

GA-1901

General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Including the Office of General Minister and President

Teresa Hord Owens, General Minister and President

Office of General Minister and President

Administration

I am pleased that the Rev. Lee Hull Moses will join the OGMP staff in February 2019 as Chief of Staff. Rev. Moses most recently pastored a congregation in Greensboro, NC, and brings expertise in non-profit management and fundraising to her ministry with the OGMP.

Regional and Congregational Ministry Engagement

During 2018, I attended and preached at the majority of Regional Assemblies across the church, including Canada. I was honored to preside at the installations of new regional ministers: the Rev. Dr. Andy Mangum, (Southwest); Bishop Valerie Melvin, (North Carolina); the Rev. Dr. Betsy Goehrig, (Florida) and the Rev. Chris Morton, (Nebraska). When possible, I have preached at a local congregation at the conclusion of Regional Assemblies. I have also preached at several congregational milestone anniversary celebrations. It has been important to engage as widely as possible across the whole church in order to hear and learn, and to bear witness to local ministries, local challenges, and connect with Disciples where they are. As I stated in my Advent message, despite the challenges we face, the spirit of hope permeates our church.

I continue to work closely with the College of Regional Ministers in support of regional minister search processes, and as part of the CRM itself in its regular meetings. The focus of Several regions are in search for a new Regional Minister, including Pacific Southwest and Arizona, with Virginia having just completed a search. The Ohio region has collaborated with the four contiguous regions for congregational, clergy and Commission on Ministry support. A new Regional Transitional Team leads the work of visioning the future for Ohio. I, along with general ministry leaders, have been engaged as Ohio charts a new course.

I am working with the College of Regional Ministers (CRM) on a church-wide education plan to revive and renew spiritual practice across the church, particularly Biblical literacy. The goal is a collection of resources across various media that can be utilized by congregations to promote spiritual formation and practice, and theological reflection. A small group of Regional Ministers will work with me to identify resources and prepare to launch the program.

Data Initiative

I have convened a small group of Disciples laypersons with information technology and data backgrounds. We have identified 2 phases of priority: 1) the Yearbook data gathering and data mining functions, and 2) gathering data to assess clergy well-being and flourishing. We are preparing a proposal for external funding for this venture. The Yearbook phase will include database and query design, including standardized reports. Access must be both easy and useful, and providing congregations with valuable feedback is a key objective. We are also benchmarking with other mainline denominations to see what currently exists elsewhere.

Communications

We are working with a communications firm to help assess the clarity and consistency of our messaging, and to help improve both our communications across the church, but also our messaging in the public square about the ministry of the Disciples of Christ. A series of interviews with Disciples, lay and clergy, across expressions of the Church has highlighted that common language such as the identity statement, and other historical “mantras” are widely known and used. We also understand ourselves to be theologically diverse, welcoming all to the Lord’s table, and striving to live in the tension that that diversity and welcome often bring. We do, however, struggle with how to share that message beyond these formulated statements. We will continue to work on the messaging in preparation for a wider roll-out in the coming year. This consulting engagement is not just to deliver a new “campaign”, but rather to work with us on an ongoing basis to optimize communications re: key issues and events.

On another front, Communications Ministries will be reviewing and revising our web presence in the coming year to improve access and navigation across the site as we strive to make information more readily available across the church.

Racial/Ethnic Ministries

I attended the National Convocation, the Bi-Lingual Hispanic Assembly, and the NAPAD Convocation this summer. The leaders of these ministries are planning to co-locate their assemblies in 2020, as we all seek to live into our calling to be a church that reflects the family of God.

I was honored to preside at the installation of the first woman to lead La Obra Hispana as the National Hispanic Pastor, the Rev. Lori Tapia. I also presided at the installation of the Rev. Chung Seong Kim as the Executive Pastor of NAPAD.

Cabinet

The HR Task Force, comprised of General Ministry representatives, drafted language to be submitted to the General Board and General Assembly as recommended minimum standards for General Ministry policies on harassment, including sexual harassment. The Cabinet approved the recommended draft language, and some general ministries have already revised their HR policies accordingly. This language is presented to the General Board as a resolution for adoption and referral to the General Assembly.

Justice Ministry

The participation of Disciples in the Poor People's Campaign during 2018, both within state-based campaigns and Disciples' ministries, has generated organic energy for social justice advocacy and ministry. Not only were Disciples present in state Poor People's Campaign actions, but Disciples were collectively present on several occasions with the national Campaign in Washington, DC. In September, Disciples who have been engaged in local justice work were invited to meet in Iowa at the "Disciples Public Presence" conference. Having witnessed the power of our collective presence and work, the goal was how to organize so that we can educate about social justice issues, informed by people in their own local contexts, and leverage our work together across the church. A team of small groups is working now to create a plan for future communication and collective action around social justice issues.

Disciples continue to engage in advocacy around immigration policy, across many expressions of the church. While there are specific human impacts on US soil, we also seek to educate and advocate about the root causes of global migration.

Recent trips to Good Samaritan Ministries (a ministry of the Southwest Region) in Texas, as well as to Tijuana, Mexico, with Global Ministries Partner, the Daniel F Romero Center for Border Ministries and Strategies (Centro Romero) allowed opportunities to see the challenges ministries face to provide relief and assistance as global violence, war, and poverty force many to seek safety and peace for their families.

Ecumenical Ministry

Along with Paul Tche, President of the Council on Christian Unity, and Jen Garbin, Regional Minister in Canada, I attended the General Council of the United Church of Canada. They approved our proposal to enter into a full communion relationship. A resolution is before the General Board and the General Assembly to approve this relationship in 2019.

