church of North Hollywood.

Continue on page 19. See HELM.
LIMITLESS MINISTRY

Online seminary education that’s relevant, real, and rich in deep understanding and practical experience.

- 30-50 percent scholarship for every credit-earning student
- Year-round enrollment
- Certificate, M.Div., and D.Min. programs online

LEARN MORE!
lextheo.edu

HEL M Continued from page 18.

PhD Scholarships

HELM is pleased to announce the names of the five Disciple students who have been awarded PhD scholarships for the 2019-2020 academic year. Three students were awarded the Ann E. Dickerson Scholarship and two students received the William Gilbert and Florence Jones Scholarship.

Miseon Choi, a Ph.D. student in Practical Theology with an emphasis on Religious Education at Claremont School of Theology, received the Dickerson Scholarship. She previously studied Christian Education at Hanshin University in South Korea and completed a Master of Divinity at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. She currently serves at Saegil Christian Church in Burbank as Children’s Minister.

Tomeka Jacobs, who pursuing a PhD in Practical Theology at Claremont School of Theology, received the Dickerson Scholarship. She currently works in the Financial Aid Office as a Student Assistant and maintains a Research Fellowship with Dr. Rick Hanson, researching neuroscience and contemplative practices. She attends First Christian Church in Orange, California and calls East Second Street Christian Church in Lexington, Kentucky her home.

Rev. Laura Jean Torgerson received the Dickerson Scholarship. She is a Ph.D. student in Interdisciplinary Studies in Biblical Interpretation and Sociology of Culture at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. She is currently Director of Education and Mission for Disciples Seminary Foundation in Northern California and is a member of Mills Grove Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Continue on page 20. See HELM.
Bethany College Prepares for Future

Since its founding in 1840, Bethany College has thrived largely because of its ability to adapt, innovate, and provide a compelling contemporary academic experience for generations of students.

As colleges and universities in the U.S. undergo a renaissance in the 21st Century, Bethany is no exception.

The college is engaged in a multi-year effort to modernize to provide students with critical thinking and technical expertise.

In three years, Bethany has:
• Created majors in cybersecurity, cybersecurity-information assurance, international business, and physical education-sports medicine track.
• Partnered with Pittsburgh’s Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Garden to offer educational experiences in plant agriculture, environmental sciences and sustainability.
• Established an Honors Program to reward achievement, raise academic discourse, and encourage a holistic approach to creative thinking and intellectual independence.
• Entered a 3+3 Legal Education Advancement Program partnership with Ohio Northern University to expedite legal degrees for Bethany students.
• Been twice named the No. 1 college in West Virginia for employment and wages.
• Established a cybersecurity lab.
• Opened a state-of-the-art dining facility and a trendy location for food, fellowship, and study.

Also, 95% of Bethany students are employed full-time or enrolled in graduate school within nine months of graduation.

Bethany is dedicated to providing a setting for individual growth, achievement, and leadership in fields like medicine, engineering, communications, and information technology.

Rather than avoiding the challenges facing colleges today, Bethany has embraced them as an opportunity to build a learning environment that will serve students for generations to come.

Shannon E. Kolkedy
Communications Specialist
Bethany College
Bethany, West Virginia

HEL M  Continued from page 19.

in Oakland, California.

Rev. Nick Green, who received the Jones Scholarship, will begin a PhD in Biblical Interpretation at Brite Divinity School this fall. He is a member of Central Christian Church in Pocatello, Idaho and has served as a Global Mission Intern (GMI) in El Salvador. He received his Master of Divinity and Master of Theological Studies dual degree from Christian Theological Seminary in 2016. Since seminary, he has served as the Associate Minister of South Street Christian Church in Springfield, Missouri.

Aizaiah Yong, who is pursuing a PhD in Practical Theology from Claremont School of Theology, received the Jones Scholarship. He has served as an adjunct professor, non-profit director, an associate minister for youth and young adult ministries and spiritual retreat leader. He is finishing doctoral fellowships with the Hispanic Theological Initiative and the Fetzer Institute. Aizaiah is a member of Pomona Christian Church in Pomona, California.
Perspectives of Bi-Vocational Ministry: It Can “Make Ministry Better”

Lexington Theological Seminary has been conducting research on the economic implications of bi-vocational ministry on Disciples ministers and congregations in Kentucky. One recurrent theme identified from interviews is that ‘being bi-vocational’ brings more than financial benefits alone. Ministers believe having another job ‘outside’ congregations also strengthens their ministry ‘inside’ congregations.

