

# DWCONNECT

FALL 2019

## *Greetings Disciples Women*

Disciples Women is excited about the passing of Resolution **GA-1927** at General Assembly this year:

**CONCERNING THE REOPENING OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN CUBA, ENDING THE U.S. EMBARGO AGAINST THE ISLAND, AND PROMOTING A CONSTRUCTIVE RELATION BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES.**

To read the full resolution please click <https://ga.disciples.org/resolutions/2019/ga-1927/>



**Chesla Nickelson**, Program Director for Disciples Women had the honor to be a speaker at an HIV Awareness and Black Women event hosted by Red Elephant, in Indianapolis, IN a recipient of the DWEF grant.

## What It Means to Be Free: A Conversation with Womanist Preachers

In honor of Women's Equality Day, which took place on August **New Church Ministry** interviewed **Rev. Dr. Irie Session** and Rev. Kamilah Hall Sharp, two female preachers who started **The Gathering** in Dallas, TX. Our conversation occurred on the heels of General Assembly, where Disciples marked the culmination of the **2020 Vision**.

In our **resolution**, we celebrated the formation of 1,000 congregations in 1,000 different ways. This discussion we had with The Gathering's preachers demonstrates the diversity of new and affiliated congregations, and how important this aspect of the Vision is to the Church's future. We've included an excerpt below, but for the full interview, visit New Church Ministry's

YouTube **channel** and **website**. The Gathering is a womanist church. How do each of you define womanism?

**Session: So let me begin like this:** Everyone interprets the Bible through a certain lens, whether we admit it or not, or whether even we know it or not. We bring all of who we are to our study and interpretation of the biblical text. That is, what we've been taught theologically, what we believe about the Bible. And I say what we've been taught theologically, what we believe about the Bible, because the two may not be the same. We may have been taught some things theologically, but may not necessarily believe 'em. But we bring our biases, we bring our experiences, etc. As a theologically trained Black woman who identifies as womanist, what I'm simply doing is naming the lens through which I do theology and ministry. So [The Gathering] is naming that... but as far as the definition of womanism, I consider it an embodied framework or methodology that - and to quote Dr. Mitzi J. Smith - that privileges the voices, traditions, concerns, and experiences of Black women, as opposed to the voices, traditions, concerns and experiences of say, white males. Because traditionally, that's how we've all read Scripture. That's how we've understood it. When we think of theology and biblical interpretation, they've been held hostage by the white male gaze and the white male perspective. But that's just one way of doing theology, not the only way. Womanism declares Black women's theologizing and scholarship is valid, and necessary for the survival and wholeness of all God's creation.

**Sharp:** Womanism is a lens in which I interpret the Bible, but it's also how I try to live out my life in helping liberate all people. As a womanist church, yes we are interpreting the text from a womanist lens, but we're also trying to liberate all people through our preaching, through the ways that we engage in issues of injustice, and trying to seek justice in the way we put our bodies on the line and the ways that we spend our money.

How do you think womanism contributes to equality?

**Session:** Womanism is a way of not waiting for someone to invite you to the table, but to create your own table. This idea of being able to create your own space and to privilege your own way of thinking about ministry is what it means to be free. And equality is about being free. Womanism is a way for Black women to experience freedom. That's why it was birthed... because of this lack of equality.

How does that tie in with the Disciples identity statement: "a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world?"

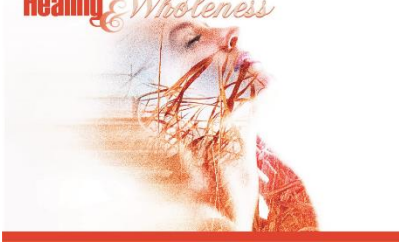
**Sharp:** You can still [have] your own table at a picnic. We got our own table, but we're still part of the party.

---

## 2020 Woman-to-Woman Worldwide Journey

We are now accepting applications for the 2020 W2WW journey which will be to Southern Asia. To view the requirements and complete an application, please click here:

<https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/congregations/disciples-women/woman-to-woman-worldwide/>



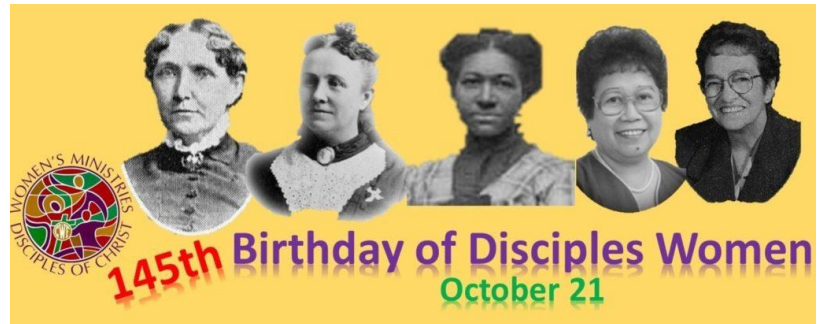
## 2020 Bible Study

**REMINDER! REMINDER!** We are currently accepting Pre-Orders for the 2020 Just Women Bible Study and will continue to accept pre-orders until December 1st. Please click on the following link to order your copy today!

Order Here:

<https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/product/2019-just-women-bible-study-2/>

## 145<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Disciples Women



Disciples Women want to thank everyone who has made donations to the 145th Birthday gifts to date and we continue to receive gifts each day! We appreciate everyone continuing to spread the word about this great celebration! If you would like to read more about the 14<sup>th</sup> birthday of Disciples Women or you would like make a donation, please click on the following link:

<https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/congregations/disciples-women/145th-birthday-of-disciples-women/>



## Disciples Women

PO Box 1986 | Indianapolis, IN 46206 | [www.discipleswomen.org](http://www.discipleswomen.org) | [odw@dhm.disciples.org](mailto:odw@dhm.disciples.org)