I will attend the Puerto Rico Disciples Assembly later in February 2019. I will also attend the United Church of Christ General Synod.

I will be the Sunday Morning preacher for the Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, DC, in April 2019. I continue to be active as a representative of the Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada at meetings of the National Council of Churches, and the World Council of Churches.

General Assembly

The work of the General Assembly Futuring Task Force has been key to the planning of the 2019 General Assembly in Des Moines. In addition to working to keep costs down and raise sponsorships, we have added value via educational offerings. Pastors who need boundary training or anti-racism training to maintain their standing can get those classes at the event. Commissioned ministers can get their Disciples history. Elder training and classes for college students navigating campus life are planned. That is in addition to the many workshops on administration, Global Ministries and even a panel discussion on the first 50 years of The Design.

Other innovations for this assembly include:

- Opening and closing celebrations
- Starting on Saturday afternoon and ending Wednesday morning to potentially save one night's hotel cost
- An open call for sermon submissions
- MissionFest! in the exhibit hall where congregations and ministries can share their ministry successes with other congregations and ministries looking for inspiration.

Recommended Action

The General Board receives the report from the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) including the Office of General Minister and President and forwards it to the 2019 General Assembly for consideration and discussion.

Center for Faith and Giving

General Board Report

Spring 2019

Our Vision: *To create a culture of generosity across the life of the whole church*

Our Mission: *To provide resources that teach stewardship as a spiritual discipline and a whole life response to the abundance of God.*

Standing Committee Members: Eric Farris (LWM Kentucky); Denise Bell (CBF Georgia); Samuel Ramirez (CHM California); Melissa St Clair (CWF Central Rocky Mountain); Daphne Gascot Arias (CHF California). *Serving ex officio:* Randy Johnson (CWM Indiana); Sotello Long (CBM G-COM); Terri Hord-Owens (CBF G-COM). Bruce Barkhauer, Director (CWM, G-COM)

The Center celebrates with the church our ninth anniversary and the many ways we have been privileged to serve you. 2019 marked our sixth year of producing annual campaign materials for the church, including two years of partnership with the United Church of Christ (2017 & 2018) and our current partnership with the Ecumenical Stewardship Center. These popular resources offer complete guidance in the task of developing a successful annual fund in congregational life and encourage strong biblical and theological study through sermon and small group curriculum. They have also provided a necessary income stream for supporting the Center's operational budget, only 48% of which is projected to be underwritten by Disciples Mission Fund in 2019. We are grateful for the many partnerships we enjoy that strengthen our witness and provide the resources to empower this particular mission of the Disciples of Christ.

We are pleased to report that CFG was awarded an Oreon E Scott Grant to work extensively with congregations in the Ohio Region. Following the economic crisis in Ohio, the Center's leadership felt a keen awareness to join with other parts of the church that have come together to support these congregations and pastors while the Ohio Region reorganizes. Our efforts will focus on delivering stewardship and fiduciary "best practices" education for clergy and laypersons, including "generosity coaching" in up to two dozen congregations who apply for Generosity Plus. Participants will receive two intensive study sessions at the regional camp ground (one spring, one fall, two days each session) that include the pastor and at least two lay people from each church. For those that do not apply for Generosity Plus, a series of six webinars will be available for all of the Ohio Disciples during 2019 and the first half of 2020. The goal is to improve both clergy and congregational financial wellness and to equip future leadership for regional and general church service on boards with administrative responsibilities. Increased financial health will expand the capacity to practice generosity at the local, regional and wider expressions of the whole church, in keeping with our stated vision.

The Generosity Plus program is being piloted in Ohio and will become available to both regions and individual congregations in 2019. This fee for service coaching platform will allow the CFG to expand its capacity and provide a deeper level of assistance for parts of the church that wish to increase their generosity profile. We will still continue to provide our high-quality level of resources to the whole church via our website, in addition to this new program. We have hired (on a contract/part-time basis) the Rev. Janet Long, past Moderator of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who has just retired from her 33 1/3 years of service to Washington Avenue Christian Church in Elyria, Ohio. We are excited to have her join our Generosity Plus team.

Our Director continues to impact those studying for the ministry and vocational service to the church through teaching at several of our Disciple seminaries, including Lexington Theological Seminary which requires students to take a stewardship and church finance course in order to graduate in the MDiv program. In May of this year, Rev. Barkhauer will give the 4th James Reed Seminar on Stewardship, as a part of the Stalcup School of Theology, one of several recognitions that speak to the respect the Center for Faith and Giving has developed across the life of the church and amongst its peers. He has worked in consultation with the Lake Institute on Faith and Giving at the Indiana University School of Philanthropy, assisting in both the NASCEP (North American Study on Congregational Economic Practice) Study and the redevelopment of their ECRF (Executive Certificate in Religious Fund Raising) Certificate program. He also has participated as a mentor over the last three years to participants of Indiana Flourish (a clergy and congregational financial wellness program funded by the Lilly Foundation). Additionally, Rev. Barkhauer was recently elected President of the Board of Directors of the Ecumenical Stewardship Center. Bruce will complete the necessary requirements to earn his ECRF designation this spring. He continues to be a sought after speaker and presenter among our ecumenical partners in the field of generosity and stewardship, particularly as it relates to the biblical and theological practice of stewardship as a spiritual discipline.

The Standing Committee bids farewell to the Reverend Erin Wathen who has completed a five-year term and twice served as chair. We welcome the Reverend Daphne Gascot Aries as she begins her term that will end in 2023. Our gratitude goes to those willing to serve and lead in this capacity.

