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Home Missions

# The Disciples' Advocate



## Reconciliation Ministry

*"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word,<sup>21</sup> that they may all be one....<sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one,<sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one..."* John 17:20 – 22a NRSV

Characterized as confronting "the most threatening domestic crisis of the past 100 years in the life of our nation," the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) solidified its commitment to the ministry of Reconciliation in 1968. Reconciliation: The Urban Emergency Program, as it was named upon its inception, was established for the purpose of addressing the root causes of poverty and racism. In the case of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) the formal establishment of the mission of Reconciliation was more of a 'sanctioning' of a movement that was well afoot toward addressing racial equity and social justice. Our nation's urban centers were ablaze with clashes and clamoring for an outlet to channel centuries of combustible rage cultivated in the soil of separatism by race and nation of origin.

It was into this setting Reconciliation as a mission was formalized for our denomination in 1968. On the one hand it would seem that we find ourselves confronting a similar context of unrest as the public outcry for human dignity persists. Our ire is raised when we see violations against the human spirit in the form of unequal access to housing,

jobs, civil rights, human rights for immigrant communities and equal treatment by law enforcement agencies. We continue to organize and raise our voices on behalf of those whose voice and witness have been muted. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) persists in her proclamation of Christ's command that we love one another and seek to embody a pro-reconciling and anti-racist identity.

In the spirit of transparency, we struggle with this proclamation. All of us do not agree about the reality of racism or its pervasiveness in our systems and institutions. "The conversation about the reality of racism in our communities and our institutions is a courageous one. When we begin this conversation, we need to ask 'why does my friend (insert neighbor, activist, participant, church member, etc.) feel this way?' There is a large chasm of difference in the experience and understanding of systemic racism in our church and society. Those of us who benefit from systems are unlikely to examine their weaknesses. It is into this gap that we must enter with courage and commitment to be agents of individual, institutional and cultural change." (Justice Primer 2017 see insert)

We enter just like Christ, whose final words of wisdom to his disciples in the Gospel according to John were "I give you a new commandment that you love one another." (John 13:34 NRSV) In our endeavor to embrace our General Assembly theme "WE ARE ONE" taken from that same

*Continued on page 13. See Reconciliation.*

### Recommitment to Reconciliation

General Assembly	one
Meet the Nominee for GMP	4
Green Chalice	7
Disciples Women	12
Friendship Ministries	14
Meaning of Sanctuary	16
Doan's Reflections	17
Winter Talk	18
Doctrine of Discovery	19
Justice Primer (pull out)	25
Ministries Across Generations	38
Refugee & Immigration	40



April Johnson



UNO / YOUNN / 하나 / UN  
JOHN 17: 20-21

# A Word or Two from Ron Degges

Over eight years ago I was extended an invitation by the Board of Directors of Disciples Home Missions to pack my bags in Southern California and make my way to beautiful, downtown Indianapolis, Ind., to serve as President of Disciples Home Missions. The invitation was truly a call from God to come to denominational headquarters bringing the gifts and graces of leadership that had been acquired over 36 years of pastoral ministry.

I went right to work on that first day of employment on January 1, 2009, sharing love and joy for the church and its ministry, a love and joy that continues to this day. I have been privileged to work with a Disciples Home Missions Staff that is highly professional, well-educated, and devoted to congregations and their leaders, both clergy and lay. I have been privileged to work alongside our Regional Executives throughout the United States and Canada who are on the front line of caring for the welfare of congregational life. These are some of the most dedicated and hardworking persons I have ever met. I have been privileged to accompany our congregational pastors and lay leaders as they navigate their congregations through the choppy waters of 21st century ministry, while building an infrastructure which insures the church's viability for centuries to come. Never has a day passed that I have not prayed for our congregations, their ministers and lay leaders, and our Regional leadership.

I have also been privileged to work on a daily basis with my colleagues in General Ministry. I can say without any hesitation that we are bound to one another and to God with a love that will not let any of us go anywhere – except into retirement. I love my General Minister and President and my General Ministry colleagues with a love that is born of laboring together in this Disciples vineyard. They have become my special family and will always remain dear to my heart.

And to you, readers of The Disciples'

Advocate, I will miss you deeply. My entire ministry has been one of communicating the good news of the gospel to the church and world. At first it was always through preaching and print media. In recent decades it has included e-mail, the internet, Facebook, You Tube, Twitter, Snapchat, FaceTime, and Constant Contact alongside preaching and print media. I have served as Editor for the last twenty-five issues of The Disciples' Advocate. Disciples Home Missions has highlighted the various ministries and mission involvements of congregations and Regions across the life of our



Rev. Ron Degges

church. In this issue you will find articles dedicated to recommitting our energies to the Ministry of Reconciliation. If there was ever a time to focus more clearly on being a pro reconciling anti-racist church and society, the time is now. We need more than ever a united and uniting church to stand against the growing polarization and division that is breaking apart our human family.

Let me thank you for giving me the opportunity to engage with you over these past years. If no one has told you lately, let me tell you now, what a great church and people you are. I will hold you near to my heart and continue to serve my God and my church on the other side of retirement.

With gratitude and thanksgiving for you, I am very truly yours,


Ron



## Black Leadership Project Grant

Application form deadline is **May 31**. All proposals for projects that develop, nurture, and strengthen lay or clergy church leadership in Disciples African American congregations will be considered. Funds will be awarded to the chosen projects in Summer of 2017. Go to [www.discipleshomemissions.org/black-leadership-projects-grant](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/black-leadership-projects-grant) for more information and application guidelines.

# In the Mail



I have thought for some time about writing to you. Now it is essential. I want to wish the very best for you in your coming retirement. My husband and I have enjoyed ours for several years now and would not wish otherwise for you. However, I will miss you very, very much. I look forward to your articles in the DHM newsletters and regularly share them with several people. I have much regard for your directness and perspective. You have been a blessing to many people. Thank you for all the ways in which you have shared your life.

Yours sincerely,

*Roberta Prowell  
Beaverton, Oregon*

Many thanks for your generous gift of \$50 for the drawing to benefit the Shelton Family Scholarship at Disciples Seminary Foundation which was part of the Don Shelton Golf Classic. We generated \$1,100.00 for the Scholarship Fund.

The tournament itself had a profit of \$20,000.00, so we gave \$3,333.33 to each of the six ministries that benefit from this event.

Congratulations on your plans to retire at the end of August next year. I hope you'll be returning to South California so we can see you on a more regular basis.

A blessed Christmas,

*Ed Liubey, Chairman  
Shelton Golf Classic*

Thank you for the DHM award as I begin service at Bethany College. I missed you but was so delighted to see Pat representing DHM. Thank you again for keeping me and this historic Disciples' school in your thoughts this week. I look forward to welcoming you in the village one day soon.

*Tamera Nichols Rodenberg  
President of Bethany Collage*

I never miss reading one of Ron Degg's "essays". They are wonderful, so wise and thought-provoking. Please tell him how much they are appreciated.

*Janet Graff*

Thank you for your beautiful cards, notes and letters. It is always a special gift to hear from you. Some of you told me how many years you have celebrated Christmas. For me -- 85 years. I recall our first Christmas in Congo. With help from other missionaries, we "made" a tree, the decorations, and most of the gifts. We attended the Christmas worship service, Christmas morning at the Bolenge church. This service lasted four hours. The language was Lonkundo, which we had not yet learned. It was a very happy service! Our three young children were not as trilled as Dick and I.

Happy New Year to all of DHM staff! Thank you!

*Virginia Taylor  
Glen Allen, Virginia*

Please accept my deep gratitude for the beautiful card and plaque given to me upon my consecration to the Office of Bishop. Your ministry is so vital to the entire church. It has certainly encouraged me.

Dear Ron, for the remainder of my days I will believe that DHM is on a God-breather journey. Partly because of you and your ability to love no matter what! You are loved!

Respectfully,

*Bishop Valerie J. Melvin  
Goldsboro, North Carolina*

*See story on page 44.*

Thank you for being a friend! To all staff of DHM – current or retired. Your invitation to the Thanksgiving luncheon certainly gave us a chance to enjoy a delicious meal, celebrate life together, and learn old and new staff experiences. You have always found ways to appreciate the DHM staff. Thanks again!

Love,

*Marilyn Hotz  
Indianapolis, Indiana*

P.S. Thanks also for the DHM logo gift! It's special.

Ron, Great job my friend. I ask that God's blessings continue to be on you and DHM as you encourage us to work together as Christians in today's world.

*Loma Sullivan*

*Continued on page 10. See in the Mail.*

# Meet the Nominee for GMP

The General Board voted to forward the name of Rev. Teresa (Terri) Hord Owens to the 2017 General Assembly as the nominee for General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

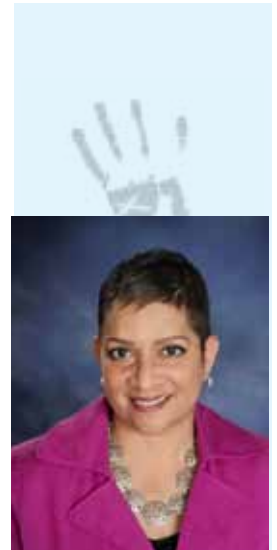


A Disciples since young adulthood, Hord Owens is currently dean of students at the University of Chicago Divinity School and pastor of First Christian Church of Downers Grove, Ill.

Search Committee Chair Jackie Bunch reviewed the process for the General Board before the members of the board had the opportunity to meet Hord Owens in small groups and in the plenary. Of more than 40 people recommended last summer, nine were screened in accordance with the

executive search process. Four were then interviewed in person in October by the search committee. Just prior to the General Board meeting, three candidates were interviewed by the Administrative Committee to determine which candidate to recommend to the board.

Rev. Owens is widely sought after as a preacher, speaker and workshop facilitator. Her ministry and intellectual interests include a theology of reconciliation, cultural intelligence, developing inclusive and multi-cultural congregations, and the mentoring of youth and young adults. She is married to Walter Owens, Jr., with whom she will soon celebrate 30 years of marriage. They are the proud parents of an adult son, W. Mitchell Owens, III.



Teresa (Terri) Hord Owens

## A Renewed Commitment to the Office of Reconciliation

For more than forty years the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has been committed to the eradication of racism in all of its forms and manifestations.

This emphasis has had its ups and downs. The signs of the present times, however, call for the acknowledgement of human dignity for all of God's children; red, yellow, black and white. The ministry that has been designated to lead the denomination in this noble and needed effort is Reconciliation Ministries.

It is time to renew the appeal for Reconciliation Ministry and the role it plays in guiding the church at its three expressions; general, regional and congregational. We may be proud of ourselves in that we are among a few denominations in the country, that have anti-racism as an initiative that characterizes our identity. This is a movement which certainly requires courage, and must be undergirded with the gifts of our time, talents and resources.

To this end we must reaffirm our determination to be active participants in the movement for wholeness in a fragmented

world. One-half of the Reconciliation Offering is shared with our regional ministries, making it possible for active program and activity across the country that call out and address matters of injustice and provide anti-racism training sessions. In our determination let us be united as church, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." (Romans 12: 5).

At our 2017 General Assembly, meeting in Indianapolis, Ind., we will have the



chance to reassert our passion and enthusiasm for the office of Reconciliation Ministry. A resolution will request the strengthening of this ministry with greater participation of church members and finance in order to actualize our initiative and to make full proof of this, our Ministry.

*Rev. Timothy James, Associate General Minister and Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation*





2017  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



SAVE THE DATE

July 8-12, 2017 • Indianapolis



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JOHN 17: 20-21a



REGISTER  
TODAY at  
[disciples.org/ga](http://disciples.org/ga)

- WORSHIP as one
- LEARN in community about transformational leadership, worship, resources and justice
- ELECT a new General Minister and President
- HEAR the results of Mission First!
- EXPLORE new ideas

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**WORSHIP SPEAKERS** *(subject to change)*

■ **Saturday Rev. Jose Morales**  
Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA

■ **Monday Rev. Dr. Serene Jones**  
Union Theological Seminary, New York City

■ **Tuesday Rev. Virzola Law**  
Lindenwood Christian Church, Memphis, TN

■ **Wednesday Newly elected General  
Minister and President**  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

# Engage Your Congregation in Creation Care

*Congregational Toolkit Coming Soon*

Your new Climate Leadership Toolkit will provide the resources you need to get your congregation started on creating a more just and positive future, including:

- Climate communication guides
- Sample sermons and worship materials
- An inspirational video
- An infographic explaining climate impacts and solutions
- Steps for achieving Green Chalice Certification

You can use these resources daily to help make creation care integral to every aspect of your mission.

Scripture calls on us to love our neighbors and care for God's creation. Discover all the ways you and your congregation can build a stronger, healthier community, and care for the "least of these" Watch for your Climate Leadership Toolkit, arriving in early April.





# Resolution on Carbon Neutrality

Look for another General Assembly packed with Green Chalice connections and tools to empower your church to care for people and God's creation. Green Chalice will be offering General Assembly Resolution GA-1723 *"Concerning Carbon*

*Neutrality"* A Resolution for consideration while lifting up care for people and God's creation. Green Chalice staff and volunteers will be partnering with in efforts to provide inspirational, educational and community building opportunities.

Rev. Scott Hardin-Nieri, the Associate Minister of Green Chalice will participate

in a workshop **Wednesday, July 12, 8:45-10:45 a.m.**, on *"Being Cost-Efficient in a Green Society"* with guests Jim Michael of the Church Extension Fund, Rev. Heather McColl of Midway Christian Church and Rev. Trey Flowers of Downey Ave. Christian Church. For details visit the General Assembly website at: [ga.disciples.org/education/stewardship](http://ga.disciples.org/education/stewardship).

Green Chalice will also offer an interactive workshop **Tuesday, July 11, 8:45-10:45 a.m.**, *"A Climate for Faithful Action"* explor-

ing the environmental and social challenges and the uniquely hope-filled solutions offered by Disciples of Christ Congregations. For details go to: [ga.disciples.org/education/social-justice](http://ga.disciples.org/education/social-justice). Green Chalice is also grateful to learn along side our youth ministry programs at the assembly. At the Columbus assembly, we offered an appetizer event with Blessed Tomorrow as well as a bird watching hike with the Audubon Society. Look for more of this kind of fun this year as well. Learn more on the Green Chalice Facebook at [facebook.com/greenchalicedoc](https://facebook.com/greenchalicedoc) or the website, [www.greenchalice.org](http://www.greenchalice.org).

Green Chalice is partnering with Blessed Tomorrow to share a toolkit with congregations this spring. Watch your mail for some ways to live out your faith by caring for people and planet.

*Rev. Scott Hardin-Nieri  
Associate Minister for Green Chalice*



*Rain Garden in Bloom from Midway Christian Church*



The S.O.I.L. experience explores the landscape of our faith as you have never seen it before: through the lens of sustainability, justice, service, and action.

On this week-long journey situated in the beautiful Blue Ridge mountains, groups will learn about some of the most challenging environmental issues impacting our world today: hunger and food insecurity, climate change, pollution, poverty, race and reconciliation.

Participants will explore complex sustainability challenges and meet churches engaged in environmental/social justice in their own communities. This camp is about listening to stories, seeing their impact firsthand and reflecting on how you can champion causes important to you. For more information visit: [www.christmount.org/s-o-i-l](http://www.christmount.org/s-o-i-l)



*Solar Panels from First Christian Church, Black Mountain, North Carolina.*



*Based on many requests, Disciples Home Missions' Office of Christian Vocations is now offering Disciples Deacon and Elder*

*Pins, intended for active lay persons serving in those ministries. The pins are \$5.00 each, plus shipping. To place your order please click: [www.discipleshomeissions.org/clergy/search-call/online-store](http://www.discipleshomeissions.org/clergy/search-call/online-store)*

# Presence of Peace

The chapel is quiet right now. The only noise comes from the Black Hawks and Chinooks preparing to take off to destinations around Iraq. It is Christmas Eve. The rain is pouring and the ground is rapidly covered in a type of mud that is anything but festive. It bogs the mood of the camp, but the war effort does not slow. I have been here for every holiday this year. It never slows, not even in Taji, a place far from the thunder of the frontlines.

In just a few short hours, the Australian Padre, fellow US chaplains and I will lead a candle light service celebrating once again the birth of the Prince of Peace. We will sing traditional carols as military personnel and contractors from around the world pause to pay homage. It is a wonderful reminder. Men and women have looked to this event with hope filled wonder for many years.