Ministers said their experiences in being employed outside the congregation has allowed them to better understand the experiences of others and to strengthen their skills, such as managing finances and communicating. And, it’s not just that the ministers take skills they learn from the ‘other job’ and use them in congregations – it’s that the experience of working in the ‘everyday world’ also helps them understand the congregation better. One minister said, “I am more understanding of the perils people have….when there is a potential of someone losing a job, or when they change insurance at work…”

One of the ministers who thinks being bi-vocational has helped “make ministry better” is Carl Wagoner. Carl is the pastor of Somerset Christian Church, near Mt. Sterling, Kentucky. He has served the congregation for 6 years while also work-
Open House

October 22, 2019
8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Including:
- Complimentary breakfast & lunch
- Greetings from President Newell Williams and Dean Michael Miller
  - Informational sessions
  - Faculty teaching modules
    - Chapel service
    - Community lunch
  - Admissions interviews
    - Class visits
    - Campus tour
- Optional preview day on October 21

For more information, email
brite-admissions@tcu.edu

To register for this free event,
visit brite.edu/openhouse
FREE 1-Hour Online Trainings and Affordable Short Courses for Laity, Clergy, and Groups

Take charge of your faith!
Engage topics such as justice, spirituality, the Bible, and more

www.dsf.edu/discover

Register Today!

DSF Discover is a Program of Disciples Seminary Foundation
Churches in the Secular World

Religiously or spiritually speaking, the Church is the Body of Christ, the gathering of the saved, the Spouse of Christ, the communion of saints, a priestly people. We are a witness to the world, through word and deed, to the inbreaking reign of God on earth. We meet together in temples of praise, tabernacles of God’s presence, houses of prayer for all people.

But churches also have secular functions. Among these are the following:

First, churches serve as what I call “markers of numinosity”: Both communities of faith and houses of worship are signs of transcendence in a secular world, reminders that society is grounded in something beyond itself, pointers to what theologian Paul Tillich calls “the depth dimension” of society or the “religious substance” of culture.

Second, churches often serve as schools for good citizenship. They are spaces that promote character formation, ethical orientation, shared values, group loyalty and cooperation, concern for others, dedication to religious liberty, and a commitment to the common good. Disciples, in particular, promote values necessary to a properly functioning liberal society: freedom of thought, rational deliberation, and democratic decision-making.

Third, churches serve as what Dr. King called “the conscience of the nation.” Here pastoral concern for “the least of these” combines with a passion for justice to promote prophetic criticism and ethical guidance to the State in terms of laws and public policies—especially laws and public policies that impact persons and groups on the economic and political margins of society.

Rev. Dr. Ken Brooker Langston
Executive Director, Disciples Center for Public Witness; Director, Disciples Justice Action Network (DJAN); Justice Advocacy Consultant and Public Policy Advisor, Disciples Home Missions and the Office of the General Minister and President

Bi-Vocational  Continued from page 21.

ing as a self-employed potter who has his studio located in his home. Carl has found that sitting at the wheel and making pottery brings a creative dimension that has helped him to enjoy ministry more and to be more productive. He appreciates how the creative process of his work often leads to contemplation and theological reflection and that sometimes finds expression in his preaching. Carl served as a single-vocation pastor for more than 20 years before coming to the Somerset congregation. He said he “absolutely loves” being bi-vocational. He is grateful for the collaborative relationship he has with the Somerset congregation and attributes some of this to having well-defined boundaries and expectations.

Congregational leaders agree; Carl is not their first bi-vocational minister. With this particular bi-vocational pastor, they seem to appreciate his experience in ministry and also said they love the way people see their pastor at local art fairs where he is selling pottery (and where people can hear about their church, too). Carl went to seminary in his 30s after several years in another profession and then returned to seminary to earn a D. Min. degree. He also is an accomplished musician and vocalist. Lay leaders said they love that about him, too.

For more information about Lexington Theological Seminary’s research concerning bi-vocational ministry, funded by Lilly Endowment Inc., contact: Kristen Plinke Bentley; Project Director, Conversations on Stewardship & Finances; Lexington Theological Seminary, kris.bentley@lextheo.ed.

Kristen Plinke Bentley, Project Director
Lexington Theological Seminary
Lexington, Kentucky
Let Justice Roll (LJR) works hard for an increase in the minimum wage on the way to a just and sustainable living wage. We also support paycheck fairness for women, higher wages plus tips for restaurant workers, and greater justice in the wages of farm workers. Furthermore, LJR strongly opposes the continuing disparity in pay between different racial and ethnic groups.

“Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an overflowing stream” (Amos 5:24)

Follow Let Justice Roll on Twitter @lrjlivingwage.

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  
c/o Disciples Home Missions  
PO Box 1986  
Indianapolis, IN 46206  
www.disciplescenter.org
Stories of healing abound in the Bible, in both the Old Testament and New Testament, offering readers encouragement that God desires human wholeness — shalom for individuals and communities. This eight-session Bible study will explore Old Testament stories of God’s healing — whether in body, mind, or soul — and what that might mean for twenty-first century Christians.