Christian Church Services

PO Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206

317.713.2405

Rev. Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens, president

Rev. Dr. Todd Adams, board chair

John Goebel, financial services

Cherilyn Williams, interim staff

Christian Church Services (CCS) is the umbrella corporation that coordinates the shared services of the Disciples Center such as building lease, phone system, reception and insurance. Since the last report to the General Board in April of 2018, longtime staff Sharon Coleman moved to another position within the Disciples Center in June 2018. Cherilyn Williams and John Goebel have filled the gap until the anticipated arrival of a chief of staff for the Office of General Minister and President, Rev. Lee Hull Moses, in February 2019.

The board met in June and December of 2018 to review operations. The following are highlights:

- A new phone software system task force, led by Pension Fund's Rick Mahoney, selected Level365 as a vendor. The software transition occurred in December 2018.
- Meetings also included updates on finances, procedures, manuals and training cycles as well as schedule of holidays for the building.
- Gary Kidwell was elected as board chair for 2019-2020.

College of Regional Ministers Report

President Greg Alexander, Kentucky
President Elect, LaTaunya Bynum, N. California-Nevada
First Vice President, Nadine Burton, Great River
Second Vice President, Bill Rose-Heim, Greater Kansas City
Secretary, Christal Williams, Tennessee

The College of Regional Ministers is made up of lead staff members of each of the 32 regional churches and the leaders of the three Ethnic Ministries and meets 2-3 times annually for spiritual renewal, mutual encouragement, continuing education, and matters of church oversight and service.

On non-General Assembly years, the CRM holds a meeting in the summer which includes the Moderators of each of the regional churches for community building and skill building. The CRM also meets for a meal function at each General Assembly and invites the former members of the CRM and their spouses to the function at a reduced cost to continue the ties of friendship and fellowship within this group of church leaders.

The officers of the CRM, known as the CRMX, meet 6-8 times a year online for business between the formal meetings of the CRM. Officers of the CRM are elected for a two-year term of service during the off General Assembly year gathering in the summer.

The CRM is divided into five fellowship groups based on geography. The Fellowship Groups meet in person once a year for community building and program coordination. Two of the five groups are currently meeting together for this function.

The funds of the CRM are managed by the OGMP Office. The CRM work is funded through annual dues contributed by the regional churches, invested funds, and regional church budgets through voluntary work done by its members.

One of the challenges/opportunities of the CRM is the high level of turnover in the membership. The report submitted to the **2018 General Board** listed this range of service of the regional ministers in regions by their amount of tenure. Add a year to each category for 2018.

- Five regions have been served for 14-22 years;
- Six regions have been served for 6-11 years;
- Six regions have served for 3-4 years;
- Seven regions have been served for 1-2 years;
- Two regions called permanent staff in February 2018,
- Six regions are served by interim ministries/strategies.
- In addition, two regional churches have changed their models to have multiple regional ministers as teams. This reality means adding five more persons using the title of Regional Minister for ministry. While the college only has one member

per regional church that attends its meetings, this still translates into exceptional transitional movement in the CRM.

Highlights of 2017-2018

- The CRM developed "An Ethical Covenant for Regional Ministers." The members of the CRM believed Regional Ministers must be held accountable to appropriate ethical standards. At the February meeting of the CRM, all the Regional Ministers will participate in a signing service in the context of worship.
- John Mobley (Alabama NW Florida) works as Chairperson of the Calling, Advisory, and Orientation Committee to assist Regions in leadership transition. He works with the General Minister and President to recommend persons to serve in positions of interim leadership. He assigns CRM members to partner with search teams in Regions that are seeking new regional ministers. Since the beginning of 2018 the following Regions have benefited from this assistance: Arizona, Florida, Kentucky, Mid-America, Nebraska, North Carolina, Northeast, Ohio, Pacific Southwest, South Carolina, Southwest, and Virginia. Currently five regions are in various stages of search processes and are working closely with members of the CRM in the process.
- Five of the CRM members serve on the General Commission on Ministry.
- Teresa Dulyea-Parker (Illinois Wisconsin) and Bill Spangler-Dunning (Upper Midwest) represent the CRM on the Administrative Committee.
- The CRM maintains a webpage for the public to learn about their work with a private area for confidential business. The CRM also maintains an active listserv system for fluid and quick communication.
- Susan Gonzales-Dewey (Pacific SW) represented the CRM in the planning and implementation of the July 2018 FORM (Fellowship of Regional Moderators) meeting in Birmingham, Alabama in the days preceding the National Convocation gathering. The CRM meets in the same time frame with part of the time spent with both groups together. This date and location allowed many of the CRM members to stay for all or part of the Convocation. A strong and vibrant network of the Regional Moderators emerged that will continue to develop identity and purpose in this next biennium.
- The CRM is preparing to address some challenging conversations that it must have. The CRM has become very intentional to build greater degrees of trust and transparency into the developing relationships among all its members. These conversations will address the deeper systemic issues of institutional racism that still haunt the structures of our denomination; the challenges facing our current regional structures and the need to explore alternatives that will carry our witness and work forward for generations to come; the changing landscape of congregational life and its impact on our current ministry structures (education, ministerial identity, recruitment, and Search and Call).
- Twelve of the General Units have at least one Regional Minister on their Board of Directors/Trustees. Regional Ministers serve on all of the Ethnic Ministries boards, Disciples Women Leadership, Reconciliation, Week of Compassion and

General Commission on the Ministry. Four Disciples Colleges and six Disciples Seminaries have Regional Ministers on their boards.