I think a great deal about peace these days. Whether it is Iraq or Syria, it is difficult for those who care to not watch with broken hearts. I feel fortunate to be part of an ongoing operation trying to do something about the tragedy we all see on our screens, but it never seems to be enough and it never seems to move fast enough. The destruction is indiscriminate and especially brutal to those most vulnerable: the elderly, women

and children.

As I unpack the candles for the service, I meditate on the last year. I'm getting ready to leave. The battles still rage to my north and probably will for some time to come. There is a certain guilt I cannot help but feel as I prepare to leave. I get to go home. I get to hug my wife and children and sleep in relative safety under the beautiful Tucson night sky. If I want, I do not have to even consider the war-torn events I am poised to leave. It is a strange luxury lost on most of our country. I am ill at ease with that reality. And so I wonder and pray, what will PEACE look like for this part of the world?

One of the officers at lunch recounted the story of the Christmas Truce from WWI. I googled it when I returned back to my office. The story perfectly illustrates how, during the weeks leading to Christmas, tragedy becomes the paradox of God's grace. The story has the feel of myth. As it goes, roughly 100,000 British and German soldiers were involved in an unofficial cessation of hostility along the Western Front. The Germans placed candles on their trenches and on Christmas trees. Both sides joined in singing Christmas Carols, shouting greetings across the way. They even made excursions across

*Continued on page 15. See Chandler.*



Owen R. Chandler



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JOHN 17: 20-21

ADM will be sponsoring two workshops **Tuesday, July 11, 8:45-10:45 a.m.** "Make a Joyful Noise to God" and **Wednesday, July 12, 8:45-10:45 a.m.** "Reclaiming Congregational Song." For details visit the General Assembly website at: [ga.disciples.org/education/worship](http://ga.disciples.org/education/worship).

## ADM to Gather in Indianapolis

The Association of Disciple Musicians (ADM) will hold its 56th Annual Conference this summer in conjunction with the General Assembly in Indianapolis from July 8 to 12. This will be an exciting time as the denomination's national music organization joins as ONE with the strength and purpose of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).



When first organized, ADM was founded with the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of church musicians as they participate in the mission of the church. The term "church musician" was interpreted to include all persons who lead or otherwise participate in church music by vocation or avocation.

Each summer's conference features clinicians leading sessions in worship, organ, choral, handbell, liturgical dance, emerging worship, and children's/youth music. We look forward to this opportunity to share the energy, benefits and work of ADM through its presence in Indianapolis. Complete details for General Assembly registration and conference and assembly activities are on the ADM website at [www.adm-doc.org](http://www.adm-doc.org).



# Ben's Miraculous Story

On November 29, 2016 at about 8 a.m. in the morning, the girlfriend of our oldest child, Benjamin called. Abby was crying and told me she had discovered Ben unresponsive on the couch, the EMT's had arrived, and were taking him to a nearby hospital. I immediately began praying. As my husband, John-Mark, and I drove the 1½ hours we prayed and breathed deeply.

Because Ben had not been sleeping well, he took a sleep herb called Magnolia Root extract. As best anyone can tell, Ben slept hard, stopped breathing, possibly due to sleep apnea, and had a colossal cardiac event, takotsubo cardiomyopathy. (His cardiac troponin enzymes were 35, a number higher than any of the cardiologists had ever seen.) When he arrived at Saints Mary and Elizabeth hospital, he had multiple organ failure, his oxygen was at 40% and his breathing was shallow and labored, his heart pumping function was 10% and his kidneys had shut down. The E.R. doctors concurred that someone needed to tell us that he would not make it.

But something happened on the walk from Ben's bedside to our private waiting room. Dr. Jameel, a faithful Muslim said, "Your son is very, very sick -- but he is young --- maybe he can make it." John-Mark asked, "Can we be hopeful?" Dr. Jameel said, "Yes, you can be hopeful."

The hope and power of the Holy Spirit settled on me in that hospital named for two holy mothers, Mary

and Elizabeth, and stayed for the next 9 days giving me peace that passed all understanding and providing me with confidence that our son would fully recover, I never believed otherwise. Each morning in the hospital, scripture, a devotion and prayer were shared over the intercom. Likewise each evening ended with a prayer.

None of the doctors or nurses who first saw Ben believed that he would live. The cardiologist's first examination of Ben was to see which of his organs could be harvested. The doctors gave him, at best, a 5% chance of survival. But God, love and prayer were not figured into that percentage. And fortunately in that hospital the medical team allowed room in their hearts and minds for the power of God, for a miracle.

And people were praying – our friends in India were praying Hindu prayers, friends in Ecuador were praying Sufi prayers, my friend Father Justin lit a candle for Ben and said Orthodox prayers, Father Tom, Abby's father's priest, prayed through the night and dedicated several masses to Ben. Monks at Gethsemane and nuns were praying, Disciples all over Kentucky, Indianapolis, and all over the United States were praying. Sharon Watkins prayed for Ben at a Mission First event. The Governor of Kentucky prayed for Ben during a Cabinet meeting. An evangelical friend was anointed with oil and received the laying on of hands for Ben. Another friend stood in the circle of a medita-

*Continued on page 12. See Ben.*



*Sarah Hack, Carol Devine, John-Mark Hack, Benjamin Hack and Elijah Hack*



## National Convocation Banquet



*You are invited to the National  
Convocation Banquet*

Sunday, July 9, 2017

5:00 – 6:30 PM

Indianapolis Convention Center

**Tickets are \$35.00**

Please sign up on the General Assembly website - [ga.disciples.org](http://ga.disciples.org)



*Rev. Teresa Hord Owens, Nominee for General Minister and President, being surrounded in prayer at the 2017 Black Ministers Retreat in St. Louis, Mo.*

## In the Mail Continued from page 3.

I want to thank you so much for inviting me to attend the opening dinner for the Board of the Division of Homeland Ministries. It was an impressive group, and auspicious opening for your meeting.

I can only argue that this note is so late because of the Stages of Grief I entered later that night. While you, and all of the others were careful to avoid declaring the outcome of the election, I suspect few considered the outcome in doubt – at least I chose to believe what ‘experts’ were predicting.

Anyway, it was a long night. I can only imagine the physical and emotional pall cast on your agenda, especially since all were still trying to absorb your announcement of retirement.

Ron, I was quite touched by your words explaining my presence in the room. I have no idea what influence I could have offered you in those early years. It is always surprising, and humbling to get an affirmation of maybe, just maybe, touching a life in some unexpected way. Thank you!

I’m blessed to count you as a colleague and friend. I’m just glad that I did not get in your way in your remarkable career.

I look forward to our continuing friendship and to your continuing ministries to and through our church.

Very sincerely and gratefully.

*Laird A. Thomason*

*N. Bethesda, Maryland*

Our prayers are with you as you prepare for retirement. Thank you for coming to visit Wyoming. We enjoyed the time you preached in Casper.

We pray for all of the DHM staff and the search team who’ll be looking for future leadership. Thank you all for equipping Disciples Congregations for strong ministry.

Blessings,

*Rev. Cynthia McBride*

*First Christian Church*

*Casper, Wyoming*

Thank you for hosting the General Youth Council in Indy! It really was great to see how much you care about the youth and young adults of the church. Your love for the church shine through in everything you do. Keep doing what you’re doing. We will definitely miss you once you retire.

Again, thank you for all you do!

*Kate Summers*

*Mt. Carmel, Illinois*

Thank you for sending the extra snacks from the General Youth Council retreat back to Mt. Carmel! We really enjoyed them! It also gave us time to talk about DHM!

Thanks Again.

*Kate Summers and the Mt. Carmel youth*

*Mt. Carmel, Illinois*

*Mckinnon Anderson*

*Connor Anderson*

*Laurel Payne*

*Tyler Johnston*

*Jessia Williams*

*Brenna Lathrop*

*Ashley Harms*

*Kelsey Phelps*

*Logan Baker*

*Madie Macintire*

I have always understood this event to be a Christmas party and so I want to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I also want to thank you for allowing me to attend this party of your staff. As you know, I have always had a special fondness for you and your work that are so much like the program I was involved in for many years. The future is not as predictable as we have been accustomed to and so we must hope that we and people of the world will find our way forward for the wellbeing of all.

Thanks again for the party.

*Garnett Day*

*Indianapolis, Indiana*

Note: I dictated this for Carolyn to write so you could read it! G.

*Continue on page 45. See in the Mail.*



## Disciples Men’s Luncheon

Wednesday, July 12, 2017

11:15 AM – 12:45 PM

Indianapolis Convention Center

**\$30**

# Disciples Schools Show Commitment to Reconciliation

A strong commitment to reconciliation is required from colleges and universities if they are to produce global citizens who view the world through a much wider lens than one's own culture, faith or nationality. Disciples related schools are doing their part to try and address issues of inequality, justice and cross cultural bridge-building.

This past November, students from two Disciples related schools, Texas Christian University and Jarvis Christian College, met together for a dialogue entitled "Breaking the Barrier: A Conversation on Racism in America," facilitated by the Rev. Damien Durr. The event, held in the chapel at Jarvis College, enabled students and faculty to engage openly and honestly on this important problem. Poverty was one of the issues discussed, with Durr listing economic, political, spiritual, physical, and cultural poverties that, while affecting all groups, disproportionately affect communities of color. Durr noted that "Christ engages all of these poverties



*Texas Christian University and Jarvis College dialogue on race.*

and has given us the ability and capacity to confront issues of poverty." While acknowledging changes in race relations over the years, students noted the importance of continuing to fight against injustice, including events like this that create space for difficult conversations.

At Lynchburg College, a new Office of Diversity and Inclusion was announced by the President, Dr. Kenneth Garren, in December 2016. The goal of the office, according to Garren, is to "ensure that the institution's

commitment to diversity is clearly apparent through a campus climate where all students, faculty, and staff feel welcomed and are treated with respect." Garren went on to note that "the Office of Equity and Inclusion will serve as a hub for inclusivity, outreach, programming, training and development for all campus members."

The Chapman Diversity Project, begun in 2014, has led to the creation



*Texas Christian University and Jarvis College dialogue on race.*

of several advisory groups that focus on issues such as disabilities and accessibility, people of color, socio-economic stratification, and the status of women and the LGBTQ community. As part of this process, in February Chapman opened a multi-cultural center which is a hub for student groups and individual students around issues of race, gender, sexuality, ableism, and class. In addition, Transylvania University's Project One seeks to build up the cultural competency of students through engagement on campus as well as in the larger community, encouraging students to embrace diversity and learn from differences.

As a church that is committed to the difficult work of reconciliation, we can celebrate the diversity of students and faculty at Disciples related colleges and universities as well as their efforts to both teach and embody what it means to live in ways that seek justice and love in our relationships and world.

*Jon Barnes*

*Higher Education & Leadership Ministries*



*Are you attending General Assembly? If so, you are invited to the HELM dinner on Monday, July 10, from 5-6:30 p.m. at the Indianapolis Convention Center. The theme of the dinner is "Leadership Formation and the Call to do Justice" and the panel of speakers include Dr. Leah Gunning-Francis, Dean of Christian Theological Seminary, Dr. Robert Wilson-Black, CEO of Sojourners, Rev. Linda McCrae, pastor of Central Christian Church in Indianapolis, and Cris Marin, a HELM Leadership Fellow at Eureka College. Cost of the dinner is \$25 and you can sign-up to attend on the GA registration website at: [ga.disciples.org](http://ga.disciples.org).*

# Stay connected with Disciples Women's Ministries at General Assembly



## The Workshop

Freedom: Promise & Struggle  
Sunday, July 9, 2017  
Location: TBD

## The After Session

Monday, July 10, 2017  
following evening worship  
Location: TBD

## The Luncheon

Wednesday, July 12, 2017  
11:15 AM-12:45 PM  
J.W. Marriott  
\$35  
Register TODAY!

Download "Disciples Women"  
in your mobile App Store for  
updates



## **Ben** *Continued from page 9.*

tion group and received prayers and the laying on of hands for Ben. Our Christian Scientist friends were praying, Baptists, Presbyterians, friends, family and people we will never meet were praying for Ben. Dr. Babar, one of Ben's doctors, asked his Imam to pray and then holding Ben's hand joined John-Mark, my mom, and a Christian minister in prayer. If there was ever a time that we prayed without ceasing, it was during the 5 ½ days Ben was on a ventilator.

And by the power of the Holy Spirit, everything went right and on day ten he walked out of the hospital by himself with a fully functioning heart, lungs and kidneys with no sign of damage or infection.

On Ben's first day in ICU, the nurse manager, a nun, came in and visited with me. She told me that Ben was assigned to the best nurse in the hospital. Nurse Kay said, "Ben is receiving the best medical care and also the care of God, keep praying." The cardiologist assistant said, "Touch is powerful, keep touching him." The doctors and nurses were calling and texting, even from home about Ben's progress and next steps. Family members of the staff were holding Ben in prayer.

Benjamin is known as the Christmas miracle at

Saints Mary and Elizabeth hospital in Louisville, Ky. Through his situation Christians and Muslims prayed together, an Atheist acknowledged a power larger than us, two relatives who have had animosity found unity over a meal and a prayer in Ben's hospital room, a blunt and cold Cardiologist who was confident that Ben would die sat on the edge of Ben's hospital bed and with warm loving kindness claimed that the only explanation is God. One of Ben's doctors told him that he is alive due to the love of his family and prayer. Another said, God is great! We lived one large miracle that brought light to many other miracles – and I am sure there are many others that we will never know.

I give great thanks for the medical skills of the team at Saints Mary and Elizabeth hospital – no one could have done a better job anywhere in the world. But many doctors, nurses, and therapists could have done as good a job. And so I am even more humbled and thankful that Ben's medical team made room in their hearts and care, in Ben's hospital room and procedures, for the power of the Holy Spirit. God is great indeed!

*Rev. Carol Devine*

*Minister of Green Chalice*

# Disciples Women Social Action Emphasis Embraces Immigrant Families

Disciples Women has announced its new social action emphasis of Embracing Immigrant Families to begin in 2017. Disciples Women introduced a resolution to the 2011 General Assembly on educating and advocating to end modern-day slavery and human trafficking. The church has heard and is being educated on this horrible practice but also has and is working to prevent it, end it, and deal with the physical, spiritual, and emotional scars inflicted upon victims. While Disciples Women began its work to combat human trafficking even before the resolution unanimously passed they continue to educate, organize and advocate against it. It was the emphasis from 2010-2014 then the Executive Committee decided to extend it as the social action emphasis to 2018 focusing on those in jeopardy from immigration and labor abuse.

At their February meeting, the current Executive Committee agreed that while the church is much more aware and has done a great deal of work to combat trafficking and there are still nearly 21 million people in slavery today, Disciples Women would continue this work.

However, the committee also decided that there was an urgent need that Disciples Women should be addressing – keeping families of undocumented immigrants together and caring for those most vulnerable. While these families struggle, our immigration system does not function well to assist and protect them even with the reality of the horror they face if they return. This problem has gotten worse with the new policies and executive orders being put in place.



Families are terrified of being torn apart or being sent back to a place where their lives and/or their children will be in danger.

Many pastors, members of congregations and leaders of the Disciples are immigrants and some of them live in fear of family separation. The negative rhetoric against immigrants has made these brothers and sisters fearful of detention and deportation as well. Many of these families have children under the age of 18, some who have known no other home than the United States. (Migration Policy Institute estimates over 5 million children under the age of 18 lived with an undocumented immigrant parent in 2009-13).

Disciples Women is partnering with several partners including the Urban Mission and the Pacific Southwest Region congregations to help families and churches prepare for raids and the appropriate response in the face of detention and deportation risks. The partnership with DHM's Refugee and Immigration Ministries will continue as together we work to care for families in detention and/or preparing for court appearances. Disciples Women will also be working to take care of those who are separated by these policies as well as those workers and caregivers who are standing with these brothers and sisters in difficult times.

Together we can welcome the stranger, for *"just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me"* (Matthew 25:40 NRSV).

*Rev. Pat Donahoo*  
Disciples Women

## Reconciliation *Continued from page 1.*

Gospel John 17:21, we accept Christ's commandment of love as the bridge to "becoming completely one." Love as the bridge to embrace Christ's prayer for his disciples is complex and it is hard and it is completely possible. We do not disagree in love; we disagree because we love one another as Christ has loved us. When it seems that loving one another is impossible because we do not agree about police brutality or pathways to citizenship, or what is Christian and what is political, we can still be one. Oneness in the body of believers holds that with the same love of God in Christ, and Christ's love for us we are made one. As a Church whose identity is Pro-Reconciling and Anti-Racist, we contend that the absence of human dignity and whole-

ness in communities oppressed by racism requires our advocacy as an expression of Christ's love.