Each Bible Study is just $15.00

Order your copy online at: www.discipleswomen.org
or by mailing your check to
Just Women
PO Box 1986
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Writers and Scripture

The Rev. Shannon Dycus
- Remembrance as a path to healing and wholeness (Deuteronomy 6:10-12)
- Lessons about doubt and faith in Job’s story (Job 2:7-10)
- In every season of life, we live into God’s wholeness (Ecclesiastes 3:1-17)

The Rev. Dr. Janice Johnson Hume
- Petition and praise (Psalm 71)
- Blessed to be salt and light in later life (Matthew 5:1-16)

The Rev. Karen Thomas Smith
- Hagar — free at last (Genesis 16:1-16 and Genesis 21:8-21)

The Rev. Angela Whitenhill
- Deborah & Jael — Called to lead (Judges 4)
- Jesus heals a man born blind (John 9:1-34)

Pre-Order your copy by December 1, 2019 and pay no postage!

Copies will be mailed out in January 2020
After several days Drew was sent home to recuperate.

During his post op visit several days later, his parents heard those four words.

YOUR CHILD HAS CANCER. Routine testing of tissue following surgery revealed that Drew had Burkitts Lymphoma; a very rare, very aggressive form of pediatric cancer. Thankfully, it was caught in the very beginning stages. There were immediate consultations with pediatric oncologists. A plan was formed to fight for Drew’s life.

Sunday afternoon before Drew was to enter the hospital for another surgery and then begin months of grueling mixtures of chemotherapy, some at adult strength, our family gathered at his home. We gathered to support Drew, his mom, dad and little sister, and each other.

At this point in time Children Worship & Wonder had been in our church for four years. Drew and his little sister were regular worshipers. They knew the stories. They had heard them over and over for four years. That Sunday afternoon as our family gathered in the living room of Drew’s house, I sat on the floor with Drew, his sister and cousins. I took out the story of the Good Shepherd and told it. When we got to the wondering questions after the story, and I asked, “I wonder if you have ever had to go through places of danger?” Drew immediately responded that he had cancer. As he and his cousins talked, they talked about how scary his cancer diagnosis was. But they also responded with absolute faith that the Good Shepherd would be with Drew all through his fight. There was no doubt in their minds.

Drew is now thirteen, and cancer free. He survived his battle. That was definitely not an easy battle. Not for him, not for his mom, dad and little sister, and not for any of us in his family. But we made it through. And the journey was not nearly as terrifying as it would have been had he not had the faith and certainty in The Good Shepherd.

The stories matter.
The repetition of the stories matter.
The faith of a child matters. A lot.

Rev. Lisa Engelken, Coordinator
Children Worship & Wonder
Family and Children’s Ministries
Disciples Home Missions

General Assembly Continued from page 1.

of Hope Christian Church in Decatur, Ga., explored the hard work of unity-building, and reminded the Church that we’re called – not to be peacekeepers – but peacemakers.

Hale was followed by Rev. Mark Briley, lead pastor of Harvard Avenue Christian Church in Tulsa, Okla. Rev. Briley spoke about the trio of death, burial, and resurrection, encouraging the Church to not get stuck in the stiffness of rigor mortis, remembering that “hope is a group effort.”

After worship on Tuesday, former General Minister and Presidents Rev. Drs. Sharon E. Watkins and Richard Hamm led a discussion on “The Design at 100.” Both leaders spoke about the ways the Design is unique, as well as how we could adapt it for the 21st century.

In these formal conversations, and in informal ones, Disciples discovered we have a lot to celebrate. We also reminded ourselves that we have plenty of work to do as we continue our work to live into our call to be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.

Emily Martin
Communication and Disciples Mission Fund Coordinator

Rev. Mark Briley, senior pastor at Harvard Avenue Christian Church in Tulsa, Okla., called on Disciples to continue our resurrection and not let rigor mortis set in as we look ahead to the next 50 years of the Christian Church. (photo by Rev. Glenn Davis)
The Disciples’ Advocate

Spirituality That Turns Us Inside and Outward

I’ve not long returned from the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) where I was energized by rich fellowship, enthusiastic worship and legislative decisions that were suggestive of an ecclesial ethos in which risk-taking in the interest of the vulnerable and victimized is privileged. Explorations of the theme “Abide in Me” reminded participants that as impressive as justice-seeking decisions might appear, their transforming capacity and sustainability depended on our deep-rooted grounding in Christ, radical openness to God and the disciplined exercise of practices like Bible study and prayer. In her reflections, President Teresa Owens also admonished us to appreciate the importance of structure that engenders accountability.

I’m certainly not unique in my concern over the readiness of many Disciples to embrace together all components of that described above.