- The four Regional Ministers from the five contiguous regions to the Ohio Region (Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, and Pennsylvania/West Virginia) have entered into a covenant to provide Regional Ministry support services to congregations/ministers of the Ohio Region during this time of transition and renewal for that Region. Four geographic areas have been identified and one assigned to each of the four Regional Ministers.
- The eight regions of the Southeast Regional Fellowship (AL/NWFL, FL, GA, KY, NC, SC, TN, and VA) received a grant from the Oreon E. Scott Foundation to bring key leaders and regional staffs together at Christmount in a three-day retreat to explore areas where ministry/resources could be shared among the eight regions. A follow-up retreat is planned for late February, 2019.
- WWOW Event - In April 2018 The Wild Women of the West event was a multi-regional event that included worship, workshops, good food and good fellowship. Joined by women from the Office of Disciples Women, leaders of the Disciples Women's Leadership Conference, and General Minister and President the weekend was rich in community and enhanced by visitors from Puerto Rico and Latin America. It was a wonderful weekend. Another Wild Women of the West gathering will take place in June 2020 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Goals moving into 2019 - 2020 remain the same as for 2018-2019 as they are a continuation of intentional self-reflection and the actions they call forth:

- Continuing to form a deep and collegial relationship with the new GMP;
- rewriting our training manual for regional ministry;
- reengaging at a deeper level our anti-racism work;
- re-examining the distribution strategy of the regional church pool of DMF;
- creating innovative methods for regional churches to work together in new partnerships;
- taking better advantage of on-line meetings to share resources and training;
- initiating a monthly online conversation about one aspect at a time of regional ministry work;
- creating a covenant around search and call practices with representatives from CRM and all three Ethnic Ministries' leadership;
- rewriting the CRM bylaws;
- redefining the CRM identity in light of new emerging models of regional ministry leadership; and
- continuing to find ways forward in collaboration with all the ministries of our whole church that we may be a CRM that helps to bind together the work of the whole church and the congregations through mutual relationship, vision and action.

Rev. D. Gregory Alexander, President
January 31, 2019

Communication Ministries

PO Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206

317.713.2496

Cherilyn Williams, Assistant Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Emily Martin, Communication and Disciples Mission Fund Coordinator

General communications

- Supported the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival via social media, web page and e-letters, as instructed by the 2017 General Assembly resolution
- Began work with grassroots Disciples Public Presence group based in the Upper Midwest region; attended conference in September
- Began work with West End Strategies Team on communication audit and additional communication projects
- Convened general ministry communicators for a retreat and monthly meetings that included targeted discussions of shared challenges such as social media practices and policies
- Consistently distributed of *Disciples News Service* weekly and *Disciples Together* bi-monthly e-letters for general and pastor audiences respectively
- Posted daily on Facebook and Twitter general accounts, consistently posted and monitored special interest groups: General Assembly, Disciples Local Impact and Disciples Exchange
- Produced original stories for *Disciples News Service* highlighting a number of notable congregational and other ministries
- Gathered data on audience response for electronic communications. Now that we have approximately 18 months of consistent data we will be able to begin a more careful analysis of audience preferences.
 - Statistics (January-November 2018)
 - Facebook: 1,559 new page likes in 2018; 3.2% average engagement rate (industry average is 0.17%)
 - Twitter: 534 new followers; 2% average engagement rate (industry average is 0.055%)
 - E-mail open/click rates:
 - Disciples Together: 37% average open rate; 13.7% average click rate
 - Disciples News Service: 33.1% average open rate; 14.5% average click rate(industry average for religious organizations: 26.3% open rate, 7.3% click rate)

Website traffic:

- disciples.org: average 2,349 page views per month, 425,176 total. The most clicked link from the home page is Our Identity
- disciplesmissionfund.org: average 195 page views per month, 25,332 total. The most clicked links from the home page are What Is DMF and Special Day Offerings

Disciples Mission Fund

- Implemented new practice of featuring related stories in *Disciples News Service* during offering periods; coordinated the production and distribution of Disciples Mission Fund special day offering materials (Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving, Christmas)
- Set strategic goals for DMF development; at the time of this report, we had exceeded goal for increasing number of new individual donors in 2018
- Refreshed Disciples Mission Fund website organization, creating two new pages for worship resources and online giving
- Increased touch points with Disciples Mission Fund donors (both congregations and individuals) by sending quarterly letters and email solicitations
- Developed informational Disciples Mission Fund brochure

Year Book & Directory

- Supported the Year Book & Directory operations of gathering data and updating records, in partnership with regional ministers, and in layout and print production of final product.
- Connected with Year Book staff of several other denominations to compare best practices and share ideas
- Revised year book form and data gathering plan for 2019 cycle

General Assembly

- Coordinated 2019 General Assembly preparation of
 - Bible studies
 - Educational offerings
 - Promotional mailings, ads and videos
 - Website update
 - Local Arrangements Committee, including missions
 - Sponsorship solicitation and ad sales
 - Exhibit booth sales
 - Initial space allocations for education, child care, etc.
 - Mobile app for the event via a third-party vendor

The Disciples Center for Public Witness

December 2018 Report for the OGMP

Rev. Dr. Ken Brooker Langston

Executive Director

Introduction: The Disciples Center for Public Witness (DC4PW) is a justice advocacy ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. Originating as a shared ministry of National City Christian Church and the Christian Church Capital Area, DC4PW is now a shared ministry of seven founding congregations and several other partner congregations. (We are continuing to reach out successfully to new congregations). DC4PW has official status as a recognized organization through the Office of the General Minister and President; and our finances are handled by Disciples Home Missions.

The mission of DC4PW is two-fold: to use our denomination's passion for justice and vision of true community to evaluate and influence the laws and policies that affect all of us—especially marginalized persons and communities—in the United States, Canada, and around the world; and to inform, connect, and empower Disciples and other people of faith for ecumenical and interfaith justice advocacy in the United States and Canada. Our larger goal is to promote and help achieve the Beloved Community envisioned by Dr. King, a vision based on the Biblical promise of shalom and Jesus' proclamation of the inbreaking reign of God.