Disciples are creating beloved community in life-giving ways that embolden our witness as a Pro-Reconciling and Anti-Racist Church. Disciples in St. Louis, Mo., are working together to continue strengthening their public witness in light of the Ferguson uprising in 2014. Conversations between congregations have ensued about how they can work together to forge a better community and relationships. In the Pacific Southwest Region, over 20 congregations are meeting together for education and action to affect a broad Matthew 25 sanctuary for individuals and churches desir-

*Continued on page 19. See Reconciliation.*

# Venga la Esperanza! – Hope Comes through Partnering with Friendship Ministries!

There is a growing number of Disciples congregations which have discovered “Venga la Esperanza” - Hope Comes - through partnering with Friendship Ministries ([www.friendship.org](http://www.friendship.org)) to provide a variety of services and materials to nurture the spiritual growth of people with intellectual disabilities.

Friendship Ministries online resources and free consulting services compliment their high quality, interdenominational, easy to use curricula and support the development of mutually rewarding one-on-one, personal relationships between Friends and mentors. The “Together” online approach to bible study ([www.togethersmallgroups.org](http://www.togethersmallgroups.org)) uses a wide variety of teaching techniques with visual and dramatic bible passage presentations and challenging interactive exercises, worship songs and prayers which create a deep sense of true belonging among people of all levels of intellectual ability and autism spectrum disabilities.

Linda Morrow of First Christian Church in Denton, Texas, is happy to report that she began a “Rainbow Class” program for special needs adults in 1983 and now, thanks to Friendship Ministries and Linda’s dedication, it is still going strong ([www.fccdenton.com/ministries/rainbow-class](http://www.fccdenton.com/ministries/rainbow-class))

Linda says “We currently have 16 on our roll and usually there are 12 or 13 in attendance. Most stay for worship after the Sunday School Class, and many also attend fellowship dinners and various other functions when the weather and their rides permit. It was a chapel at the Denton State School (now the Denton State

Supported Living Center) who first told us about the Friendship curriculum. It is my favorite curriculum to use although, of course, it is a big investment for a class as small as ours. There is quite a variety of material that covers both scripture and real life issues. Both are necessary. Since most of my students live in group settings, the real life issues resources are really helpful.”

“Although some people “weren’t sure what to think of the group when it started, especially when I taught them how to serve communion!”, Linda admits, her testimony is clear: enabling friends with intellectual abilities to become an active part of God’s family is rewarding for the whole church. For further information see their website/s or call 888-866-8966 (English) or 800-426-8355 (Spanish).

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it...in fact, God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as God wanted them to be.” (Corinthians 12:27 & 18)

*Rev. Kate Epperly  
Justice and Advocacy Coordinator*



*Photo above: A Friendship Ministries group attend a cookout in the backyard of Linda Morrow of First Christian Church in Denton, Texas. The two people immediately facing the camera are mentors, not students. (Photo provided by Linda Morrow)*



*May Peace Prevail on Earth in English, Spanish, Armenian, and Swedish. Honoring the life and ministry of Pastor Bill Backstrom. The Peace Pole was a gift from his wife, Mary K, and their children.*

*A large group of people came to dedicate the Peace Pole and honor the legacy of Pastor Bill Backstrom at the Pasadena, Calif., Christian Church. DHM President, Ron Degges, preached during Morning Worship on Universal Reconciliation.*

# Fill Backpacks for the Homeless

"As General Assembly draws near and planning is in its final stages, the Young Adult Commission (YAK) has seen a need within the Indianapolis community. As we come together as Disciples to worship and share fellowship with each other, there will be a large homeless population right outside the doors of our sanctuary. In order to be the hands and feet of Jesus, YAK is going to be collecting supplies to fill backpacks for the homeless. In partnership with the Wheeler Mission in Indianapolis, we are requesting attendees bring the following items to fill the already gifted backpacks with: underwear, t-shirts and pajamas, sizes S – 4X (can be gently used); toiletries, especially deodorant; chucks (disposable, waterproof bed pads); Ibuprofen, Tylenol,

analgesics (must be sealed in original container); baby wipes; bath towels and wash cloths; socks; paper napkins, paper towels, paper plates, disposable tableware; and ethnic hair care products.

These products are just the most needed at the current time. For a full list of needs please go to [wheelermission.org/ways-to-give/more-ways-to-help/](http://wheelermission.org/ways-to-give/more-ways-to-help/) and select "Ongoing Needs." Any gifts of the items listed above or any on the website will help us support the community we are coming together to worship in. Thank you all and God Bless." Drop off your items at the DHM exhibit booth near the YAK area.

*Clayton Summers*

*Disciples of Christ Young Adult Commission*

## Chandler *Continued from page 8.*

No Man's Land to exchange gifts of food, tobacco and alcohol.

How were they able to peer past their training and their reality to see the peace being celebrated in the birth of Christ? I think of the enemies we now face and I cannot imagine a similar scene. I cannot see the same opportunities of make-shift sacred space or a common understanding of humanity. During the Christmas Truce, there was a stalemate in the trenches. There was a space created in the impasse. The space was steeped in desperation and prayer. It became a sacred moment juxtaposed with the coming Christmas morning. There was time to actually consider the story of the one hunkered in the opposite trench. The soldier was drilled to believe that the enemy soldier is the enemy of all life and all future. But in the space in between, they saw a common humanity. They saw the image of God within the other. In a season where we celebrate hope, joy and love, peace overcame them, even if for only a short while.

In some respects, it is probably not completely fair to compare this current conflict with that one so long ago. As I hear the approaching steps of a chaplain, one cannot help but wonder, however. Have the last 13 years of war created a similar type

of stalemate? This deployment has created more questions than answers. Will we be able to take the tragic spaces created by war and make them holy? How will peace be possible if we are unable or even unwilling to see our own stories, sons and daughters in the faces of our enemy? I do not know. In our candle lit circle tonight, there will be no elements of the enemy. There will be no echoing songs coming from battle lines afar. No gifts. No sharing of photos of family. No laughter. After nine months however, I can attest that the same desperation and prayer will be here tonight.

The problem of peace is nothing new. I had hoped that this problem would be one I would not have to pass down to my children awaiting my return. I imagine that same hope was a driving reason for the anticipation surrounding Christ's birth so long ago. And so tonight we will sing. And we will pray. And we will lift the light of Christ high into the air. And we will welcome the Prince of Peace, trusting like those soldiers did a hundred years ago that peace can be born in the most hopeless places.

*Chaplain Owen R. Chandler*  
*Tucson, Arizona*



# True Meaning of Sanctuary

An invitation went out to church and community to gather at Iglesia Christiana Ebenezer, Los Fresnos, Texas. Many came to hear and to ask questions of Consuls from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. How appropriate to gather in a sanctuary, promoting the God-inspired idea of community among nations. This is RECONCILIATION, and Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries re-commits itself by hosting these gatherings periodically.

The diplomats described services available from consulates to those starting a new life in the U.S. English classes and job training are two of many examples. One particularly poignant question: "I am here legally and by my own choice. Yet I still have family in my home country, and want to be buried there when I die. Do you work with the U.S. government for border clearances necessary for transporting my body across the border?" How many of us have to face that kind of dilemma?

The consul from Honduras hailed from a poor family and had worked as a clean-

ing lady while studying to better herself. Now with her doctorate, she represents her country as a consul to the U.S. The Guatemalan Consul met privately with refugees currently under the care of Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries. Having escaped kidnappers/abusers in Guatemala, they seek asylum in the U.S. The two governments are cooperating to help grandmother, mother and baby build a better life. Seeing the child in such good hands projects better than words ever could the bridge of hope that was evident at the gathering. Thank you for making our ministries possible.

*Rev. Feliberto Pereira*  
*Executive Director*  
*Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries*  
[swgsm.org](http://swgsm.org)



*Rev Feliberto Pereira (flanked by refugees from Guatemala), and Consuls from El Salvador (holding refugee baby) and Guatemala. (photo proved by SWGSM)*



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## Reflections on Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministries

As I retire this summer from 12 years as your endorser of chaplains and pastoral counselors, my greatest reaction is one of pure joy and gratitude. For 37 years, I have served our church with an ever-deepening love. First as a student and pastor, then as a military chaplain, and finally as the Endorser for Disciples Home Missions, my focus has stayed clear: love God and neighbor and live out the Great Commandment to Go and Make Disciples wherever I find myself.

When I retired from the pastorate, this ministry allowed me to meet and connect with hundreds of our clergy who hear a different call--to minister in specialized ministries. They're the ones who walk the halls of hospitals and hospices, minister to those in prison, perform and provide loving counsel and hope to our folks in the military and their families. We even have chaplains serving in industry and with local first responders.

This diverse and multitalented group of ministers who come from every state and several nations and who were called and trained first to serve God as a career and a life. In the beginning of my own journey, I was mentored and nurtured by our endorsers and by other chaplains who kindly shared their time and wisdom and friendship with me. Some of those folks have gone on to glory, but others still serve every day.

More than ever, our church provides ministers to meet the needs of a new generation of souls who don't always "do church" the way their parents and grandparents did. They have questions. They detest easy answers to complex questions, and they are drawn to folks who offer God's love with kindness and earnest faith. Most of the ministry I did in the Army was outside of the chapel--often in the fields and camps of far-off places. I shared their lives, and I listened to their stories. That's how I started at Oxford Christian Church in Scott County, Kentucky, where I learned to be a pastor and to cherish each one's journey. It's no different in an ICU waiting room or in a counseling office or on a ship or even on top of a tank. People's need and hunger for God has never changed. And no matter how much music and worship change, the people still respond to the genuine.

On the matter of reconciliation and healing of the nation and the spirit, I have reflected so often on the way that our chaplains are drawn to positions where there is equality of opportunity. The military is woefully underrepresented in the chaplain corps by minorities and women. While I have sought to recruit more women and minorities, the numbers of both in the military is far too low. As a result, the chaplain corps

*Continued on page 24. See Doan.*



Steve Doan

## Mission Opportunities at General Assembly



Center and some are flexibly available throughout significant portions of the Assembly. These include knitting hats for local recipients, writing letters advocating around hunger issues to congressional leaders, and making hero capes for children in the NICU and PICU at the Peyton Manning Children's Hospital. Also at the convention center, a blood drive will be conducted, a 40,000 pound "food drop" in partnership with Society of St. Andrew

Opportunities abound for serving in mission at General Assembly. Most don't even require leaving the Convention

will benefit local food pantries, and the walls of a new home will be framed with Habitat for Humanity. Off-site opportunities include serving with Gleaners Food Bank and Growing Places Indy, a community gardening project. Several of these service projects require advanced registration. Disciples Volunteering and the General Assembly Local Missions Planning Team have been hard at work to ensure that Disciples can witness to our faith in action as we serve others when we gather in

Indianapolis. To learn more about any of these projects and to register to serve, visit [www.discipleshomemissions.org/registration-assembly-missions](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/registration-assembly-missions).



# Winter Talk 2017

The winter season is a natural time of reflection, discernment, and conversation. Winter Talk recognizes the need to consider indigenous issues of justice and injustice, provide a sage and brave space, and spend a few days talking about how to engage justice.

This last January, Brite Divinity School hosted Disciples fourth annual Winter Talk in Fort Worth, Texas. With humor and seriousness, keynote Sarah Augustine helped folks enter a conversation of how the Christian Doctrine of Discovery's world-wide effort to extract resources is damaging indigenous people.

Group conversations spoke of how First Nation and American Native people and tribes currently experience damaging effects of resource extraction by government and business. These conversations helped people grasp the interconnection between the Canadian Tar Sands, US petroleum pipelines, and US mining. Those insights helped conversations to go deeper and engage the problematic effects of theology and profit on indigenous peoples.

Directly impacting Disciples was a significant discussion on upcoming General Assembly Resolution—GA-1722: Repudiation of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery, A

Call to Education and Action, And Support for Indigenous Voice in the Structure of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

First introduced at Winter Talk 2016, congregations have discussed, offered rewrite suggestions, and co-signed the resolution over the year. During this discussion, folks made additional suggestions to consider prior to submittal. The current resolution reflects many of those suggestions. Find the resolution at [ga.disciples.org/business](http://ga.disciples.org/business) or <http://wp.me/P6DjFC-2z>.

If you might be interested in attending Winter Talk 2018 or to keep up with indigenous justice issues, please sign up for Yakama Christian Mission's newsletter at [www.yakamamission.org](http://www.yakamamission.org).

David Bell  
Yakama Christian Mission



Linda Two Hawk Feather closing on day one of Winter Talk.



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# Resolution to Repudiate the Christian Doctrine of Discovery



Delegates at this year's General Assembly will have the opportunity to approve Resolution GA-1722. With a title nearly as long as this article, **Repudiation of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery, A Call to Education and Action, And Support for Indigenous Voice in the Structure of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), GA-1722** is a first step toward having all manifestations of the church move toward indigenous accountability.



David Bell lecturing on the Doctrine of Discovery at the Landscape Mending Conference at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas, on January 30 to February 1, 2017.

A multifaceted document calling for accountability, GA-1722 appeals for the condemnation and

repudiation of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery (CDoD). While often framed in terms of injustice felt by Native American and First Nation people, the resolution goes further by calling congregations into awareness of how the CDoD has affected landscapes beyond that of North America.

GA-1722 is an indigenous document that calls for an honest assessment of how

indigenous people have been and are treated. Historically, for instance, GA-1722 calls the church to learn its African roots came about due to European empires use of the CDoD to enslave indigenous African people. Similarly, the resolution calls awareness as to how Christian theology supported the Repartimiento system enslaving the Puerto Rican Taíno people and the enslavement and subjugation of people in Mexico, Central, and South America. GA-1722 recognizes the need for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to achieve greater awareness of its indigenous roots and its theological impact on those roots.

Disciples congregations are encouraged to read, discuss, and debate GA-1722 prior to the General Assembly so their delegates might arrive with studied decision on how to vote. Yakama Christian Mission and Landscape Mending staff and volunteers are available to help in this discernment process. Feel free to contact David Bell at Yakama Christian Mission at [dave@yakamamission.org](mailto:dave@yakamamission.org) or (509) 969-2093, Blue Eagle McCutchen at [williammccutchen@att.net](mailto:williammccutchen@att.net), and Corey Meyer at [corey.meyer617@gmail.com](mailto:corey.meyer617@gmail.com). Find resolution GA-1722 at <http://wp.me/P6DjFC-2z> or [ga.disciples.org/business](http://ga.disciples.org/business).

## Reconciliation *Continued from page 13.*

ing to serve communities in distress over rapidly changing immigration legislation. We continue to increase the number and ways that we offer anti-racism trainings to equip our efforts to understand and address racism in our structures. In the larger church wide effort to embody oneness, **Resolution GA-1720 "A Renewed Commitment to Reconciliation Ministry"** has been sponsored by congregations to foster concrete support of the important mission of Reconciliation Ministry in the life of our beloved Church.

Please join us at General Assembly at our Booth which we will be sharing with Disciples Justice Action Network, GLAD, and Disciples Peace Interns. We will be launching our One Conversation campaign

at this justice superbooth! Our Youth will be hosting pre-Assembly pro-reconciliation conversation. Also at General Assembly join us for the **Reconciliation Ministry Breakfast** event on **Tuesday, July 11th at 7:00 a.m.** Our speaker for the event will be **Rev. Traci Blackmon**. She is the Acting Executive Minister of Justice & Witness Ministries of The United Church of Christ and Senior Pastor of Christ The King United Church of Christ in Florissant, Mo. She and her colleague John Dorhauer lead an online study on *White Privilege* a helpful resource for courageous dialogue.

My prayers and my passions are with this sacred mission of the Christian Church

*Continued on page 45. See Reconciliation.*



Traci Blackmon





## Disciples Home Mission Dinner

Disciples Home Missions invites you to the DHM Dinner on **Tuesday, July 11, 2017 from 5:00 –6:30 PM at the Indianapolis Convention Center**. It's an opportunity to celebrate the ministries of DHM.



DHM will also be honoring the 2017 Distinguished Leadership Award Recipient, the Rev. Dr. Norman Reed.