There is evidence of a bifurcated mindset among us. On one side, there are some for whom advocacy work substitutes for attention to devotional practices that are identified with a conservative leaning and so antagonistic to desired inclusivity or because the religious foundation that supports such practices has long eroded. On the other side, that promoted by some as faithful Christianity is effectively an insulation from the challenges posed by emergent streams within and outside our denomination. Disciples polity allows persons/congregations on both sides to locate themselves in the denominational terrain in such a way that limited encounter occurs with those with whom there is significant disagreement.

The explorations around the Assembly theme along with resolution GA1929 point to a third disposition that is compatible with what I classify as Integral Spirituality. My appreciation for this disposition presumes a God that by character is actively present in all processes of global existence, including biopsychosocial dynamics associated with

MAG  Continued from page 3.

thing but funny.

While many in our church communities are quick to point out the loss of church membership and lack of young people, they still seek the “quick” fixes and are quick to blame when the “quick” fix does not result in the image or realities they had in their head of “church.” In fact, some of you are reading this article, hoping for a “quick” fix for your faith community needs with younger people. But just in case you missed it...

“It’s not MAG – ic, it’s ministry.” Ministries Across Generations (MAG) is a general level movement under Disciples Home Missions intentionally moving away from the age segregated silos that have hurt and fragmented the church. This means that instead of a youth ministry, we will minister to youth. Instead of a children’s ministry, we will minister to children. Instead of a young adult ministry, we will minister to young adults. Instead of a family ministry, we will minister to families. Of course, even in those descriptions we do not really define what is a young adult, a family, a youth, or a child in the same way. Thus we are required to see each individual, each congregation, and all of creation as various moving parts with gifts for the whole Body of Christ. We must continuously focus on the person and connect the person back to the whole and visa versa. In other words, we must do ministry.

“We” have not been doing this. The problems of our church is that we have sought to entertain and not engage. Working together takes more effort. Our society loves to market to age segregated groups. It is easier for all the “Aces” to hang out in the hole with the other “Aces,” the “Eights” to know the craziness of the other “Eights.” The “Twos” get the struggles of the other “Twos.”

Continued from page 3. See MAG.
Wilson to Participate in Seminar about Christian Witness in an Interfaith World

Château de Bossey, Bogis-Bossey, Switzerland – Rev. Nathan Day Wilson, Director of Communications at Christian Theological Seminary, will participate in the seminar program “Equipping Each Other for Christian Witness in a Multi-cultural and Multi-faith World” at the Ecumenical Institute de Bossey.

The Ecumenical Institute at Bossey is the international center for encounter, dialogue, and formation of the World Council of Churches. According to the hosts, this seminar is designed to provide an opportunity for church leaders and young persons to equip each other for Christian witness in a multi-cultural and multi-faith world.

Rev. Wilson’s varied participation in the seminar includes offering a lecture, moderating a panel, and leading small group discussions. He explained, “My premise, often confirmed in discussions with pastors and those training to be so, is that an increasing number of Christian leaders are ready to grow our relationships with other religious communities beyond interfaith encounters and joint activities to deeper consideration of important, albeit sometimes difficult, issues.” Rev. Wilson’s lecture will address the difficult balance of humility and conviction, and he will suggest an approach to interfaith dialogue that includes sharing gifts as participants pursue truth and beauty.

About his lecture, Rev. Wilson said, “I plan to name and describe four fundamental categories of consideration for Christians who take religious pluralism seriously: theological, ecumenical, missional, and moral. Of those, the moral challenges may be the most confounding – and also the most compelling.”

Rev. Nathan Day Wilson
Director of Communications
Christian Theological Seminary
Indianapolis, Indiana

Candle Continued from page 12.

of our Young People.”

Children and teenagers were asked an important question, “Why will you be in the church when you grow up?” It is estimated that most young people have decided by the age of 14 if they will be active in a faith community as an adult. With many young people making the choice to not stay active in their faith into adulthood, it was time to ask those under 14 what connects them to a love of God and God’s people. Each devotion will be their responses, resources, and images.

This year’s theme and other liturgical resources from the Children’s Defense Fund: “Uniting Hearts and Voices to End Child Poverty.”