Overview: This year has been a year of increased investment in increased capacity and further expansion, especially in two areas of our ongoing work: communications and fundraising. With the help of consultants, contracted staff, and volunteers, we have increased our social media presence, revised our website, published weekly newsletters, and developed a database that better allows us to segment and communicate with our donors and grassroots advocates. Two of our contracted staff have taken fundraising courses, and the executive director has been helped on a regular basis by both a fundraising coach and an informal network of fundraisers within the denomination.

At the same time, we continue our program activities in many issue-areas, including racial justice, gender justice, worker justice, health care, mass incarceration, gun violence, domestic violence, torture (including solitary confinement), religious liberty, drone warfare, Cuba, and Palestine/Israel. In most of these issue-areas, we work with

our ecumenical, interfaith, and secular partners. We also work with our denominational partners on racism, immigration, refugees, women and children, criminal justice reform, and care for God's creation.

Special Programs: Two special programs of DC4PW are the *Ecumenical Poverty Initiative* (EPI) and *Let Justice Roll* (LJR). EPI is an anti-poverty ministry of DC4PW that is shared with the ecumenical community. It pulls together national and local religious leaders to work on a variety of racial and economic justice issues: exposing the negative effects of pay day lending, opposing budget cuts to programs that help people who are struggling economically, opposing the increasing debt for college students, and promoting more equal distribution of the resources available to public schools.

Let Justice Roll (LJR) is currently a virtual organization that uses its online presence and social media to inform and empower people of faith to do three things: promote a living wage on the national level, get more involved in state campaigns that are working to increase the local minimum wage, and oppose disparities in pay between different ethnic, racial, and gender groups. LJR's motto is: "A job should keep you out of poverty, not in it."

Special Projects: In addition to our regular activities and the activities associated with EPI and LJR, there were a number of special projects in which DC4PW was involved this year. One of these was *Journey to Justice* (J2J), a project in which a new pastor of African descent was given the opportunity to learn more about diverse forms of social witness by engaging in three areas of witness: public policy advocacy, justice-oriented networking with other church leaders, and faith-based activism.

Another special project was *Labor in the Pulpits*. In this project, we encouraged Disciples to invite labor leaders or people of faith involved in some form of worker justice ministry to speak in their congregations on or around Labor Day.

Still another special project was our involvement in *Torture Awareness Month*. Throughout the month of June, we encouraged congregations to do three things: give a sermon and/or host a discussion on torture; show a film about U.S. participation in torture; and hang a banner declaring opposition to torture.

Finally, we were actively engaged in *Faithful Democracy*, a project where we collect and distribute useful information about voter registration, voter education, and voter mobilization to regions, congregations, and faith-based groups.

We were able to accomplish the work necessary for the success of these special projects with the help of college students participating in our summer internship program.

Campaigns: DC4PW has been very involved in three major campaigns: *The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call to Moral Revival*, where we attended planning meetings and participated in public gatherings and events in Washington, DC; the National Council of Churches' *ACT Now*, which began with an event on the U.S. National Mall in which DC4PW organized and staffed a Disciples booth that received a good deal of traffic from participants in the gathering; and *MLK50*, where we encouraged participation by Disciples in events around the United States that were sponsored by the Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, TN.

Collaboration with other Disciples ministries: In terms of DC4PW's collaboration with other Disciples ministries, we worked with Refugee and Immigration Ministries and the coalition to which it belongs, the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, to oppose such things as the separation of undocumented immigrant children from their families, the tearing apart of immigrant families by our current immigration policies, the severe limiting of the number of refugees who are allowed to enter the United States, and the changes in statutory and regulatory definitions that make it even harder for immigrants legally to enter our nation.

We also worked closely with Green Chalice with and through the coalition to which we both belong, Creation Justice Ministries, on clean air and water, the preservation of national parks and monuments, the protection of the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge (ANWAR), a quicker transition away from fossil fuels, and opposition to both the Keystone Pipeline and increased offshore drilling.

And, finally, we worked with Family & Children's Ministries with and through the coalition to which we both belong, Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence. Alongside other people of faith, we actively promoted universal background checks, the banning of assault weapons, restrictions on high capacity ammunition magazines, and making gun trafficking a federal crime.

DC4PW also collaborated on a number of projects and events with Reconciliation Ministry, Week of Compassion, the National Benevolent Association, the Council on Christian Unity, the Division of Overseas Ministries, the Office of the General Minister and President, and the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Conferences in which DC4PW actively participated: Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice, Black Ministers Retreat, the National Convocation, Winter Talk, the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Asamblea Nacional Hispana Y Bingue, the Christian Unity Gathering of the National Council of Churches, Festival of Homiletics, National Immigrant Integration Conference, MLK50 Gathering for People of Faith.

Regional Assemblies where DC4PW had a strong presence: Canada, Florida, Tennessee, and the Christian Church Capital Area.

Coalitions with and through which DC4PW works: The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, Interfaith Worker Justice, National Religious Campaign Against Torture, Creation Justice Ministries, Paycheck Fairness Coalition, Coalition Against Religious Discrimination, International Religious Freedom Roundtable, Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence, Heads of Washington Offices of the Washington Interreligious Staff Community, Washington Working Group on the International Criminal Court, Domestic Human Needs, Coalition on Human Needs, Interfaith Network on Drone Warfare, School of the Americas Watch, Medicaid Coalition, Jubilee, USA, Bread for the World, the Interfaith Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, the Interfaith Health Care Coalition, and the Committee on Religious Liberty.