**Adult Tickets are \$35**

**Children Ages 4-12 are \$15**

**Children under the age of 4 are free**

Please sign up on the General Assembly website [ga.disciples.org](http://ga.disciples.org)

# Disciples Home Missions & Disciples Women



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Visit us in the Exhibit Hall, Booth 202

Visit us online, [www.discipleshomeissions.org](http://www.discipleshomeissions.org)



*Rev. Kate Gould Epperly, Coordinator for Justice and Advocacy for DHM's Family and Children's Ministries and Interim Children Worship and Wonder Coordinator, invites all interested General Assembly attendees to join her from **noon to 1 p.m.** for three different **discussions groups** to be held in Ron Degge's suite of rooms at the **Marriott Downtown**.*

***Monday's** gathering will be for Children Worship and Wonder trainers and interested persons. **Tuesday's** gathering will be for persons interested in family resources and practices for Homegrown Peace and Justice. **Wednesday's** gathering will be for persons interested in Gun Violence Prevention and Safety for Families. Rev. Kris Eggert, Director of God Before Guns will also attend. For the exact location of Ron's suite please check with the DHM Family and Children's Ministries booth at the Convention Center or write to Kate Epperly just prior to GA at [kepperly@dhm.disciples.org](mailto:kepperly@dhm.disciples.org). Eggert will also be active in the "Rally for Family Justice" on Saturday, July 7, 3 to 5 p.m.*

*Epperly will also be presenting a workshop **Sunday, July 8, 2-3:15 p.m.** on "Homegrown Peace and Justice." This workshop will offer faith formation activities, age-appropriate conversations, rituals, and resources for families with children ages 3-18.*



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# DISCIPLES RALLY 4 FAMILY JUSTICE



"Inverted Chalice" by Rev. Hector Hernandez

**Saturday, July 8, 3-5 p.m.**

**Gather 2:45 p.m. in Room TBD  
of the Convention Center**

**3:15 March to State Capitol Grounds**

**3:30 Rally/Press Conference**

**& Action Options**

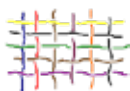
**4:45 Return to Convention Center**

**\*HEAR VOICES of Impacted Family Members**

**\*SUPPORT efforts for Peacebuilding & Environmental, Immigrant,  
Refugee, Racial, Native American, Children's, & LGBTQ+ Justice**

**\*ACT as Disciples to Promote Justice!!**

Questions? Contact: [ssstanley@dhm.disciples.org](mailto:ssstanley@dhm.disciples.org), 202-957-7826



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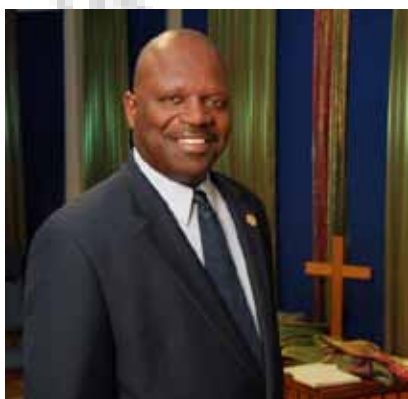
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“A Season of Action: Onward Christian Soldiers!”

2 Samuel 10:12 Psalm 18:19

2017 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Christian Missionary Convention. For this centennial hallmark, we may all be thankful and filled with praise for the goodness of God. In spite of all that has transpired in the church, in society, the nation and the world, we are still here making a witness actively participating in the wholeness movement.

Join us in Alabama as we continue our celebration of this historic moment!



Timothy James, Administrative Secretary



Patricia Penelton, President

*Registration for the 25th Biennial Session opens on August 1, 2017!  
Remember to register early to take advantage of the early-bird discounts!*

## Black History Month Honoree Sandra Bryant

Rev. Sandra Bryant, Executive Director of All Peoples Community Center in Los Angeles, Calif., has been recognized by Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard as she celebrates Black History Month.

"Hello, I'm Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard. Every year during the month of February, we take time to reflect on the countless contributions that African Americans have made to this nation throughout its history. We recognize and appreciate the collective strength that diversity brings to the United States.

"I'm inspired by African American leaders like Sandra Bryant, from our 40th Congressional District. For more than thirty years, Sandra has been the Executive Director of All Peoples Community Center in South Los Angeles. Over her decades of leadership at All Peoples, she has devoted herself to the well-being of her neighbors, overseeing

an array of services and activities that have helped generations of local men, women, and children make ends meet and pursue their full potential.

"Black History Month not only encourages us to celebrate the progress we have made as a country, but also reminds us of the work we still have to do. It is time to work together to find real solutions so we may ensure a better, brighter, and more equitable future for all Americans.

"I am proud to celebrate Black History Month, and I hope you will join me in celebrating the progress we have made as a nation, and recommitting ourselves to building a better tomorrow."



Sandra Bryant

You can view Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard's video statement in honor of Black History Month: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbepLKB5eZk>

### Doan *Continued from page 17.*

does not reflect the overall makeup of the military they serve. Mostly this is because serving in the military is a personal choice--a family decision and a further calling to go possibly in harm's way, to move family frequently, to become part of a totally new culture--and to leave the comforts of home. But we can do so much more as a church to encourage young men and women of diverse backgrounds to consider a life of service in uniform.

And yet--the rewards of a life of service are immense. I loved almost every minute of my time in uniform. I met such amazing people--folks who inspired and encouraged me, those who challenged my too narrow vision, and others who left lasting imprints on my heart. I can still see so many of them. And I know that my life was forever changed by the road less traveled.

If I could wish one thing for our 21st century church, it would be that we lift up chaplaincy, not as a strange aberration of real ministry, but as the chance to be a pastor in uniform, in prison, in hospital and hospice, in the counseling center. It means that every part of our church acknowledge the contributions of the clergy they provide to serve as chaplains and counselors. It means that we have a more aggressive recruiting effort in our churches and in our seminaries. After the Vietnam War, many Disciples assumed that military chaplains were part of the war effort and such a calling was unworthy. The result was that our service men and women too often received less than quality ministry

from mediocre, often poorly-trained clergy who only served to try to convert people to their own beliefs.

Now, when you observe the chaplaincy, you see men and women of many faiths, many denominations, many colors, sharing their faith, listening to stories, seeking to live out the call of God to go and proclaim good news. No one is better equipped for this multicultural, pluralistic environment than clergy from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)--no one.

Over the years and with budget cuts, the endorser position was downsized from full-time to part-time. From a full week to a day and a half. With technology advances, we are still able to do much more in less time, but the time spent traveling has decreased tremendously. The ministry is largely done on the phone and the computer. My prayer is that somehow the position could become full-time once more. Nevertheless, my moments with great chaplains, the chance to serve with Ron Degges and Arnold Nelson, with Anne Marie Moyars and the staff of DHM has been deeply humbling. I wish I could have done more. Because finally it is about realizing that ours is a sacred call from God, and it demands (in the words of the old hymn) "My soul, my life, my all." Thank you, my beloved church, for allowing me to answer this call for these past 12 years.

Blessings in Christ,

Steve Doan  
Chaplains' Endorsement Officer







**Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**  
in the United States and Canada

# Justice Primer & Study Guide

**“We are Disciples of Christ,  
a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.  
As part of the one Body of Christ,  
we welcome all to the Lord’s Table  
as God has welcomed us.”**

*(Disciples identity statement, General Board 2008)*

**“. . . what does the Lord require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God.”**

*Micah 6:8 (NRSV)*

This Justice Primer is produced by the Disciples Justice Table, an informal gathering within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of its general ministries and their invited guests for the purposes of communication, cooperation, and potential coordination of collaborative efforts in regard to social witness and justice advocacy in both church and society.

## INTRODUCTION

*A passion for justice is a natural outgrowth of our love of God and neighbor. When we love God fully, we love all God's children as neighbor. Our spirit recognizes each child of God as part of the true community we share in Christ, and we want for each the same wholeness of life that we want for ourselves.*

Each of the four reflections in this booklet highlights a facet of what it means to be a disciple, a follower of the living Christ. Action gives meaning to the "wholeness" we seek in our fragmented world. And it is this God-given "wholeness" that calls us to deal with our own fragmentation by dealing with our painful divisions and truly becoming a pro-reconciling, anti-racist church. Study questions appear in the back of the booklet.

- **April Johnson** (Minister of Reconciliation, Reconciliation Ministry) helps us see that the spiritual "pulling away" in the manner of Jesus leads to a pouring out of the self.
- **Pat Donahoo** (Executive Director, Office of Disciples Women) shows that the true community we long for finds us seeking "to reflect the values provided by God in Jesus Christ . . . celebrating, respecting, and valuing one another. As the body of Christ, true community seeks justice and love for all of God's people."
- **Ken Brooker Langston** (Executive Director, Disciples Center for Public Witness) reminds

us that "justice is . . . when we truly affirm and respect the inherent dignity, worth and equality of each person as a sister or brother created in the image of God and included fully in the family of God."

- **April Johnson** and **Ken Brooker Langston** together stress that becoming a pro-reconciling/anti-racist church . . . requires continuous conversion through difficult conversation, honest confession, and authentic commitment.
- In her conclusion, former Director of Week of Compassion **Amy Gopp** brings us back to our core practice as Disciples, reminding us that "communion at our Lord's Table is learning to love one another as we gather around a common meal, regardless of age, gender, class, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, political affiliation, disability, or name."
- **Pat Donahoo** provides a study guide that small groups can use to explore and wrestle with the thoughts, insights, and suggestions of these reflections. As is appropriate for Disciples, each session ends in worship around the Lord's Table.

As you read these brief statements and engage in study together, I invite you to imagine a table, an impossibly large table made possible in the Spirit. A table that stretches across the miles and the ages, where Jesus sits as host and all God's children find a place as cherished members of one family.

**Sharon E. Watkins**

General Minister and President  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
in the United States and Canada



## DEEP CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

*"And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone" Matthew 14:23*

Couched between the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand and the miracle of walking on water, we find Jesus "up the mountain" alone praying. In the Old Testament in the book of I Kings we see Elijah, having defeated the prophets of Baal, sitting under a broom tree being nurtured by an angel for a journey that will land him in a cave on Mount Horeb where there he will hear God's still small voice. Whether we are retreating from our ministry

for personal renewal or if we are running from our ministry for finding peace, Jesus still stands at the door of our hearts and knocks. As Christ's disciples and his namesake – members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) – we have the privilege to inculcate deep Christian spirituality as a mark of our identity.

In his ground-breaking book to the Church 2020 Vision, Dick Hamm offers a working definition of Christian spirituality as ". . . a way of life that relates who and what we are to who and what God is as revealed in Jesus Christ and as experienced through the Holy Spirit."<sup>1</sup> As Disciples our spirit is refreshed by the model and ministry of Jesus that is revealed to us through the Holy Spirit. Christian

spirituality deepens our self-understanding as part of the whole family of God. When we give careful attention to God's revealing of God's self, our inner life is strengthened so that we may be poured out on behalf of God's beloved children — all of them. Opening ourselves to God whether intentionally like Jesus on the mountain or out of necessity like Elijah in the cave, we are inspired to serve God by serving God's people, seeking justice on behalf of the whole family of God.

Cultivating habits of attentiveness to God's nature as it is revealed through spiritual discipline can be counter-cultural. In our fast paced, overstimulated society, a faith where God adapts to our schedule can appear to be more attractive than one that requires our own stillness for discernment for God's will. "The goal of Christian spirituality is not to merely know ourselves, it is to offer ourselves to God: . . . to empty ourselves so that we may be

available to hear God's call and to respond . . ."<sup>2</sup> This spirituality is less reminiscent of the comfort of a country club but bears the resemblance more of a soup kitchen. Deep Christian spirituality emboldens Disciples to feed when there is only bones and broth, to teach where the binding on books is worn, and to speak when evil renders members of God's family speechless.

Submission to the Holy Spirit through intentional 'pulling away' by attention to the scriptures, prayer, solitude, and gathering around the Table of the Lord, our hearts and minds are equipped for the essential work of being the Good News from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.

<sup>1</sup> Hamm, Richard L., 2020 Vision for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Chalice Press, 2001, p. 46

<sup>2</sup> Hamm. Ibid., p. 53

## TRUE COMMUNITY

*In true community there is space for difference, as well as dissent, without a sense of defensiveness or being on guard.*

True community is part of the identity of the church from its birth (Acts 2). It is also central to the identity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Acts 2 church expresses true community, given through the Holy Spirit, in how the church exists with one another: having all things in common, selling possessions as anyone had need, and supporting justice for each person. In 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, the community of believers is identified as the body of Christ where their interrelatedness causes all to rejoice together and all to suffer together because they are so closely bound. As the body of Christ the church seeks to reflect this community, living by the example received in Christ and lived out by Christ. This true community creates a sense of belonging, of being at home where all are related to and part of something greater than any individual. To live in true community is to overcome isolation and fragmentation by being interdependent and celebrating the gifts and worth of all individuals as part of the whole people of God. True community focuses on the gifts of each person rather than on his or her differences, shortcomings or deficiencies.

Recognizing and affirming these gifts, those on the margins find a place at the center.

True community is experienced especially when all are present at the Table of the household of God — with God as head of the household, and God's

children seeking to follow the gracious example set by God, welcoming others as God welcomes. As part of this community of God's household all seek to reflect the values provided by God in Jesus Christ, moving past the needs of safety and comfort to providing hospitality and generosity to one another. Hebrews 13:1-3 reminds us that by entertaining strangers we may find we have, in fact, entertained God's own messengers. Jesus teaches in Matthew 25:34-46 that in welcoming the stranger we also welcome Christ himself. Hospitality is the welcoming of strangers by affirming the dignity of each person and being open to the diversity of ideas and beliefs reflected. In true community there is space for difference, as well as dissent, without a sense of defensiveness or being on guard. True community uses language of healing and relatedness rather than of protection or separation.

Being part of true community expects that all work in partnership with those elected/appointed to leadership positions. In Mark's account of the feeding of the multitude (Mark 6:31-44) the disciples point out to Jesus that it is late and he should send the people away to get food. Jesus teaches that those who follow him exist in true community by caring for the needs of one another, and responds to their request by saying, "You give them something to eat."

People who live in true community thus live in covenantal relationships celebrating, respecting, and valuing one another. As the body of Christ, true community seeks justice and love for all of God's people.

## A PASSION FOR JUSTICE

*... Jesus not only lifted up the plight of the oppressed, but also uncompromisingly challenged the unjust use of power by religious and political leaders.*

Grounded in the Biblical vision of shalom (true and full physical, emotional and spiritual wholeness), justice is how we treat each other in community. It becomes a reality when we truly affirm and respect the inherent dignity, worth and equality of each person as a sister or brother created in the image of God and included fully in the family of God.

Scriptures are alive with a passion for justice. Over and over again, the Hebrew prophets clearly communicate God's desire that God's people "do justice," (Micah 6:8) that the righteous "speak up for the powerless," (Proverbs 31:8-9) that the nation "welcome the stranger," (Deuteronomy 10:19; Leviticus 19:34) and that political leaders "render justice to the oppressed and needy" (Psalms 82:3-4). We find this same passion for justice in the life and ministry of Jesus. In the tradition of Jubilee economics (where debts were to be forgiven and land was redistributed), our Lord and Savior announced that he came "to preach good news to the poor" and "set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Luke 4:18-19). In his Beatitudes, he taught that the reign of God belongs to the poor and to those who suffer for the sake of justice (Matthew 5:3-10; see also Luke 6:20-26). And he warned that the final judgment will be based on how we, as nations, treat "the least of these": the naked, the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, and

the imprisoned (Matthew 25:31-46).

Because of his passion for justice, Jesus not only lifted up the plight of the oppressed, but also uncompromisingly challenged the unjust use of power by religious and political leaders. For this he was denounced and crucified as a dangerous subversive. Thus, when he died for our sins, he also suffered and died in spiritual and political solidarity with history's many victims of violence, injustice, and oppression. But God raised him from the dead, vindicating all aspects of his life and ministry—including his passion for justice!

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we Disciples can share in the Biblical witness to and passion for justice. Whenever we struggle against the demonic powers of personal and institutional racism; whenever we call upon our nations to legally receive the stranger as a welcome and valued member of our increasingly diverse national families; whenever we work to protect God's creation from those activities that threaten it; whenever we stand up for the equality of women and men; whenever we work to overcome the exclusion and domination of any person or group; whenever we struggle to recognize basic human rights of the immigrant community as we seek for a reformed immigration laws that supports immigrants' whole families and brings justice to all; whenever we advocate for public policy that helps bring health, wholeness and well-being to all God's children; whenever we, as the diverse but united body of Christ, come together as true equals around the Lord's Table—whenever we do these things, we do them as Bible-believing, Spirit-led and Table-fed Disciples of Christ who share in our Lord and Savior's undying passion for justice.