As you prepare for Children’s Sabbath or seek other liturgical resources, see all the interfaith and ecumenical practices surround and uniting us in helping the needs of our children. https://www.childrensdefense.org/programs/faith-based/childrens-sabbath-celebration/

Rev. Olivia Bryan Updegrove
Minister of Family and Children’s Ministry
Disciples Home Missions

Ways to access Light a Candle

WITH Children

• Blog: http://lightacandle.blogspot.com
• Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/LightaCandleforChildren/
• Text Message: Text 81010 and write @ weeklyfc
• Twitter: @minacrossgenDOC
• If you would like a hard copy of 2019’s information, please contact us. (Last year was videos.) obupdegrove@dhm.disciples.org
Choose from a 3-month, 6-month, or 9-month internship at Christmount. We will help develop an internship based on your specific goals, skill-set, and passions. Some options might include:

- Hospitality, Recreation, and Tourism
- Culinary Arts / Food Service
- Social Media, Marketing, and Sales
- Landscaping / Organic Gardening
- Event Planning
- Special Education (Lakey Gap Autism Programs & Sunshine Programs)
- Grant-Writing and Development
- Eco-Justice and Social Justice

In addition to responsibilities on-site at Christmount, the Intern will also have opportunities to network with community organizations and local congregations.

Internships include lodging and meals, and a small monthly stipend will be provided for the Intern. For more information, contact Christmount - 828-669-8977 or rob@christmount.org.

The theme for Chautauqua Comes to Christmount is I.D.E.A. - Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Affirmation and will be keynoted by the Rev. Dr. William (Bill) Thomas. Currently Bill serves as Senior Minister of Little White Chapel Christian Church in Burbank, Calif., where he combines his passions for music, storytelling and proclaiming the Good News to his congregation and to those around them. Chautauqua will also feature morning workshops, book clubs, yoga, and evening concerts. More information: https://www.christmount.org/chautauqua

Come for the big Turkey Day or stay for the week and join lots of old and new friends as we celebrate a feast to remember. Lodging is available in the Guest House, Group Lodge, Watson Cottages, or RV Park. The meal is donation-based, with all proceeds going to the Camp Sunshine Scholarship Fund.

Join us for a Gingerbread House Workshop on either December 13 OR December 14 this year! We will provide all the supplies, including your very own Christmount holiday apron to take home along with your lovely gingerbread house. At least, we’re sure it will be lovely…
Disciples Invited to Celebrate #DMFday on Sept. 12

#DMFday is Thursday, Sept. 12, 2019 our first-ever Church-wide giving day to support and sustain Disciples Mission Fund.

We’re celebrating this special day on the 231st birthday of Alexander Campbell, one of the founders of our denomination. To honor our Church’s history, we look towards the future, by investing in the regional and general ministries we’ve developed to live into our call to be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.

This campaign is an effort to raise gifts for Disciples Mission Fund, which funds our whole Church, and we could not sustain our ministries without generous support. DMFday is also an opportunity to educate Disciples congregations about DMF and the ministries our gifts support. We hope this education will encourage and inspire more congregations to support Disciples Mission Fund throughout the year.

So on #DMFday, we invite Disciples to come together — to celebrate our Church’s past, present, and future. Our goal is to reach 231 new givers on Sept. 12. Will you join us?

Visit disciplesmissionfund.org/DMFday to find social media graphics and resources to help us invite everyone to join us on September 12.

Known by our Missions and Ministry Partners

The mission of Disciples Church Extension Fund (DCEF) is to help churches plan and finance their Holy Places. We do this by making low interest church loans that are funded through investment vehicles offered to Disciples congregations, individuals and church-related organizations. DCEF also offers building and capital fundraising services.

The mission of Hope Partnership Services is to provide leadership development and congregational revisioning services to churches in transition. These services, including New Beginnings and the Epiphany process, are now available through DCEF at a reduced cost making them more accessible to the congregations that need them most.

The mission of New Church Ministry is to support the efforts of the local regional and area new church movement by assessing, training, and coaching new church planters. A variety of NCM resources aid this goal, including Leadership Academy and the webinar series New Church Hacks.

To learn more, call 800.274.1883 (866.534.1949 en español), or visit disciplescef.org, hopepmt.org or newchurchministry.org.
Noted Scholars Update Book on Disciples Identity


While the content is certainly revised, so was the authors’ process. “We realized that, even more than in 2009, two white guys writing this book wasn’t ideal,” explains Kinnamon, former General Secretary of the National Council of Churches.

So the authors asked Disciples from the communities served by National Convocation, Obra Hispana, and North American Pacific/Asian Disciples to review the 2009 book as they prepared the new one. Linn, former Lexington Theological Seminary professor, also conducted interviews with regional and general Church leaders.

These responses helped inform the 2019 book, which was also influenced by the writers’ varying opinions. “We have a wonderful partnership,” Kinnamon said, “in part because we don’t always agree. We’re not afraid to engage in that open disagreement until we find resolution.”

Still, Kinnamon suggests, the book isn’t intended to be the final word on any topic, but instead a conversation starter for classes and congregations across our Church.”

“Disciples: Who We Are and What Holds Us Together” is full of fruitful discussion topics, devoting each chapter to a tenet the authors determined to be central to Disciples identity: covenant, scripture, the Lord’s Table, baptism, unity, mission, congregations, and leadership.