EUROPEAN EVANGELISTIC SOCIETY

PO Box 24560

Indianapolis, Indiana

www.eesinc.org

317-299-0333

Tony Twist, President

2018 General Board Report

The European Evangelistic Society (EES), incorporated in 1946, has now been in existence for 70 years. The Institute for the Study of Christian Origins was established in Tübingen, Germany in the early 1960s. Its purpose is to encourage and guide research in the earliest church and to focus the application of that research on the church today. Over the years the Institute has gained the respect of the faculty of theology at the University of Tübingen and as a result occupies a place of honor among scholars of the New Testament and early church history around the world.

The mission of EES in its 70 years of history has not changed. It remains: To develop Christian leaders for significant service through higher learning. The vision of EES is that every nation has effective leaders of disciple-making movements making a global impact on their churches, cultures, and countries for Christ. This vision reflects the common mission priorities of the Disciples of Christ as a movement for wholeness that welcomes all to the Table, and fulfills the last command of Jesus – “. . . as you are going, make disciples of all nations immersing them into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching obedience to all that I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).

The mission of EES is focused on this concern of leadership development necessary to realize the Four Priorities of the Church as outlined in the 2020 Vision of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). EES views its priorities in terms of developing Christian leaders and future Christian leaders that have unique access to the University for significant service, especially international students who are coming in increased numbers. This is done through providing practical assistance, counsel, and hospitality when they arrive on campus in order to establish relationships; then through prayer, fellowship, and studies as they get more involved.

Through the Institute for the Study of Christian Origins at the University of Tübingen, Germany, EES is actively involved in research supervision and publication. In conjunction with the Protestant faculty, a doctoral colloquium is offered in which international doctoral students have the opportunity for research supervision at a major European University. This mission expresses itself in three primary areas of ministry:

- To develop international leaders through advanced studies
- To assist emerging leaders in research and publication of relevant national articles, books, and other materials
- To help encourage the establishment and development of churches, colleges, and agencies focused on evangelism and disciple making.

At the present time, the educational ministry at The Institute for the Study of Christian Origins, led by Director Dr. Beth Langstaff, continues to function alongside Eberhard Karls University in Tübingen, Germany. The Institute has a long and productive relationship with the prestigious and influential University. The influence of this ministry has been felt all over the world, as international students have come to the University for academic purposes and have been a part of the Institute. It pursues basic New Testament research, offers colloquia through the academic year, and engages in continuing dialogue with professors and students from around the world.

The **English-German Colloquium in New Testament** serves as a forum for visiting professors and scholars to read works in progress. The Colloquium also provides an opportunity for doctoral students to present their work (dissertation proposals, chapter, conference papers, etc.) and to receive feedback. Moreover, it offers an unusual opportunity for scholars at all levels—master’s students, doctoral candidates, post-doc fellows, and professors—to meet and to discuss current research with one another.

A few special lectures in 2018:

- In January, colloquium members went on a guided tour at the Bible Museum in Stuttgart, which had a special exhibition on “Gott und Geld (God and Money)”. In the evening, Professor Marius Reiser gave a guest lecture on the intriguing topic of “The Bible and Money.”
- Another fascinating and timely topic—German theology during the Third Reich—was addressed at a well-attended guest lecture in June; Professor Anton Segev, from the Philosophy Dept of Loyola University in Chicago, read a paper on “Gerhard Kittel: Religion and Politics”



Beth Langstaff, Prof. Morgenstern, Prof. Segev,
Prof. Tilly

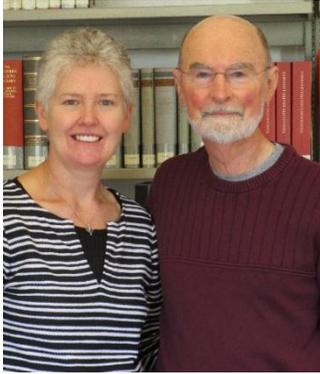
- In July 2018, Gregory Fewster from the University of Toronto gave a talk on "Origen, the Alexandrian School, and Critical Philology of the corpus Paulinum in Egypt".

Courses in Theological German and Theological English are taught at the University with some translation and linguistic work. The classes include readings from a variety of Christian authors, in addition to Scripture, all with a view toward deepening relationships with God and others. Both classes and colloquia provide good opportunities for probing questions as well as opportunities to meet outside of class for deeper discussions. Increasingly the colloquium is serving international scholars as well. The position that the Institute has by being part of the University officially gives them a great advantage and status as they develop these ongoing relationships. In order to serve more effectively as Bible college professors, presidents, mission directors, and in other high capacity positions, many from these networks will need the type of advanced preparation that EES can provide.

The **Theological German class** has included students from all over the world: during the past year, the participants came mainly from the UK and USA. In the winter semester (2017-18), we read and discussed the 2012 book, Jesus, written by the famous Catholic theologian Hans Küng, who has spent many years here in Tübingen. In the summer semester, we focused on the writings—poems, notes, sermons, prayers—that Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote during his imprisonment from April 1943 to his execution in April 1945.

The **Theological English class** is made up mostly of German students, some of whom are preparing to head overseas for an exchange semester/year. During the winter semester (2017-18), we explored "Theologies of the Global South"—getting to know a range of Christian theologians from Peru to Papua New Guinea, from South Africa to South Korea. The topic for the summer class was "J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis: Story and Theology"; we discussed theological motifs such as creation, good and evil, death and eternal life, and redemption in their fantasy writings. The Tolkien/Lewis class was so large that we had to use a seminar room at the University—and it included a good number of native English speakers, as well.