## A PRO-RECONCILING/ANTI-RACIST CHURCH

*"If one part of the body suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it."  
1 Corinthians 12:26-27 (NLT)*

AT&T CEO, Randall Stephenson, presenting to a large group of employees, recounts his reaction to the testimony of his friend and neighbor Chris. In the wake of serial clashes between police and

communities of color, Chris was asked to lead a discussion on race in his predominately white congregation. Chris shared experiences that spanned his lifetime from childhood through adulthood where he had been the victim of numerous dehumanizing acts of name calling, refusal of service in restaurants, unwarranted traffic stops and requests to serve as waiter while he was dining. Lastly, he described his daily practice of carrying his drivers' license when he jogs in his neighborhood in order to prove to the police that he resides in the community. Chris is a three-time war veteran, a heart specialist, Stephenson's

best friend and African American. Stephenson shared his shock in learning of his best friend's experiences for the first time through this video-taped testimony. "If two very close friends could not find time to discuss race – something that shaped Chris' worldview, how can we as a society expect to find common ground on this very serious problem?" Stephenson asked. He then invited his colleagues to join him in a series of conversations about race in an effort to dismantle the hold of silence on racial oppression.

Becoming a pro-reconciling and anti-racist church means we can no longer remain silent. It requires that we name the 'sin that so easily ensnares us' that is separation and silence about racial disparities in North America. Silence prevents authentic relationship with one another and inhibits our ability to experience shared humanity. The gifts that we bring to work of healing and reconciliation emanate from our identity as the body of Christ. In the body there are many gifts and many parts but we all drink of one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13) Our anti-racism and pro-reconciliation ministry and witness is spiritual work, fraught with unknowing and blessed with the fruit of the spirit.

Across the expanse of North America and the world, we Disciples pause each Sunday to gather around the Lord's Table as a mark of our identity. It is our response to a compelling invitation to "re-member" and to transform our individual and our corporate lives in Christ Jesus – our Lord and redeemer. As a New Testament church, it is important that we do not neglect our first testament prophetic call to "do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God." As we endeavor to live our vision "to be a faithful growing church that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice", we acknowledge that it is at the table of the Lord where we recognize the ways in which we are fragmented and our deep need to be reconciled. In our efforts to realize our vision, we are compelled to engage the spiritual work of "re-membering" the body of Christ by embracing our imperative to become a pro-reconciling and anti-racist church.

What does it mean to be pro-reconciling and anti-racist? First we must have a shared understanding of how we define racism. Most often, racism is defined as prejudicial attitudes and behaviors held by individuals toward minorities or people of non-European descent. This understanding reduces the nature of racism to the human proclivity and bias. It is when exclusionary bias is organized into policies and practices within societal systems and structures that racism has the destructive power to uphold oppression and sustain harmful impact on persons and communities of color. It is also where

racism emerges despite our collective desire to eliminate it.

For example, legislation that promotes racial profiling by ancestry and region of origin allows law enforcement to consider suspect persons whose physical features may resemble South and Central American ancestry. These policies institutionalize a normative of "othering" that violates human rights and reaches further than that of individual prejudice. This is an othering that we may not even be conscious is happening on our behalf. When one part of the community is expected to endure negative treatment while another part is exempt from that same treatment, the identity of everyone is impacted. When structural and institutional racism normalize the privileges of one race over the rights of others, what follows is often unconscious bias that grows into intolerance and misshaping of human identity and value.

The conversation about the reality of racism in our communities and our institutions is a courageous one. When we begin this conversation, we are helped by affirming the human dignity and value of everyone. Randall Stephenson reminds his colleagues to start out the conversation with the question, '*why does my friend (insert neighbor, activist, participant, church member, etc.) feel this way?*' As members of the body of Christ, we must lead by example. Our conversations and interrogation of racist practices and policies must begin with an acknowledgement of our brokenness and our shared desire for wholeness. There is a large chasm of difference in the experience of systemic racism in our church and society. It is into this gap that we must enter with courage and commitment to be agents of individual, institutional and cultural change. We enter just like Christ, who set his face toward Jerusalem in order that he might face suffering and death by crucifixion that we might be made whole. This is the brokenness we "remember" each time we share the Lord's Supper so that we can be "re-membered" as the whole body of Christ.

We must stay at the table and we return to the table again and again, to be strengthened for the ministry of reconciliation. Becoming a pro-reconciling, anti-racist church is generational work. It requires continuous conversion through difficult conversation, honest confession, and authentic commitment. It requires the spiritual renewal not only of hearts and minds, but also of institutions and systems. And, to be successful, it requires the full participation of all God's children. Because we confess, that "when one part of the body suffers, all suffer. And when one part is honored all are glad. For we are all together a part of Christ's body, each of us is a part of it." May it be so...

## CONCLUSION

*We, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) along with all churches and all persons of faith, are called “to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with [our] God.” (Micah 6:8)*

Our capacity to affect social change and pave paths of justice is unrivaled. Propelled by our faith to take action while grounded in deep spirituality, we strive to be the peace in the world that we have experienced in Christ. We have learned that peacemaking and justice-seeking are most effective when carried out by peaceable people and communities who actively nurture their own spirits and open themselves to God’s Holy Spirit. As bodies of Christ connected by the Body of Christ, we are concerned with forming and inspiring true, beloved communities where poverty, racism, sexism, classicism, exclusion, violence and injustice do not exist. Our salvation is inextricably bound in the salvation of one another—this we know.

Thus, we are indeed called to be a movement for wholeness in an extremely fragmented world. As early followers of the Jesus movement, who met together in voluntary associations to share a meal, share stories, and share community, we Disciples share Communion. To share of ourselves, we share our own wounds, suffering, wrongdoing and fear. Out of brokenness and our own sense of injustice emerges wholeness and holiness. This is the mystery of our faith. Love shared not out of perfection, but out of messiness, confusion and self-absorption. Communion at our Lord’s Table is learning to love one another as we gather around a common meal, regardless of age, gender, class, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, political affiliation, disability, or name. This is the Feast of Justice to which we welcome all as God has welcomed us.

This struggle and pursuit for justice is powerless, however, without the peaceable presence of the love of God through Jesus Christ, felt in the guts of our innermost being as the Holy Spirit, pulsing through our veins and flowing through and out of our bodies into the world. We are the agents of God’s justice and love as modeled in the scriptures. We have captured, and have been captured by the Biblical vision! We are the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the imperfect but earnest embodiment of the Love that makes for justice in a world mired in anguish and oppression. We believe in the ubiquitous and reconciling presence of God even in the face of anguish and division.

We proclaim the Good News that Love truly does drive out fear, and that we will make it through the tyranny of Good Friday injustice and arise on Easter, awe-struck at the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord to resurrect and transform.

We are a Church who understands and is passionate about what the Lord requires of us: to do justice.

## STUDY GUIDES

*Each of the following four sessions of study for the Justice Primer are estimated at 60-minutes. You can use them as they are outlined or modify them to suit your context.*

### **Micah 6:8**

**... what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.** (NRSV)

**And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.** (NIV)

**The Lord God has told us what is right and what he demands: “See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God.”** (CEV)

**But he’s already made it plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in men and women. It’s quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love. And don’t take yourself too seriously—take God seriously.** (The Message)

**He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?** (NKJV)

### **Disciples Identity Statement**

“We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one Body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord’s Table as God has welcomed us.” (approved by the General Board 2008)

### **Disciples Vision Statement**

“To be a faithful, growing church, that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality and a passion for justice.”

## SESSION ONE

### Deep Christian Spirituality

***“And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.”***

*Matthew 14:23*

As you begin the first study on Deep Christian Spirituality, take 5 minutes to read Micah 6:8 in a variety of translations (see above) and the “Introduction” to the Justice Primer inviting the group to consider the following questions:

1. What does it mean to be a disciple, a follower of the living Christ?
  2. How do we seek wholeness in a fragmented world?
  3. How big is your table?
  4. What is true community?
  5. What is deep Christian spirituality?
  6. What is justice and how do we develop a passion for it?
- Next read the scripture and this section of the Justice Primer. Allow approximately 5 minutes to discuss questions 2 and 3.

1. Read “Deep Christian Spirituality” in Justice Primer.
2. Where do you find a place to pray alone?
3. What have been your most meaningful moments of renewal?

Invite the group to take time to enter into silent time. You can pray if you wish but it is not necessary. Try to be completely aware of your surroundings; don’t zone out but in silence be fully present and aware. Pay attention to where your mind wanders when you are in a time of silence. (5 minutes)

Allow 10 minutes to discuss the following questions:

1. Share with one another your experience of silent time.
2. How would you describe Jesus’ spirituality? Explain.
3. How does having a close relationship with God prepare you to serve and love God’s children?
4. How can you be attentive to God? When or where have you felt closest to God? What made God’s presence so real?

Invite participants to draw a picture of a time or place when they have felt close to God. Include who was there and what the circumstances were. Ask: “Did you call on God or did you notice God was already there?” (10 minutes)

Allow 5 minutes to discuss the following questions:

1. What gets in the way of being open to God?
2. How can you offer yourself to God?

Invite group to describe a time when they served in a soup kitchen, a homeless shelter, or some other act of servant ministry. Ask: “Did this experience bring you closer to God or was it an act of being responsive to the needs of others on a purely practical level?” (10 minutes)

Close by gathering around the Table of the Lord. As you share the bread and the cup, offer one word or one phrase about what it means to feel the presence of God. (10 minutes)

## SESSION TWO

### True Community

***“All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.”*** Acts 2:44-45

Begin by reading scripture and this section of the Justice Primer. Allow approximately 5 minutes to discuss questions 2 and 3.

Read “True Community” in Justice Primer.

1. What would prevent you from selling your possessions to provide for the needs of others?
2. What prevents today’s Church from having all things in common?

Allow 10 minutes for this activity. Think about what possessions are your most prized. Which possessions would be most difficult to part with? Why? What is it about them that gives them value? What would it take to convince you to sell them for the good of someone else? Share your stories with one another.

Allow 10 minutes to discuss the following questions:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. How closely bound are you to other believers? Are you more closely bound to some than others? What makes the difference?
2. What does it mean to belong? How is belonging different from membership?
3. Have you ever felt you belonged to a group until someone else made it clear that you did not? What effect does it have on you to be on the outside of a group?

Provide a sheet of paper for each person in the group and have them write their name at the top. Pass the sheets of paper around the group and have each member of the group write a one word or one phrase affirmation of that person. If you prefer you might prefer to draw a representation of encouragement. Return the papers to the person whose name is at the top and allow a few moments in silence to reflect on what was shared. (10 minutes)

Allow 5 minutes to discuss the following questions:

1. How have you offered ‘welcome’ to someone else? How have you been welcomed? What is said or done that makes a place or experience welcoming? What makes a place or experience unwelcoming?
2. What do you find most difficult about welcoming someone who is very different from yourself? Is it easier or harder than someone who has a lot in common with you?

Read Matthew 25:34-46 and ask group to consider, “How is welcoming a stranger the same as welcoming Christ himself?” (Allow 10 minutes to read scripture and answer the following questions.)

1. How can you help someone while affirming their dignity? When have you seen a person’s dignity denied/ignored? How could it have been handled better?
2. Is it easier to embrace diversity of ethnicity and background than diversity of beliefs, theology, philosophy, and/or ideas? Why?

Close by gathering around the Table of the Lord. As you serve one another the bread and the cup, offer a blessing about the gift the person you serve brings to this community. (10 minutes)

## SESSION THREE

### A Passion for Justice

***“Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.”*** Proverbs 31:8-9

Begin by reading scripture and this section of the Justice Primer. Allow approximately 10 minutes to discuss questions 2, 3, and 4.

1. Read “A Passion for Justice” in Justice Primer.

2. What is justice? How is it lived out? What are some examples of acts of justice?
3. Have you ever actively sought justice? For yourself? For someone else?
4. What is it that moves you to stand up for what is right? Something or someone close and personal? Something on a national scale? A global injustice?

Invite the group to consider what it is like to seek justice in different circumstances.

Allow 10 minutes for discussion.

- If you have been wrongly accused or you are fired without reason.
- If your child is bullied at school.
- If government programs or budgets put a group or class of people in financial jeopardy.
- If a foreign government allows their citizens to be tortured or killed.

When would you seek justice? What's the difference?

Allow 10 minutes to discuss the following questions:

1. When did Jesus seek justice? What was it that called his attention to the injustice? Did he notice on his own or did someone else bring it to his attention?
2. Read Matthew 25:31-46. What does this passage tell us about our focus on justice? Who are the people who suffer injustice? What should our response be?

Remind the group that Jesus challenged the use of power by religious and political leaders and sought to relieve the oppressed from their difficult existence. He was also crucified as a revolutionary. Ask: "How concerned are you about the possible repercussions of speaking out against power? When you consider acts of injustice, are you fearful of what might happen to you if you speak out?" (10 minutes)

Allow 10 minutes to discuss the following questions:

1. What injustice do you see around you? Is there injustice against groups of people? Based on race? Gender? Sexual orientation? Age? Beliefs?
2. Is there injustice through exclusion or domination? Through lack of availability of human necessities?
3. You have heard and probably sung "They'll know we are Christians by our love". Do you think people would recognize us as Christians by the way we show love through speaking out and moving against injustice? What can we do about justice issues to show that we are Christians?

Close by gathering around the Table of the Lord. As you serve one another the bread and the cup, pray for those who lack the basic necessities of bread and clean water. (10 minutes)

## SESSION FOUR

### A Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racist Church

**"If one part of the body suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it."**

1 Corinthians 12:26-27 (NLT)

Begin by reading scripture and this section of the Justice Primer. Allow approximately 10 minutes to discuss questions 2, 3, and 4.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. Read "A Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racist Church" in Justice Primer.
2. How do you understand Disciples of Christ as people of the Table?
3. How do you define racism? If you are gathered in a group study, how does your group define racism?
4. What forms can societal racism take?

View Randall Stephenson's presentation to AT&T's ERG staff. Allow approximately 20 minutes to watch video and discuss questions.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Th074oFt\\_Q&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Th074oFt_Q&feature=youtu.be)

1. Share your thoughts in your group meeting or in a journal. Where do you see societal, systemic racism in Randall and Chris' story?
2. How does your faith inform your understanding of becoming a Pro-Reconciling and Anti-Racist Church?

Invite the group to reflect on the following questions. Allow approximately 15 minutes.

1. How does your relationship with God, your Deep Spirituality, prepare you to address pro-reconciling/anti-racist ministry?
  2. How does understanding the welcome of True Community clarify for you the need to be a reconciling movement?
  3. How will you live out your Passion for Justice in becoming an anti-racist church? How will you move beyond equality to equity?
- Closing (15 minutes)

As you conclude your study, gather around the Table of the Lord. Invite those gathered to hear again these words from the "Conclusion" of the Justice Primer,

"We proclaim the Good News that Love truly does drive out fear, and that we will make it through the tyranny of Good Friday injustice and arise on Easter, awe-struck at the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord to resurrect and transform."

As you share the bread and the cup at the table, consider again that impossibly large table Dr. Watkins mentioned in the introduction of the Justice Primer and remember the grace of God represented in our lives and the meaning of all the tables around which we gather.

As a gift of God through the Holy Spirit we have been given this table that spans space and time, where Jesus is the host, and each of God's children finds a safe place where justice abounds.

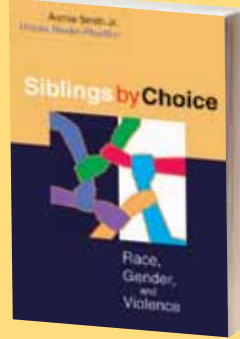
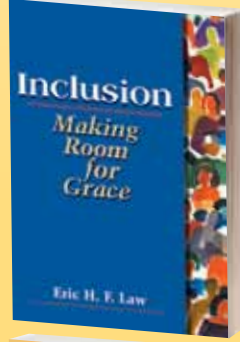
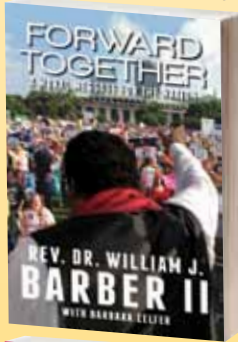
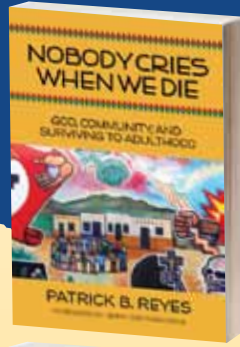
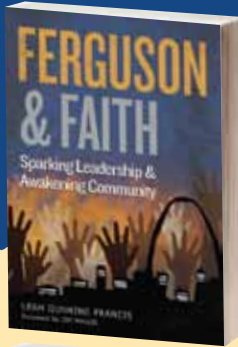
*The Justice Primer was originally published as a part of the Spring 2012 edition of **The Disciples Advocate** published by Disciples Home Missions in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Justice Primer can be downloaded from <http://disciples.org>.*



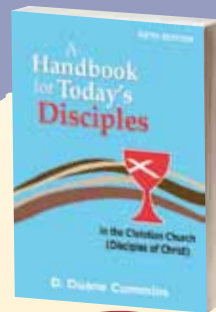


# YOU WANT TO CHANGE THE WORLD. SO DO WE.

And we have some resources to do that, together. Chalice Press's commitment to reconciliation and understanding are reflected in the titles we publish. Here are some of our resources for your church as they consider, debate, and most importantly, pray about addressing racism.