In both editions of the books, Kinnamon and Linn’s thesis remains: “Disciples have an identity that is recognizable across the years and across cultures, and a reclaiming of this identity can contribute to much-needed renewal of our denomination, while strengthening our witness as ‘a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world’.”

The first chapter, “Covenant: Freedom with Accountability,” is crucial to the authors’ look at our Church in the 21st century, Kinnamon argues.

“The key tension for almost any Church is between unity and justice – we hope Disciples are committed in a big way to both. But how do you hold together in a community that includes those who are supportive of undocumented immigrants [for example], and those who oppose that immigration? That’s why we think the focus on covenant is particularly important. The way we approach diversity is to celebrate the diversity inherent in our unity.”

Following jam-packed workshops at General Assembly, the conversation will continue online in the fall. Information about those conversations will be provided at ChalicePress.com/Disciples, in Disciples News Service, and on social media.

Emily Martin, Communication Ministries Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
The Call: My Mission and Our Ministry at Trinity United Christian Church

I had two reasons behind my impetus to write the book. First, I have been a pastor for 32 years and 23 have been spent with Trinity United Christian Church, in Lower Burrell, Pa. I wanted a written record of what we pray for, dreamed, and accomplished for the Lord. The leadership of Trinity worked very hard to create a compelling vision for the congregation to follow. I felt that sharing the insights, stories, and creativity of our journey of faith might inspire and challenge other churches to move forward with their people. The challenge of moving a congregation from a 1950s style of to a 21st century church has been both very hard and rewarding at the same time! It’s as if we have an entirely new congregation compared to just a few years ago.

Second, my calling as a pastor resides in evangelism, discipleship, and missions. I truly believe we must combine Matthew 25 and Matthew 28. Jesus called Trinity to become a missions-minded church and that mission includes both reaching peoples’ hearts for Christ and blessing their physical lives. In Matthew 28:18 we hear these words, “Go, into all the world and preach this gospel” while Matthew 25 reminds us “when you did it to the least of them, you did it unto Me.” Simply put, our Lord calls us to REACH, TOUCH, and BLESS our generation for the Lord Jesus and that is what we tried to do.

THE CALL was written for pastors, lay leaders, the laity, and any church member who is interested about long-term ministry and a strategy in one place that can produce a church that remains focused on mission and discipleship. In Pennsylvania, and western Pennsylvania in particular.

MAG Continued from page 28.

Playing together is hard. There have to be rules, discussions, and boundaries. There have to be times when one loses and another card wins. There is always a need to start over and be shuffled. There are many different ways to play, but we all have to take a turn.

There are a variety of reflections on how we have created ourselves quite a conundrum. That instead of asking how do we build relationships and create space to be together; we have spent many years hiring out the least of these for the “least of these” and hoping a curricula and a stellar Vacation Bible School will help our future generations know and experience a living Christ daily. We have done what the other “cards” wanted and not lived into what Paul’s letter to the Corinthians calls us to be.

“It’s not MAG – ic, it’s ministry.” I invite you to read the quotes that were found on the cards handed out at General Assembly. I invite you to share them within your churches, communities, and on social media. Look up some of the ministries that are attached to these leaders at this time in the movement. The energy, intentionality, and shifts that it will take to bring all of “the deck” back together are counter-cultural to how we have engaged in ministry for the last 50 or more years. It requires us to be willing to engage in the grieving process of our failures, the learning process of cross-generational learning, the daily needs for spiritual growth, and a
GA Accepts the Challenge

The theme for the 2019 General Assembly (GA), held in Des Moines, Iowa, July 20 – 24, was ‘Abide in Me’ from the scriptural passage of John 15:5 (NRSV)

“Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.”

And the booth for Disciples Church Extension Fund (DCEF), Hope Partnership and New Church Ministry embraced this theme with a vineyard setting, wine barrel tables, and two ‘tastings’ with DCEF President Rick Reisinger as sommelier (pouring grape juice, of course). But probably the biggest draw to the booth, located just inside the main entrance of the exhibit hall, was the 14-foot lighted chalice that faced the room interior.

“People used it to navigate, because you could see it wherever you were in Hy-Vee Hall,” says DCEF Vice President Gilberto Collazo. “Plus, it was a great background for selfies and we encouraged people to take ‘the chalice challenge’.”

And, people did, by the hundreds, with the DCEF staff who were working the booth often serving as photographer. Whether people were stopping by the booth to speak with a Building and Capital Services Advisor, or to check DCEF’s Escape Room Leader Board, they usually managed to make it over to the chalice . . . and accept the challenge.