During the past year, the Institute has also offered guest accommodation to visiting scholars, such as Ronald Heine, one of the speakers at the Symposium on the Lord's Prayer, who was here in Tübingen with his wife Gill.



Gill and Ron Heine in Tübingen 2018

The Institute for the Study of Christian Origins is being positioned to help develop dedicated leaders for significant service throughout Europe, Russia, Central Asia, the Middle East, and beyond.

EES Goals:

- Develop relationships between EES and other universities to help provide access to resources and research opportunities for the growing number of graduate students needing advanced studies.
- Provide more doctoral mentoring, supervision, and opportunities for graduates and others through the EES networks.
- Provide opportunities for
 - ♦ Mentoring doctoral students
 - ♦ Teaching theological English and theological German to students at Tübingen University
 - ♦ Preparing students from Eastern Europe and Central Asia to conduct research, write, and publish quality materials in their own languages
- Continue to conduct the Doctoral Colloquium in conjunction with Protestant Faculty at Tübingen University.

On the basis of the respect earned by EES, the Institute has been able to sponsor, with the help of Tübingen's New Testament faculty and that of the University of Munich, two symposia with scholars from around the world. These meetings help to fulfill the mission of the EES to stimulate study of early Christianity among scholars so our movement to restore New Testament Christianity can be taken seriously at the highest level. The volume of papers from the 2014 Symposium ("Make Disciples of All Nations") is being published by Mohr Siebeck. A third symposium was held in Tübingen in October 2018. The symposium focused on the Lord's Prayer in the context of Judaism, the New Testament, and early Christianity. The symposium was organized and sponsored by Prof. Michael Tilly (Universität Tübingen), Prof. Loren Stuckenbruck (LMU Munich) and Dr. Beth Langstaff (Institute for the Study of Christian Origins). Once again, speakers were invited from other regions of the world (e.g. Eastern Europe, North America, Israel, South Africa) and from a variety of religious traditions (Protestant, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Jewish).



Although EES does not work specifically in any one congregation, it seeks to promote the cause of reconciliation throughout the world by developing leaders who will demonstrate our commitment to the idea of a faithful, growing church that exhibits true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice. The work of EES in Germany at the University of Tübingen is truly a multi-cultural community. Since 2000, doctoral colloquium presentations have been given by visiting professors and doctoral students from Australia, Canada, Germany, Finland, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, South Africa, The United Kingdom, and the United States. EES seeks to be an international witness for the Christian gospel in one of the most significant theological settings in the world. In keeping with the original vision of the European Evangelistic Society, the goal is to see churches thriving and flourishing throughout the world by equipping capable leaders to serve.

EES is characterized by a deep and abiding interest in the oneness of the Body of Christ. The original purpose of the organization was to effect a channel through which it might cooperate in accomplishing the divine mission transmitted to the Church through the New Testament, and that its fraternity in this cause should be recognized as a fellowship for advancing the Christian mission. That interest has not changed with the passing of 70 years of ministry. The European Evangelistic Society is one of the few

ministries among Stone-Campbell churches that has historically sought to work among all three streams of the American expression of this ideal. For over half a century, the dream of a united Church, bound by its commitment to the New Testament as the revelation of God about the person of Jesus Christ, has been the unchanging focus of its mission.

THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

D. Newell Williams, Chairperson

The General Commission on Ministry [GCOM] of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is composed of members appointed by the General Minister and President in consultation with various constituencies across the life of the church. In odd-numbered years, the General Minister and President may present a slate of members to the General Board for confirmation.

In 2018, the following persons served on the General Commission on Ministry: **Cynthia Adcock**, pastor, Northwest Christian Church, Columbus, OH; **Greg Alexander**, Regional Minister, Christian Church in Kentucky; **William Almodovar**, local pastor, Indianapolis, IN; **Linda Brown**, layperson, Main Street Christian Church, Parker City, IN; **LaTaunya Bynum**, Regional Minister, Christian Church in Northern California; **Eugene Fisher**, Pension Fund Representative; **Pam Holt**, Regional Minister, Christian Church in Oklahoma; **Eugene James**, Regional Minister, Christian Church in Michigan; **Timothy James**, Associate General Minister and Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation; **Chung Seong Kim**, Executive Pastor of the North American Pacific/Asian Disciples; **Sotello Long**, Disciples Home Mission President; **Holly Miller-Shank**, United Church of Christ Representative; **Terri Hord Owens**, General Minister and President, ex-officio; **William Rose-Heim**, Regional Minister, Christian Church of Greater Kansas City; **Matt Rosine**, Pension Fund Representative; **Glen Stewart**, retired Regional Minister, Nashville, TN; **Lori Tapia**, National Pastor for Hispanic Ministries; **D. Newell Williams**, Seminary Representative [President, Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, TX]; **Tom Yang**, pastor, Glenview (IL) Christian Church. In addition, **Warren Lynn**, Director, Office of Christian Vocation, met by invitation with the Search and Call Committee to share information directly related to his work and **Beth Sullivan**, Executive Assistant to the General Minister and President, provided staff support to the Commission as a whole and in particular to the Support Committee which reviews applications for ministerial standing.

GCOM meets twice per year. In 2018, we met February 12-13 in Indianapolis and August 27-28 via electronic conferencing. By the time this General Board gathers, GCOM's first meeting of 2019, January 7-8 in Indianapolis, will have concluded.