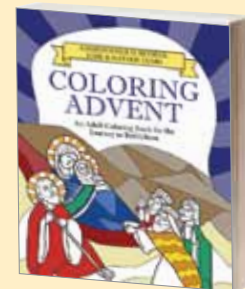
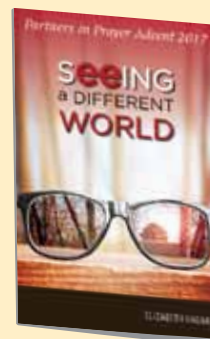
## More Resources for Disciples



Updated for 2017!



Order now to have new hymnals by Advent!



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## A message from the 2016 Mission Council

*We, the members of the Mission Council, having joined together in prayerful worship of God, spent days in conversation and discernment listening to input from many Mission Gatherings across our church. We were also inspired by our global church partner, Rev. Dr. Moiserale Prince Dibeela, of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, and by worship and the study of Holy Scripture.*

*From Mission Gatherings we heard that God is well at work in many ways. We are overwhelmingly called to be a Church that passionately:*

- *Responds with compassion to the vulnerable;*
- *Creates communities of inclusion and care;*
- *Overcomes ongoing and deeply entrenched injustice resisting racism and other forms of injustice in order to affirm the fullness of life for all God's children;*
- *Works together in common cause with ecumenical and global ministry partners.*

*We also heard a call to focus our efforts for a time on areas in which the above actions intersect with the lives of children, youth, and young adults; thus, enhancing our presence in ways that illuminate God's mission.*



**Christian Church**  
(Disciples of Christ)  
in the United States and Canada  
disciples.org



### *New Priority*

God calls us to **work with and for children, youth, and young adults** so together we may share and receive the good news of Jesus Christ by creating communities of healing, learning and transformation.

### **Our Identity**

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

- **Our Vision:** to be a faithful, growing church, that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice. (Micah 6:8)
- **Our Mission:** to be and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving and serving, from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)
- **Our Imperative:** to strengthen congregational life for mission. (Ephesians 4:11-13. 15-16)
- **On-going Priorities:**
  - Becoming a Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racist Church
  - The formation of 1000 new congregations by 2020
  - The transformation of 1000 congregations
  - Calling and forming of new leaders; reforming of current leaders

## **Background**

The Mission Council of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was formed in response to General Board action **GB-15-0934 Report of the Mission Council Task Force**. It is part of the Mission First pilot project intended (1) to call Disciples to focus upon God's mission in the world today; and, (2) to test a two-year pilot model for shared mission. The Council met in Dallas, Texas, December 2-4, 2016.

**The purpose of the Council**, according to GB-15-0934, was:

1. Based on the [rich learning from the Mission Gatherings](#), identify one to four key mission directions for the Church,
2. Facilitate communication, connection and collaboration among ministries of the Church,
3. Encourage the ministries of the Church to develop implementation strategies for the key mission directions.

The Council prepared for its work by reading *Restoring Dignity, Nourishing Hope*, Peter E. Makari and Jonathan Barnes, ed. The members had the opportunity to engage in Facebook discussion on the book and the paradigm of mission it shares. Council members also were invited to two preparatory webinars to familiarize themselves with the Mission Council goals and with the report of the Mission First Implementation Team on the Mission Gatherings and data.

Special guest keynoter was the Rev. Dr. Moiseraela Prince Dibeela, of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa – a longtime partner in mission with Disciples of Christ. Many thanks to Division of Overseas Ministries and Disciples Home Missions for making his presence possible. Worship was led by Paul Demer, Worship Architect and Leader at Galileo Church in Fort Worth. The Planning Team for the Council meeting included LaTaunya Bynum, Gilberto Collazo, Ron Degges, Rebecca Hale, Bill Spangler-Dunning, Paul Tche, Cathy Myers Wirt.

**Mission Council Members** are: General Assembly **Moderators**: Tony Rodriguez, Tom Perring, Mary Lou Kegler, Sue Morris. **Regional ministers**: Greg Alexander, Thad Allen, Denise Bell, Nadine Burton, LaTaunya Bynum, Teresa Dulyea-Parker, Allen Harris, Sotello Long, Bill Spangler-Dunning, Cathy Myers Wirt. **Higher Ed**: Jon Berquist, Kelly Thompson, Delores Carpenter. **General and Racial/Ethnic ministries**: Gilberto Collazo, Ron Degges, Chris Dorsey, Rebecca Hale, Julia Brown Karimu, Seung Un (Paul) Tche, Denise Turner, Brian Burton, Timothy James, Hector Velazquez, Geunhee Yu. **Congregational and at large**: Jon Blackwood, Shanell Bowden, Hope Casey-Allen, Peggy Chandler, Jeremy DeWitt, Aura Yolanda Estrada, Nestor Gomez Morales, Steven Gower, Arnold Hayes, Jennie S. Huang, Matthew Hudman, Delesslyn Kennebrew, Mayon Marcelino, Carolyn McLemore, Jaclyn Oden-Peace, Sarah Page Jones, Dawn Robinette.  
**GMP**: Sharon Watkins

# Four Regional Ministers Celebrate Retirement

Four regional ministers retired at the end of 2016. The Rev. G. Lee Parker in Virginia, the Rev. John Richards in North Carolina, The Rev. Paxton Jones in Kansas and the Rev. Juan Rodriguez in Florida.

"Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet we hear the phrase, 'Parting is such sweet sorrow that I shall say good night till it be tomorrow.' Couched in that line



G. Lee Parker

is the sadness of separation but an anticipation of reconciliation in time to come," writes the Rev. G. Lee Parker in the October 2016 issue of *The Virginia Christian*. "It is my desire to say goodbye, but it is also my hope and anticipation that one day we shall be reunited as promised by God through Christ Jesus our Lord."

Parker began serving as regional minister on June 18, 1997. "We have seen much transition in the nineteen years, as some churches have closed and others have chosen to disaffiliate from the denomination over various theological and polity issues. In spite of that, we have seen a succession of effective pastors doing outstanding ministry in the congregations of our regions. There are more women serving as pastors at this time than in 1997.

The Rev. John Richards served as regional minister for the past 14 years.

"I have grown to love the Christian Church in North Carolina," writes Richards in a final pastoral letter to the region. "I have not always agreed with decisions of some, but I have never doubted my love for you."

Richards continues, "There have been moments when you have disappointed me and I have disappointed you. But I pray we have never doubted our love for each other."

"A few churches have closed, and we celebrate their years of ministry – a ministry whose influence will never end. Some churches have chosen to leave. Their decisions have grieved us all. And, we give thanks for the new congregations that have been established. Our regional church is different than it was 14 years



John Richards

ago, just as I am different, but we the church are still seeking to be faithful in our response to God's calling."

Following 23 years in congregational ministry, the Rev. Paxton Jones officially joined the regional staff in October 1998 as Deputy Regional Minister and Treasurer and became Regional Minister in May 2007.

Beginning as a representative from the Northeast District on the [then] Committee on Licensed Ministry in 1981, he has served on the Regional Board in some capacity every year except one since that time!

The general church also has made use of his talents, calling upon him to serve as an Assistant Parliamentarian for both the Denver and Cincinnati General Assemblies, on the General Conference of Disciples Men, and currently as Chair of the General Commission on the Ministry. He's also been a member of the General Board and its Administrative Committee.

"Ever since he joined The Florida Disciples as our Regional Minister in 2012 Rev. Juan Rodriguez quite literally has been on a path of Barrier Breaking and Bridge Building efforts," says moderators of the Florida region in a letter in response to the announcement.

"His relentless pursuit of transforming our region into a better place is self-evident in one of his favorite expressions that we must reach out to one another, in courageous conversation to improve our Covenant Relationship with each other."

In Rodriguez's retirement letter, he challenged us asking: 'How do we, as Disciples of Christ acknowledge that God is able to do exceedingly

more than we can ask for or even imagine, open our hearts to God and each other for the healing of our Regional Church Covenant Relationship and live into transformation? Answering this question requires commitment to the hard work of entering into life-giving relationship.'"



Paxton Jones



Juan Rodriguez



DHM board and staff at National City Christian Church during the November 2016 DHM board meeting in Washington, D.C. From back left: Timothy James, Sheila Spencer, Katherine Raley, Reuben Sancken-Marx, Lori Tapia, Lonna Owens, Xochitl Alvizo, Jeremy Skaggs, Pat Donahoo, Derick Perkins, Kathy Watts, From front left: Tom Cooley, Candyce Black-Wells, Valerie Melvin, Rhonda Cole-Green, Marilyn Williams, Sandy Messick, Ron Degges, Donna Davis and Jennifer Larson.



Bob Perkowitz with EcoAmerica, speaking to the DHM board and staff during the November 2016 DHM board meeting in Washington, D.C.



DHM Nominating Committee, from left: Valerie Melvin, Katherine Raley, Candyce Black-Wells, Jeremy Skaggs, Derrick Perkins and Jennifer Larson at National City Christian Church with Pastor, Dr. Steve Gentle (standing) during the November 2016 DHM board meeting in Washington, D.C.



Ron Degges offering Benediction at National City Christian Church, Washington, D.C., November 6, 2016

Photos right: the Rev. William Chris Hobgood, (seated) cofounder and co-president of the Disciples Center for Public Witness, was honored with a Bridge Builders Award at National City Christian Church during a Martin Luther King, Jr. service sponsored by the Christian Church Capital Area and the Disciples Center for Public Witness.



Chris, who, among many other things, served as regional minister, and General Minister and President, received the award for his leadership and hard work in shaping, promoting, and living out our denomination's commitment to becoming a pro reconciling/anti-racist church.

Also honored was Joan Bell-Haynes, (photo right on right) who, besides her many forms of leadership in the general church, has been a leader in the effort to promote and achieve a more truly multicultural church. (Oscar Haynes was a member of the Center's Board of Governors.)



Photo above and below: Youth Ministers from across the United States and Canada meeting at Christmount in Black Mountain, North Carolina, for the Youth Ministry Summit on March 5 to 7, 2017.



# Ministries Across Generations

The test of a good children's program and youth group can be found in the participation levels of the young adults and families. The church concept of participation is shifting, but overall studies have shown that the more faithful adults that are connected to a child or youth, the more likely that child will be a faithful adult, and participate in the world with a faith-based understanding.

The church is one of the last places where multiple ages can participate in a profound experience together. In theory, this sounds reasonable. In practice, it is difficult to find ways to connect people of various ages in intentional conversations, relationships, and forms of community that fulfill their needs, wants, and expectations.

As a church we seek to invite all to the table, but how do we find ways to listen, respond, and be faithful to all voices across age, race, and cultural lines? How do we truly engage our children, youth, young adults, adults, grandparents, and all other types of lifestyle situations in living and being God's one community at all ages and stages? How can we be one?

As a church that lifts up the complicated process of reconciliation, we must name and recognize that age segregation over the last 50 years has been a large factor in the decline of mainline Christianity. Thus, to truly help our children, youth, and young adults connect to a lifelong faith, relationships between the silos that have separated our ministries must come together.

The first gathering of the executive committee, Ministries Across Generations, met in December 2016. This ministry is in process of becoming the "umbrella" that unites the conversation between our children, youth, young adult, and constituency ministries. We had representatives across both age and race lines that were selected in a variety of ways. The group included people all the way from California to Massachusetts, with lots of places in between. There were grandmas, an old guy, a youth, young and mid-adults, married, unmarried, divorced, clergy and lay. There were those with young children, older children, teen children, young adult

children and no children. God brought us together and to say "it was good" would be an understatement.

Over the next year Ministries Across Generations will continue putting the pieces in place to "officially" live into our place at Disciples Home Missions. We will work to connect our constituency groups, general ministries, regional ministries, and local ministries to practices that proclaim the love of God through Christ to all in intentional, life-giving, and profoundly faithful ways. Ministries Across Generations will help to begin to model how our churches and their leaders must understand their calls as a united ministry and not age segregated task groups.

By gathering multiple voices together, we are more capable to serve the church in all its beautiful diversity. While we are all still called to serve our areas of interest, you will see us serving you together, side-by-side. We are living out our mission to create wholeness by focusing in intentional ways on the whole Body of Christ - together.

*Olivia Bryan Updegrave*  
Minister of Family & Children Ministries



*Ministries Across Generations from front left is: Yunkyong Lee Hill, Antonio Redd, Kate Summers. From back left is: Kate Epperly, Sheila Spencer, Yessica Munoz, Randy Kuss, Olivia Bryan Updegrave, Lucy Diaz and Young Sook Kim.*



*Olivia Bryan Updegrave, Minister of Family & Children Ministries, will be presenting a workshop at the General Assembly Sunday, July 8, 2-3:15 p.m. on Intergenerate – Bringing All Ages Together in Worship and at Home. One*

*out of every 10 teenagers will still be in the church in their twenties. Why? What happened? What didn't happen? What can we do to change this trend? Who stayed? Why did they stay? Over the past 15 years lots of research and study has been done to help explain the reasons behind those leaving the church building and those leaving their faith entirely. Come and learn ways and to see faith as a lifelong journey in an intentionally intergenerational community.*

# Laugh All Ye Saints

at the 2017 General Assembly!

## Disciples Church Extension Fund & Hope Partnership All-Assembly Dinner

An informal and family-friendly meal gathering

Featuring Greta Adams, new church planter,  
Amazing Grace Christian Church, Indianapolis

Wednesday, July 12, 2017 @ 5 PM  
Indianapolis Convention Center

\$19 for adults; \$12 for ages 4-12; under 4 free

Join us, this year, on the last night of Assembly!

*You also won't want to miss:*

### Pre-Assembly Event:

#### **Now What?**

A Symposium on Repurposing Our Buildings,  
Our Outreach, Our Leadership  
Saturday, July 8, 2017

**Learning track opportunities** on new church development, use of building resources for ministry, congregational transformation, capital fundraising, innovative leadership, and church investing



# Ways Your Church Can Support Refugees

On January 27 and again on March 6, President Trump signed Executive Orders to ban refugees and travelers from designated countries from coming to the United States. Both are currently held up in the courts. The newest travel ban sought to impose a **90 day suspension of entry to the U.S. of nationals from the six primarily Muslim nations of Sudan, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, and Yemen.** Iraqi citizens and persons with Legal Permanent Residence status are not affected by the new order. This order also seeks to **suspend the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for 120 days and lowers the number of refugees to be resettled in the U.S. this fiscal year to 50,000** -- even though there are more refugees in the world now than since World War II, and Congress previously allocated funds to resettle 75,000 refugees this year.

Fifty thousand represents the smallest number of refugees ever allowed to be resettled in the U.S. since the beginning of the nation's refugee resettlement program. Since the fiscal year began October 1, 2016, already 38,000 of these refugees have been admitted. This low number will also mean that tens of thousands of Iraqis who assisted the U.S. military and were authorized to enter the U.S. through refugee resettlement could be held back through the order's limits from being able to enter as refugees. The existing U.S. refugee screening process is already the world's safest and most rigorous, takes up to two years, and includes 8 federal government agencies, 6 security databases, 5 separate background checks, 4 biometric security checks, 3 separate in-person interviews, and 2 inter-agency security checks.

The announced "pause" in refugee resettlement has also already crippled refugee resettlement programs, including our Disciples' resettlement partner Church World Service--which estimates a loss of at least \$30 million for refugee resettlement for their organization this year.

**In response, there are many ways we can show compassion for the world's vulnerable refugees!:**

**1. CALL YOUR SENATORS & REPRESENTATIVES at (202) 224-3121\* today** and tell them you support the refugee resettlement program and want

to continue to resettle refugees! *\*Call 3 times to connect with your 1 Representative & 2 Senators*

Sample Script: "I'm your constituent from [City, State], and I support refugee resettlement. The recent Executive Orders against refugees will bar individuals from Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen; grind refugee resettlement from all countries to a halt; and reduce the number of refugees we welcome to 50,000, a historic low. This does not reflect the welcome for refugees I see in my community, and I urge you to do everything in your power to see this executive order rescinded."