Joe Whitman, Director of Marketing - Strategy and Messaging
DCEF, Hope Partnership and New Church Ministry

Terrell L. McTyer submitting the resolution from the floor of the Wells Fargo Arena during General Assembly. (See story on next page.)
Save the dates of July 26-31, 2020, for the Association of Disciple Musicians. The National Conference will be held at the University of Tulsa and will feature The Reverend Terri Hord Owens as the Worship Leader. “Will You Come and Follow Me” is the theme for the workshop. All are welcome for an inspiring week of Worship and Music.

NCM Excites the Church with a New Number

The first Business Session of General Assembly 2019 included a resolution from New Church Ministry (NCM). First, former General Minister and President, the Rev. Dr. Dick Hamm gave a brief history of the 2020 Vision which celebrated the success of the new church movement in formation of more than 1,000 churches since 2001.

Pastor Terrell L. McTyer, Minister of New Church Strategies, then spoke from the floor to passionately submit the RESOLUTION TO CELEBRATE THE FORMATION OF NEW CONGREGATIONS AND CONTINUE THE COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT TO MAKE DISCIPLES (https://ga.disciples.org/resolutions/2019/ga-1924) which said, in part . . .

WHEREAS, New Church Ministry partners with all the expressions of the Church to train, equip, assist and multiply New Church leaders . . .; and,

WHEREAS, it is through this cooperative spirit, and the commitment of New Church leaders that . . . (we) . . . live into the Great Commission; . . .

BE IT RESOLVED that the formation of new congregations continues to be a priority of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) beyond the year 2020 as we answer God’s call to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Pastor McTyer then proposed a new goal for the Christian Church: 1,000,000 new Disciples by the year 2030 which the crowd applauded.

“Some may say that’s an awfully big number,” Terrell notes. “But I only pray that one million is courageous enough to be worthy of a movement for wholeness in this fragmented world.”

Joe Whitman, Director of Marketing - Strategy and Messinging, DCEF, Hope Partnership and New Church Ministry

New goal for the Christian Church: 1,000,000 new Disciples by the year 2030
LGBTQ+ issues. Indeed, the structure of our denomination reflects the discernment that fundamental global processes (including human development) are characterized by interconnected complexity.

As such, the enlightened embrace expected to result from the “Invitation to Education for Welcoming and Receiving the Gifts of Transgender and Gender-Diverse People” is best viewed as an important expression of a denomination-wide spirituality that requires us to do similarly for all aspects of our life and witness. The fuel for this multifaceted enterprise would come from a relentless quest for ever-deepening attunement with the God whose pervasive presence and challenging call engenders creative transformation for each and all.

Consider then, with General Assembly as the immediate background, that we are being encouraged toward a denominational orientation in which the obligations of disciplined devotion enable us to hospitably engage multiple dimensions of every quest, point of agreement and disagreement, and of every person with whom we agree and disagree. In this ethos we will, in every encounter, be acutely mindful of the common grounding in One whose supremacy is informed by all-inclusive relationality.

The openness to fellowship and service in the midst of similarities and differences should enable us to break through the passive-aggressive approach to dissent that some adopt and the tribal way in which we’re sometimes tempted to pursue advocacy.

Operating together in a complex unity where critical solidarity is a spiritual discipline, we should be better able to sustain ourselves when faced with varied reactions to the devotional risk-taking that was evident at General Assembly. We should also be enabled to reach out together in order that others might be attracted to the ultimate source of our unity in difference, even as we celebrate our recognition that the diversity reflected in our common witness is consistent with the rich complexity of the world in which informed compassion testifies to maturing spirituality and developing humanity.

Dr. Michael St. A. Miller
Executive Vice President and Dean
Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, Texas

shift in how our church structures are currently formed.

Daily I seek prayer that those in the church stay connected for life to their faith communities. I want all of our young people to grow to know a loving God, a saving Christ and a spiritual Divinity. I am ready to play, but I am only one card. I need a full deck. Are you still looking for MAG – (IC) or are you willing to do ministry? The tricks won’t work, but I am ready to play when you are.

Rev. Dr. Olivia Bryan Updegrove
Minister of Ministries Across Generations at Disciples Home Missions
The Disciples' Advocate

The Disciples' Advocate

people have lived in their communities for many years. I believe a long-term ministry may be the best situation to turn around a church. Church work is not for the faint of heart, and one must believe and live into the calling God has placed on one’s heart.

THE CALL contains 3 sections. First, I begin with a history and analysis of Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, and the New Kensington/Lower Burrell communities. An older pastor once told me that if he went to a new church, he would walk up and down the streets of that city to discover the customs and personality of the people. Pastors must become missionaries in America. We must learn the language and culture of the native people of our churches so that we may minister specifically to them. In the second section, I unpack my theology of ministry in evangelism and discipleship, presenting a scriptural basis of the WHY behind my calling and our ministry at Trinity. And, in the third part, I relate stories (with pictures) from my 22 years in the congregation. These narratives include the contemporary music, youth ministries, our emphasis on local and world missions, Bible studies (small groups) and sermons. I know that many students at Biblical Life Institute will pastor churches, and I believe THE CALL encourages and challenges us to persevere in the pastoral ministry with God’s calling motivating us! So, my book is both research and the chronicle of the surprising love of God that touched a congregation, about 15-20 miles northeast of Pittsburgh Pa.