*First Christian Church friends and "Lady Liberty" show their support for refugees and demonstrate opposition to the proposed refugee ban in Lynchburg, Virginia during early March. (Photo by Andrew Wilds Photography)*

See our full new RIM Alert available at: [www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries)

**2. HOLD A REFUGEE SUNDAY on or around World Refugee Day** (which is celebrated annually on June 20th.) Disciples will be celebrating a "Refugee Sunday" together with ALL Church World Service and National Council of Churches partners around the country! Go to our RIM homepage of our website at: [www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries) for worship materials to help with your celebration, and see the "Protecting Welcome Restoring Hope" Ecumenical Declaration signed

by Disciples and ecumenical partners: [greateras1.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Ecumenical-Declaration-Protecting-Welcome-Restoring-Hope.pdf](http://greateras1.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Ecumenical-Declaration-Protecting-Welcome-Restoring-Hope.pdf)

**3. STUDY THESE DEVOTIONS** about immigrant and refugee themes. Find them at: [www.discipleshomemissions.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/LENTEN-Devotions-IIC-Disciples-2017-FINAL.pdf](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/LENTEN-Devotions-IIC-Disciples-2017-FINAL.pdf)

**4. PREPARE AND DISPLAY WELCOME SIGNS** for refugees and immigrants to show your messages of support! Choose this welcome sign, in Spanish/English/Arabic (originally designed by a Mennonite pastor in Harrisonburg, VA.) to communicate your welcome for refugees and immigrants: [immanuelmennonite.wordpress.com/2016/09/27/welcome-sign/](http://immanuelmennonite.wordpress.com/2016/09/27/welcome-sign/)

And, go here: for sample Refugees Welcome signs, which can be printed or adapted for your desired purposes: [www.discipleshomemissions.org/Refugees-Welcome-Signs-samples.pdf](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/Refugees-Welcome-Signs-samples.pdf)

**5. BUILD UNDERSTANDING AND RELATION-**

*Continue on next page.*



# Show Your Support for Immigrant Communities Feeling Increased FEAR

Disciples church members and neighbors are reporting heightened fears as Immigration Executive Orders have been implemented in recent months to [build a wall](#) across the U.S. southern border, increase raids, hire more immigration enforcement agents, detain families and children seeking asylum, and [force local police to serve as federal immigration agents](#). All undocumented immigrants are at risk, including a [Methodist lay leader in Kansas](#), a [mother in Arizona](#) in the U.S. for 22 years, a [mother with citizen children](#) and a pending U-Visa in Denver who just entered sanctuary, and [men coming out of a church ministry](#) that provides shelter in extremely cold conditions.

In this environment, faith communities have demonstrated unwavering commitment to our immigrant neighbors, including more than [800 congregations](#) that have pledged support for the Sanctuary Movement and [1,000 faith leaders who have opposed](#) discrimination against immigrants. Scripture calls us to love thy neighbor and welcome the sojourner by standing with our brothers and sisters to stop harmful deportations that tear families apart. As Disciples, we will be considering an ["Immigrant Welcoming Resolution"](#) at General Assembly this summer in Indianapolis. [See the resolution on at: ga.disciples.org/business](#) or [www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries](#).



*Interfaith leaders and other immigrant advocates gathered at the ICE national headquarters in February to express their concern about enhanced immigrant detentions and deportations.*

[www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries](#).

See our recent [Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries statement](#) at: [www.discipleshomemissions.org/new-refugee-immigration-restrictions-our-churchs-response/statements-from-disciples-ucc-leaders-partners](#). And [see resources for how your congregation can build solidarity and support with immigrants](#): [www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries/new-refugee-immigration-restrictions-our-churchs-response/take-action](#)

Follow @StanleyRea on Twitter, visit our website at Refugee and Immigration Ministries Disciples Home Missions, subscribe to RIM WRAP Alerts (see page 55), & "like" Refugee and Immigration Ministries Disciples Home Missions on Facebook to receive up-to-date info. Reach

Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea at [ststanley@dhm.disciples.org](mailto:ststanley@dhm.disciples.org) or 202-957-7826. You can also follow @sanctuarymvt on Twitter & "like" the National Sanctuary Movement on Facebook to receive up-to-date alerts. if you take action.

*Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea  
Refugee & Immigration Ministries*

## Refugees *Continued from page 40.*

**SHIPS OF SOLIDARITY WITH LOCAL MUSLIM COMMUNITIES** feeling fearful in this time. Consider studying resources such as these as an individual, family, or congregation:

--"My Neighbor is Muslim: Exploring the Muslim Faith," a seven-part study guide for communities and congregations to build understanding about Islam, and developed through the Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. Go to: <http://lirs.org/myneighborismuslim/> to download a copy, and/or to order a limited number of hard copies.

--"Christian-Muslim Dialogues," a five part series of panel discussions, links to lectures, articles, and additional resources for answering interfaith questions and building peaceful partnerships. Go here: <https://fullerstudio.fuller.edu/christian-muslim-dialogues/> to

access and download free materials!

--"The Jesus Fatwah: Love Your (Muslim) Neighbor as Yourself," a DVD and discussion guide from the "Living the Questions" resource series. Download some free materials, and purchase resources for home or group use here: [www.livingthequestions.com/xcart/home.php?cat=493](http://www.livingthequestions.com/xcart/home.php?cat=493)

6. **USE YOUR VOICE (and signs!) to HOST A PRAYER VIGIL, WRITE AN OP-ED, OR PLAN ANOTHER EVENT** in your area to lift up the voices and testimonies of immigrants and refugees, to pray for communities and read scripture that calls us to "welcome the stranger," and to share information to educate others about the great benefits of immigrant and refugees in our churches and communities, and

*Continue on page 54.*



National **Benevolent** Association

# Connect with NBA at GA!

As the health and social service general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the National Benevolent Association is excited to be with you at the 2017 General Assembly in Indianapolis!

## Visit Us in the Exhibit Hall, Booth #810!

Meet Disciples health and social service ministries in our shared exhibit space. And learn more about solitary confinement, the subject of Resolution GA-1525, through "6x9: A Virtual Experience," presented in collaboration with National Religious Campaign Against Torture, Disciples Home Missions, Disciples Center for Public Witness, Disciples Peace Fellowship, and Reconciliation Ministry.



## Join Us in Workshops and Learning Tracks!

Explore issues such as faith-rooted organizing, immigration and detention, mental health, social entrepreneurship, and more with NBA leaders and ministry partners during open workshops on Sunday and the Justice and Transformative Leadership & Innovation learning tracks Monday-Wednesday.

## Celebrate NBA's 130 Years of Ministry, 1887-2017!

Help us mark this latest milestone in NBA's rich legacy of compassion and care. Share your NBA memories, view our interactive "living history" archives, and be part of Disciples health and social service ministry for years to come.



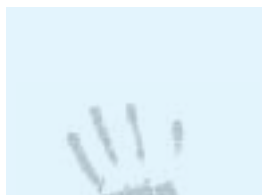
 @nbadisciples

 /NationalBenevolentAssociation



Learn more at [nbacares.org/GA2017](http://nbacares.org/GA2017)

## Helping “Flowering Justice Ministry” Bloom



Shayne Flowers and Gwynn Fuqua



Flowering Justice Ministry, an Anti-Racism Ministry of Hope, Reconciliation and Healing in Oakland, Calif., is less than a year old. As we work to clarify our mission and develop relevant programming, there are things still to be done on the business side. My head swims with all there is to do to share the message that we all need to work on ridding the church of systemic racism, as my eyes glaze over from hours on the internet reading about grant requirements.

God heard my prayers because someone told me about the Incubate Initiative, a ministry of the National Benevolent Association (NBA). The NBA incubates new and emerging Disciples-related health and social service ministries. I reach out to them and they reach back.

They invited Flowering Justice Ministry to the 2016 SENT Seminar for social entrepreneurs, for them to get to know us and us to get to know them. Off we go, hoping to soak up all we could to help Flowering Justice Ministry bloom.

Idea and recommendations on how to flip our thinking, market, ask for funds—all given to us. Our group consisted of the most amazing social entrepreneurs. I left the seminar with a feeling that a few more petals on our flower had opened.

Throughout my time at the SENT Seminar, I could not get the words of an old Rev. James Cleveland song out of my mind:

I don't feel no ways tired. I've come too far from where I started from. Nobody told me that the road would be easy. I don't believe God brought me this far to leave me.

The care, support, respect, and compassion that the staff and presenters showed us really placed in my heart that the NBA Incubate Initiative did not bring us this far to leave us.

Learn more about the NBA Incubate Initiative and SENT Seminar at [nbacares.org/incubate](http://nbacares.org/incubate).

*Rev. Shayne M. Flowers,  
Founder and Director*

*Flowering Justice Ministry*

*Participant in the 2016 SENT Seminar,  
National Benevolent Association (NBA)  
Incubate Initiative*

### NBA Resources

- **Injustice Anywhere Documentary and Study Guide** [www.nbacares.org/injustice-anywhere](http://www.nbacares.org/injustice-anywhere) Arising through collective conversations with several Disciples clergy, activists, and ministries across the church, this film shares the stories of local Disciples working for racial justice in Ferguson and beyond. The Disciples clergy involved with this documentary have provided study guide materials to help facilitate viewing and discussion of Injustice Anywhere with your congregation or community.
- **St. Louis-Area Disciples Summit on Racial Justice** [www.nbacares.org/care-resources/STLsummit](http://www.nbacares.org/care-resources/STLsummit) This summit was an opportunity to gather and challenge Disciples to forge a unique mission imperative for racial justice in the St. Louis area. The summit planners share a collection of resources from the event for anyone interested in issues of racial justice, white privilege, and reconciliation, as well as other congregations or organizations interested in hosting a similar summit in their communities.
- **NBA Prison and Jail Ministry Webinar Series** [www.nbacares.org/care-resources/category/prison-jail-ministries-affinity-group](http://www.nbacares.org/care-resources/category/prison-jail-ministries-affinity-group) View webinars on topics such as “Incarceration, Justice, and Restoration,” featuring Michelle Alexander’s book, *The New Jim Crow*, and “Juvenile Justice and Restorative Justice.”
- **Response to Crisis and Trauma** [www.nbacares.org/care-resources/nba-response-to-crisis-and-trauma](http://www.nbacares.org/care-resources/nba-response-to-crisis-and-trauma) NBA shares some of the intentional conversations and resources we have as healthcare providers and direct service ministries. We are grounded in and further encourage reconciling conversations and continue to share ways to foster dialogue following trauma.

# DHM Congratulates Bishop Melvin

Bishop Valerie J. Melvin is the first born of James Lee Melvin and Ada Knight Melvin of Goldsboro, N. C. She was called into the Gospel ministry when she was 18 years of age. In 1978, she was attending her high school graduation when she heard the audible voice of God say, "Teach my people, because ignorance abounds." The charge was crystal clear, but as many youth do, she played the role of the prodigal daughter.

Upon completion of high school Melvin attended undergraduate school at Atlantic Christian College (now Barton College) in Wilson, N. C. She graduated in 1983 with a B.S Degree in Music Education.

She was ordained in the Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ in April of 1995 and received dual ordination in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in July 2003. She has served as a supply preacher for eight and a half years as Secretary of the Goldsboro-Raleigh District Assembly. On August 25, 2007 Melvin was installed as the Associate Regional Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in North Carolina, with responsibilities to 200 plus churches in North Carolina.

On March 1, 2010 she became the 16th pastor of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Reidsville, N. C., she was selected to serve as the International Disciples Women's Worship Coordinator for the 2014 Quadrennial Assembly in Atlanta, Ga. In

July 2014 she received the coveted Liberation Award from the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the USA and Canada for her overall work within ministry, promoting liberation and unity. On December 2, 2014, Victory is Inevitable Ministries (VIE) was officially received into Life Changing Ministries International Fellowship, with Apostle Aaron McNair, Sr., General Overseer as spiritual father and covering. On that same day, her work and calling to the Office of Bishop-Designate was acknowledged and confirmed upon her life and legacy.



Valerie Melvin



Photo above: Rev. Ron Degges, President of Disciples Home Missions presenting Bishop Valerie Melvin with a gift at the Service of Consecration.



Ron Degges with Candyce Black-Wells at her wedding. Candyce is a member of the DHM Board.



Ordination service of Reuben Sancken-Marx at Central Christian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. Reuben is currently serving on the DHM board.



Ron Degges in Washington, D.C., during the November 2016 DHM board meeting.

## In the Mail Continued from page 10.

First of all, when I chaired the board that hired you, I thought we all had agreed that position was to be a position for life! Seriously, you will be missed – there's no doubt!

You have done a wonderful job, but I know you want to do other things at this time in your life. Congratulations on your upcoming retirement. It is well deserved, but you sure leave a large footprint for someone to follow in.

I have enjoyed getting to know you and call you a friend for life. Many blessings for the future, my friend.

Sincerely,

*Bill McConnell*  
Senior Minister  
Hillside Christian Church  
Wichita, Kansas

I am writing to thank you all for your very generous gift of \$1,000 made on January 6, 2017. We are so grateful for the strong support of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Refugees come to Indianapolis from many different countries, cultures, and experiences. They arrive in our city with few possessions, but with hope and eagerness to work hard, rebuild their lives in safety and freedom, and achieve self-sufficiency. Your donation enables us to continue our mission to serve and empower refugees here in Indianapolis. We couldn't do it without you.

This year, we will welcome more than 940 new refugees and continue to serve an additional 600 individuals. Refugees from countries such as Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burma, Central African Republic, China, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Sudan, and Syria will all have the opportunity to rebuild their lives in Indiana.

We deeply appreciate your generosity. Thank you so much for your gift!

*Cole Varga, Executive Director*  
Exodus Refugee Immigration, Inc.  
Indianapolis, Indiana

## Reconciliation Continued from page 19.

(Disciples of Christ). The ministry of Reconciliation covets your continued financial and spiritual support as we expand Christ's ministry in our Church and communities. We pray on behalf of those for whom Christ has given us, that with them, we may be made One!

May it be so . . .

*Rev. April Johnson*  
Minister of Reconciliation

Sometimes an individual with autism might be discouraged from participating in activities like summer camp. But your generous gift will mean that Christmount will continue to touch the hearts and lives of many campers here at Camp Lakey Gap.

Thank you so much for recognizing the significance of ministry for camps and retreats, and in turn for helping Christmount continue to live out our mission of bringing about renewal for so many. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions or need additional information about anything. Please contact us at your convenience.

With gratitude,

*Rev. Rob Morris, Executive Director*  
Christmount  
Black Mountain, North Carolina

With the recent passing and celebration of the life of Vivian Reed Hayes, our wife, mother, and grandmother, getting through the Holidays has been a challenge for our family. The Lord put caring people like you in our path to help see us through this trying time and to bring some level of comfort. We are so appreciative and deeply touched by the support and outpouring of love expressed by so many individuals from across the country.

Thank you for the thoughtful donation of \$50 in Vivian Reed Hayes' honor to the Alameda Christian Church College Scholarship Fund, and for reaching out to Vivian's family after Vivian went to be with the Lord. Vivian loved being an active member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the work of Homeland Ministries.

Thank you and have a Blessed 2017!

*Arnold, Arniesha, Kristina, Marlaina Hayes and the spirit of Vivian*

# 2016 DHM & Disciples Women

## Donors

With gratitude and appreciation, Disciples Home Missions lists the people and organizations who made donations to our mission work. With our general ministry partners, we promote diversity, growth, renewal, and leadership throughout the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These gifts make our work possible.

Donations to Disciples Home Missions in 2016 were also received for the following ministries: **All Peoples Christian Center, Association of Disciples Musicians, ADM Music Clinician Endowment, ADM Tom Wood Worship Chair Endowment Fund, ADM Vera Enz Fund, Chaplains, Disciples' Advocate, Disciples Men, Disciples Men Cookin' for Mission, Disciples Volunteering, Disciples Women, Disciples Women Social Action Project for Human Trafficking, Women to Women Worldwide, Just Women, Farm Worker Ministry, Green Chalice, Immigration Counsel, Inman Christian Center, Kids to Kids, Refugee and Immigration Ministry, Star Supporter Fund and Yakama Christian Mission.** A separate list of donations to Disciples Peace Fellowship follows on pages 36 to 38.

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United Christian Church	Fresno, CA	Shepherd Park Christian Church	Washington, DC
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Valeri L. Briggs	Irvine, CA		

Continue on next page.