Rev. Cletus l. Hull, III
Trinity United Christian Church
Lower Burrell, Pennsylvania

DCEF Awards Innovation

Disciples Church Extension Fund (DCEF) has recognized the innovative use of Holy Place for mission and ministry with the inaugural presentation of its INNOVA award. The ceremony was held on the first night of General Assembly. During the Branch and Vine Dinner hosted by DCEF, Hope Partnership and New Church Ministry, the stories of all five nominated congregations were told via video to an audience of nearly 400.

Nominees for the 2019 INNOVA award include:
- Casa View Christian Church of Dallas, Texas;
- Triumphant Temple of Praise Christian Church of Flint, Mich.;
- Greenleaf Christian Church of Goldsboro, N.C.;
- Glendale Mission & Ministry Center, Glendale, Ariz.;
- Iglesia Mision La Roca Christian Church, of south Dallas.

Following the video presentation, two award winners were announced surprising nominees and event attendees alike. Casa View Christian Church and Iglesia Mision La Roca each received the INNOVA statuette and a $3,000 cash award. The other nominees received certificates of recognition and $1,000 to aid their ministries. To view all five INNOVA nominee videos, visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12eTcBNHHJU.

“DCEF’s mission is to help churches plan and finance their Holy Places,” says DCEF President Rick Reisinger. “So, we are delighted to recognize and encourage innovative use of these facilities among our ministry partners for the benefit of their communities.”

To nominate a congregation for the next INNOVA to be awarded at the 2021 General Assembly, email a brief description of its innovative use of Holy Place (100 words or less) to jwhitman@churchextensionfmr.org with the subject line INNOVA Nominee.

Joe Whitman, Director of Marketing - Strategy and Messaging
DCEF, Hope Partnership and New Church Ministry

DCEF Awards Innovation

Pastor Jayme Harvey accepts the INNOVA award on behalf of her church -- Casa View Christian Church of Dallas, Texas.

Amazon: Search The Call Cletus Hull or www.amazon.com/Call-Mission-Ministry-Trinity-Christian/ dp/1633853071
Facebook: TheCallCletusHull
Twitter: @TheCall_Trinity

The Call Continue from page 33.
gun violence heightens the danger women face. “The majority of mass shootings in the US are in some way related to domestic or family violence.” One report from this same source indicates that in at least 54% of mass shootings, the perpetrator also shot a current or former intimate partner or family member. One classmate of the shooter behind the recent Dayton shooting reported that he kept a ‘rape list’ for girls and a ‘kill list’ for boys. Another said he talked about violence and used harsh language about women. Among those he killed was his sister.

According to federal law, perpetrators of domestic violence are legally barred from buying guns and, yet, many have been able to get high-capacity firearms. Two countries have warned their citizens against travel to the US citing “indiscriminate possession of firearms by the population” and the “impossibility of authorities to prevent these situations.” Together we can work toward sensible gun laws.

All too often men are taught directly or indirectly that their “manhood” is defined by the use and misuse of coercive power through violent means. The majority of our nation’s superheroes fight even for “the right” by violent means. Kate Epperly boldly asserts in her intergenerational gun safety and gun violence prevention resource (downloadable at www.docfamiliesand-children.org) the power of disciplined compassion and inclusive hospitality, as practiced by Jesus, needs to be seen as a type of “Supraheroism” which is badly needed in today’s world.

While we often see our greatest danger coming from outside our churches and homes, we find that often that danger is within where conflict resolution is done through violence and/or appropriate safety precautions are not used to prevent a violent family member from impulsively responding to a momentary rage.

1. We encourage congregational ministries to simply reach out to families in your church and community to talk non-judgmentally about who has guns and why. Using that opportunity, teach basic safe storage practices and the wisdom of “asking” about the presence and storage of firearms when your children play at a friend’s home.

2. We encourage the practice and teaching of non-violent conflict resolution to young and old alike.

3. We encourage the teaching of Jesus as the model for seeing the value in each person and for how we resolve conflict.

Rev. Dr. Kate Epperly, Minister of Justice and Advocacy for Families and Children
Disciples Home Missions

Rev. Dr. Patricia Donahoo, Executive Director, Disciples Women
Division of Homeland Ministries
of the Christian Church
P.O. Box 1986
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1986
Address Service Requested