# DHM

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Yvonne McCoy	Louisville, KY	Ronald H. Keith	Lakeville, MN
Mark D. Lee	Madisonville, KY	First Christian Church	Minneapolis, MN
North Middletown		Ana Wilson	Rochester, MN
Christian Church	N. Middletown, KY	Thomas H. Davis, Jr.	Saint Paul, MN
Constance R. Ford	Owensboro, KY	First Christian Church	Brookfield, MO
Michael G. Bruce	Owensboro, KY	Doyle Coffman (Chaplain and Mrs.)	Cabool, MO
First Christian Church	Paducah, KY	Johna Brill	Cameron, MO
Jeremy A. Garbat-Welch	Shelbyville, KY	First Christian Church	Doniphan, MO
Stephen M. Thompson	Stanford, KY	Tom and Cindy Wiltshire	Eldon, MO
Renee P. Chase	Versailles, KY	Leon W. Whitney	Ellisville, MO
Garry L. Eldridge	Madisonville, LA	Russell Hamilton	Gallatin, MO
Eronica C. King	New Orleans, LA	Ann D. Kircher	Harrisonville, MO
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Continue on next page.

## DJAN Lunches

Disciples Justice Action Network (DJAN) will be hosting brown bag lunches at the General Assembly in Indianapolis on Monday and Wednesday.

Monday, July 10, will be Michael Kimamon on "The Politics of Fear."

Wednesday, July 12, will be Sandhya Jha on "The Fear of Politics."





**DHM**

Eric D. Luther	Yazoo City, MS	United Christian Church	Englewood, OH
Charles Tooley	Billings, MT	New Hope Christian Church	Holland, OH
Joanne Lindberg	Billings, MT	William S. Simmons, Jr.	Liberty Township, OH
Robert and Karen Frank-Plumlee	Lincoln, MT	First Christian Church	Mansfield, OH
James Sonda	Charlotte, NC	Melba Huddlestun	Marion, OH
First Christian Church	Concord, NC	First Christian Church	Paulding, OH
Little Bethlehem Christian Church	Eden, NC	Dennis L. Brown	Republic, OH
First Christian Church	Farmville, NC	John H. Hopkins	Rootstown, OH
Charles L. Wyatt	Franklin, NC	Central Christian Church	Warren, OH
Richard Weikel	Greensboro, NC	Hugh Morgan	Warren, OH
Valerie J. Melvin	Greensboro, NC	Nancy L. Blakeslee	Westerville, OH
Marilyn Davis	Greenville, NC	Julia A. Godfrey	Wilberforce, OH
Jessica Braxton	Grifton, NC	Victoria Kumorowski	Zanesville, OH
Susan L. Brooks	Lewisville, NC	Jamie A. Bennett	Bartlesville, OK
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Lois Bayer	Sanford, NC	Richard W. Dunn	Enid, OK
First Christian Church	Wilmington, NC	Angelika Mitchell	Glenpool, OK
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in North Carolina	Wilson, NC	William M. Davis	Inola, OK
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Katherine O'Neal	Willseyville, NY	First Christian Church	Corvallis, OR
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Kenneth W. Coy	Columbus, OH	Ronald W. Bartlett	Medford, OR
Summit Christian Church	Dayton, OH		

Continue on next page.

## DHM

Carol H. Cure	Portland, OR	William Bross	Houston, TX
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Magdalyn M. Sebastian	Tualatin, OR	Brett William Coe	Kerrville, TX
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Central Christian Church	Memphis, TN	James C. Percival	Universal Cty, TX
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Keith W. Purscell	Corpus Christi, TX	Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church	Fishersville, VA
Harry Carter	Crp Christi, TX	Paul W. Simrell	Glen Allen, VA
Angela Brown	Dallas, TX	Gordonsville Christian Church	Gordonsville, VA
Sally J. Green	Dallas, TX	Deborah Carlton	Henrico, VA
Tim J. Griffin	Dallas, TX	Alma Haynes	Martinsville, VA
Warren Avenue Christian Church	Dallas, TX	Jerusalem Christian Church	Martinsville, VA
Nancy Foley	Edna, TX	Mount Olive East Christian Church	Martinsville, VA
John B. Konugres	El Paso, TX	David N. Freeman	Mathews, VA
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Continue on next page.



## DHM

Mary Lewis Webb	Randolph, VT	Country Homes Christian Church	Spokane, WA
Belleuve Christian Church	Belleuve, WA	Opportunity Christian Church	Spokane, WA
Richard Cathell	Bellingham, WA	Sandra Messick	Spokane, WA
George Wallace	Centralia, WA	Carey W. Shepard	Steilacoom, WA
Memorial Christian Church	Ephrata, WA	First Christian Church	Tacoma, WA
Northwest Regional Christian Church	Federal Way, WA	David & Belinda Bell	Toppenish, WA
Stephen D. King	Lake Forest Park, WA	Thomas A. Yates	Vancouver, WA
Janet Richardson	Lynnwood, WA	Central Christian Church	Walla Walla, WA
First Christian Church	Olympia, WA	Wilbur Memorial	White Swan, WA
First Christian Church	Puyallup, WA	David & Kathleen Helseth	Yakima, WA
Sharon Nichols	Renton, WA	Edwin & Marian Martin	Yakima, WA
Shalom United Church of Christ	Richland, WA	Englewood Christian Church	Yakima, WA
Maurice & Vera Baumgartner	Seattle, WA	Between the Ridges	Zillah, WA
Berlena C. Brock	Seattle, WA	Stephan W. Brunelle	Holmen, WI
Lake City Christian Church	Seattle, WA	Victoria Fishel	Madison, WI
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Royal Palm Christian Church	Coral Springs, FL		

Continue on next page.

### Disciples Peace Fellowship Breakfast

Sunday, July 9, 2017  
7:00 AM – 8:30 AM  
Indianapolis  
Convention Center  
\$25



# DPF

Carolyn McCracken	Greenfield, IN	Marla Schrader	Silver Spring, MD
Frank Everett	Greenfield, IN	Russell Fuller	Ann Arbor, MI
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Garnett & Carolyn Day, Jr.	Indianapolis, IN	George & Arthea Saller	Kansas City, MO
Howard & Darlene Goodrich	Indianapolis, IN	Jonne A. Long	Kansas City, MO
Jim & Carolyn Higginbotham	Indianapolis, IN	Douglas W. Smith & Kate Moyer	Kansas City, MO
Joel & Karon Duffield	Indianapolis, IN	Laura Phillips	Kansas City, MO
Judy Dunson	Indianapolis, IN	Bill & Sheral McDermet III	Raymore, MO
Laura J. Rush	Indianapolis, IN	Cynthia McCrae	Raymore, MO
Leon & Jan Riley	Indianapolis, IN	Karen J. Yount	Raymore, MO
Louella Reinhardt	Indianapolis, IN	Tom Russell	Saint Joseph, MO
Michael C. Borschel	Indianapolis, IN	Mark D. Anderson	Saint Louis, MO
Nancy Dickinson	Indianapolis, IN	Clela Anderson	Saint Louis, MO
Ron Allen & Linda McKiernan-Allen	Indianapolis, IN	Ms. K. J. Reynolds	Webster Groves, MO
Rosemary Eroin & Richard Schevitz	Indianapolis, IN	Ron Greene & Ruth Fletcher	Great Falls, MT
Sarah Riestler & T. P. Bodenreider	Indianapolis, IN	Bob & Karen Frank-Plumlee	Lincoln, MT
Mary Blair Immel	Lafayette, IN	John Brock	Missoula, MT
Ned Gillum	Marion, IN	Pablo Stone	Black Mountain, NC
Evelyn Brown	Spencer, IN	Glenda Dietrich Moore	Lincoln, NE
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Karen Stoker	Tipton, IN	Steve & Carrie Miller	Albuquerque, NM
Michael & Marla Wills	Kansas City, KS	Ralph & Jan Stone	Jemez Springs, NM
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Bob and Edna Thompson	Paris, KY	Dave & Rebecca Brown	Streetsboro, OH
Bill & Lee Longman	Watertown, MA	Janice Burns-Watson	Wapakoneta, OH
Catherine Elkiss	Baltimore, MD	Bill Spangler	West Farmington, OH
Maryn P. & Wilfred Goodson	Bethesda, MD	Dorothy Messenger	Edmond, OK
Westmoreland Congregational Church United Church of Christ	Bethesda, MD	Fred & Sue Blackmon, Jr.	Newalla, OK
Laird & Evelyn Thomason	Rockville, MD	Joe R. & Sarah Jones	Oklahoma City, OK

Continue on next page.



**DPF**

Robert Elliott	Oklahoma City, OK	University Christian Church	Fort Worth, TX
Bethany Christian Church	Tulsa, OK	Janice & Donald Tatlock	Granbury, TX
John & Toni Imbler	Tulsa, OK	Ellen B. Mitchell	Houston, TX
Kelly Kirby & Charles Johnston	Tulsa, OK	Jack C. & Cathy Robertson	Richardson, TX
Richard & Peggy Ziglar	Tulsa, OK	Marlene M. Teal	San Antonio, TX
Warren & Nancy Wirth	Tulsa, OK	Bob Mooty	Evington, VA
Joseph Driskill	London, ON	Bob & Nita Floe Hempfling	Lynchburg, VA
Gary & Betty Massoni	Corvallis, OR	Curtis Wheeler	Lynchburg, VA
Rod & Mary Anne Parrott	Hood River, OR	Len & Linda Elliott	Auburn, WA
William & Mary Jacobs	Medford, OR	Bruce W. Radtke	Bellingham, WA
Andrew Guthrie	Portland, OR	Don & Joyce Leak	Camano Island, WA
Central Pacific Conference	Portland, OR	Berlena Brock	Seattle, WA
United Church of Christ	Portland, OR	David R. Jones	Seattle, WA
Sharon Warner	Springfield, OR	Norman & Kathy Wells	Seattle, WA
Beverly Dale	Philadelphia, PA	Rosemary Blakemore	Seattle, WA
Ed & Mary Ruth Kolbe	Arlington, TX	James & Patricia Stockdale	Seattle, WA
Roger Wedell	Dallas, TX	University Christian Church	Seattle, WA
Lynn Lackey	Desoto, TX	Gail & Eva Davis	Spokane, WA
Herbert & Suzy Stanfield Lynskey	Flower Mound, TX	Patricia Tucker	Eagle River, WI
Rita N. Brock	Fort Worth, TX	James Y. Brown	Martinsburg, WV

**Next Issue**

The Disciples' Advocate

**We Are One**

Deadline:  
Aug. 18, 2017

**Eight Bible Studies Available for General Assembly Preparation**

As Disciples we know the value of study of scripture. Faculty from Disciples seminaries and other Disciples scholars graciously volunteered their thoughts on the theme verse of the 2017 General Assembly from Jesus' priestly prayer in John 17.

*"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one." John 17:20-21a*

You can find these studies on the General Assembly website (<http://disciples.org/ga>) under the "Program" tab below "Education" in the menu. Use just one, several or all eight. The website has downloadable PDF copies for printing locally. Included are:

- **Enfolded, Unfolded, Made One: Unity in the Holy Spirit** – José Francisco Morales Jr., Director of Pastoral Formation, Disciples Seminary Foundation
- **United In Our Multiplicity: The Immigrant Body and the Politics of Oneness in John 17:20-21** – Dr. Sharon Jacob, Assistant Professor of New Testament, Phillips Theological Seminary
- **Sharing Food and Sharing Life** – Dr. Kristine A. Culp, Dean, Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago, Associate Professor of Theology, The Divinity School, The University of Chicago
- **Let Us Cooperate for One: A Lesson in Polity from Alexander Campbell** – Dr. Timothy S. Lee, Associate Professor of the History of Christianity, Brite Divinity School
- **Staying Together with One Mind and One Heart** – Dr. Delores Carpenter, Professor of Religious Education, Howard University
- **We Are One—What?** – Dr. Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder, Faculty, Chicago Theological Seminary
- **Oneness in Purpose and Works** – Dr. Warren Carter, Professor of New Testament, Brite Divinity School
- **A Meditation on One** – Mark Miller-McLemore, Dean, Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt



# Refugee & Immigration Ministries



Refugee & Immigration Ministries invites you to **JOIN OUR WORKSHOP** during General Assembly. The Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea (Disciples Refugee and Immigration Ministries) and Tana Liu-Beers (Disciples Legal Immigration Counsel), together with impacted refugee and immigrant leaders will be presenting a workshop **Tuesday, July 11, 8:45-10:45 a.m. on Welcoming Immigrants & Refugees: Hearing Affected Voices, Understanding Changes, Acting Beyond Rhetoric.**

Come discuss how our faith intersects with one of the hottest topics of our time. We hear almost daily about refugees and immigrants in the news. But who are the refugees and immigrants that are connected with our congregations and partners as Disciples? And how are their lives, their churches, their families--and our communities together--being affected by rhetoric and policies that resist their presence among us? We'll explore changes instituted through recent Executive Orders and their implementation, and hear stories of how immigrant and refugee families are hurting, coping, and seeking solidarity. Then we'll activate our faith to find ways past divisions and fear as we engage in Know Your Rights awareness, share welcoming models, practice rapid response strategies, and learn how our voices can help build justice and hope.

*This workshop will connect with the "Immigrant Welcoming" resolution to be considered during the Assembly (See the resolution on at: [ga.disciples.org/business](http://ga.disciples.org/business) or [www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries)), and will also relate to the Emergency "Refugee Welcoming" resolution to be presented at the Assembly, as well.*

## Refugees Continued from page 41.

about the long term security of the U.S. refugee program. Go here: [www.discipleshomemissions.org/RIM-2017-Toolkit-Community-Response-to-Trump-Attack-on-Refugee-Program.pdf](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/RIM-2017-Toolkit-Community-Response-to-Trump-Attack-on-Refugee-Program.pdf) for talking points, and a toolkit of sample ways to assist with your efforts to share your voice of welcome for the stranger in your midst.

**7. RESETTLE REFUGEES IN YOUR AREA!!** Call our office for how you support resettlement in your area!

**8. REACH OUT TO YOUR PARTNERS IN THE BUSINESS, HEALTH, EDUCATOR, LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND FAITH COMMUNITY!** Urge them to sign onto these sector-specific letters supporting resettlement and opposing discrimination. Go to these links for each letter: [bit.ly/Business4Refugees](http://bit.ly/Business4Refugees), [bit.ly/Educators4Refugees](http://bit.ly/Educators4Refugees), [bit.ly/LawEnforcement4Refugees](http://bit.ly/LawEnforcement4Refugees), [bit.ly/Health4Refugees](http://bit.ly/Health4Refugees), [bit.ly/FaithLeaders4Refugees](http://bit.ly/FaithLeaders4Refugees).

And, please contact our Disciples Refugee and Immigration Ministries office for further ways your congregation can reach out to resettle or otherwise support refugees!!

*Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea*

*Refugee & Immigration Ministries*

*202 957-7826 (cell) or [sstanley@dhm.disciples.org](mailto:sstanley@dhm.disciples.org)*



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[www.facebook.com/discipleshomemissions](http://www.facebook.com/discipleshomemissions)



## NAPAD Events at General Assembly

July 8 to 11, Indianapolis



- July 8 4-5 pm NAPAD Ice Breaker meeting (possibly continue to dinner)
- July 9 11 am NAPAD Worship Service and Fellowship at Bethel Christian Church in Indiana  
1940 N Campbell Ave; Indianapolis, Indiana 46218
- July 10 NAPAD womens meeting after Business meeting (possibly continue to dinner)  
NAPAD ministers meeting After Sessions
- July 11 Korean Disciples Convocation meeting After Sessions

Rooms to be announced later



## RIM WRAP



Refugee and immigrant needs are changing constantly in recent months. **Please sign up at [www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/refugee-immigration-ministries) to be sure to receive the MOST recent updates about how your voice and actions are urgently needed to help welcome and stand in solidarity with immigrant and refugee neighbors!**

## Disciples Home Missions is now on Facebook!



Follow us for resources on . . .

- Missions & Volunteering
- Congregational Transformation
- Support for Clergy & Lay Leaders
- Faith Formation & Education
- Justice & Advocacy
- Scholarships & Grants
- Ministry Resources for Women, Men, Children, Families, Youth & Young Adults



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Missions

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# JUST WOMEN

**SPRING 2017**

**Women Breaking Barriers**

**SUMMER 2017**

**Race and Reality: A Justice Check**

**FALL 2017**

**The Age of Mass Incarceration**

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