Since GCOM last reported to the General Board, it has addressed the following issues:

- **Policies and Procedures for Responding to Clergy Misconduct:** Several editorial changes were approved for the sake of increased clarity. This document is reviewed annually. The Commission approved a motion that the current document be reviewed by legal counsel.
- **Revision of Standing Form used by the Commission:** The Commission recommended that all persons applying for standing from the Commission be sent a link to two documents: Policy and Procedures for Responding to Clergy Misconduct and Ministerial Code of Ethics, and that applicants be required to check a box for each of the documents indicating they have read the document.

Since August, this addition has been included in the standing forms used by the Commission.

- **Standing for retired regional ministers:** GCOM affirmed that standing for retired regional ministers is held in the region where the retired regional minister resides.
- **Potential benefits across the church of a “Ministers’ Registry” distinct from Search and Call that could be created by a standardized annual minister’s standing form adopted by all regions:** GCOM appointed Greg Alexander to request the College of Regional Ministers (CRM) to take this issue under consideration.
- **Use of Search and Call by racial/ethnic pastors and congregations:** Challenges include: language barriers, length and content of the current profile, regional differences among commissions on ministry and policies of search and call, and overlapping responsibilities of regional and racial/ethnic pastors that can create tension and confusion. Three action steps were approved: 1) Issue to Suran Systems a request for development (RFD) by which a pastor entering Search and Call could fill out multiple language profiles to be circulated simultaneously, allowing congregations to review their profiles in their native languages and allowing pastors to be considered in congregations beyond their native languages; 2) Initiate a conversation within the CRM about the development of a shorter and more appropriate Search and Call Ministerial Profile; 3) Request the CRM to name those elements they have in common in doing Search and Call and elements that could be done in a more consistent format to bring more consistency to our practices.
- **Standing granted to clergy for whom Standing is lodged with GCOM:** 166 clergy were granted Standing. Specific joys and needs were noted and responded to, as well as requirements for Boundary Training and Diversity Training.

We welcome your input, comments, questions, ideas, and concerns.

Respectfully submitted,
D. Newell Williams, Chairperson

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY CONVENTION
Donald K. Gillett, III, President
Timothy M. James, Corporate Secretary
And its Subsidiary
GREENWOOD CEMETERY OF NASHVILLE, TN., INC.
William Lee, President
Dwayne Bell, General Manager

The National Convocation Board of Trustees is elected by the General Assembly as the Trustees of the National Christian Missionary Convention, Inc. The Trustees are basically tasked with the oversight of the resources bequeathed to the National Christian Missionary Convention by our founder, Rev. Preston Taylor. From these resources, funds are contributed to the Black Disciples Endowment Fund and to the continued growth and development of Greenwood Cemetery.

THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY CONVENTION:

The funds of NCMC are invested with the Disciples Church Extension Fund and Christian Church Foundation. Transactions related to NCMC operations are handled in the office of the National Convocation.

The Black Disciples Endowment Fund is owned by NCMC. The BDEF is purposed to strengthen the ministry of Black Disciples. The BDEF assists in sponsoring the African American School of Faith and Life, offered during the Biennial Session of the National Convocation. The fund sponsors scholarships and funds for Black Disciples congregations and leadership development.

A portion of the Lillian Merchant Fund held by Christian Church Foundation is allocated to the BDEF for ministerial recruitment and nurture. The Office of African American Clergy and Leadership Development recruits and nurtures prospective ministers and work to continue the training legacy of our founder through the Preston Taylor Institute, William Lee, Director.

Trustees of the National Christian Missionary Convention are: Donald K. Gillett, President; Irie Session, Vice President; Pamela Dubose, Secretary; James Vertreese, Treasurer; Milton Bowens, Ken Brooker Langston, Delesslyn Kennebrew, Joanne Walker Flowers, William Smith, Cicely Staton-Holt, Juanita Greene, and Beverly Goines. Ex-Officio officers are: Terri Hord Owens, General Minister and President; Sotello Long, President Disciples Home Ministries; and Timothy James, Corporate Secretary.

GREENWOOD CEMETERY:

The Greenwood Cemetery of Nashville, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation organized to manage the cemetery properties owned by NCMC. Under the able leadership of Dwayne Bell, the cemetery operates three separate sites which are becoming well known by its historic significance. It has become more attractive to the people of

Nashville and we would like for it to be recognized and used by more Disciples of Christ.

Members of Greenwood Cemetery Board of Directors are: William Lee, Chairman; Freddie Lawton, Vice Chairman; Juanita Greene, Treasurer; Pat Penelton, Dale Braxton, Norman Reed, John Tiggle, Beverly Dickason, Ahmed White, Marvin Owens. Ex-Officio Officers: Timothy James, Corporate Secretary; John Foulkes, Investment Committee Chair; and Dwayne Bell, General Manager.

NATIONAL CITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH FOUNDATION

John Arterberry, Chairperson

Stephen Gentle, Senior Minister

5 Thomas Circle, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20005

Telephone: (202) 232-0323

Web site: www.nationalcitycc.org

National City Christian Church was created to live out Alexander Campbell's vision to uphold a momentous church facility in the city known for its national and world leaders so that the Gospel of Jesus Christ might be proclaimed. National City Christian Church Foundation is honored to be one of the recognized organizations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. The Foundation holds in trust the ownership of the church property and its facilities on behalf of the wider church. It is led by a national Board of Trustees and reports to the General Assembly. The Foundation is yoked in partnership with the congregation of National City Christian Church to provide a national facility for worship, study, ministry, and mission in the U.S. capital.

The Foundation of National City Christian Church ("The Foundation") exists for the purpose of maintaining the financial and physical assets of the Foundation so that the congregations and/or wider ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may pursue mission at 5 Thomas Circle. In order to accomplish this, the Foundation shall: preserve and grow the endowment; manage its facilities and property to maximize its use by tenants whose purposes are consistent with the values of the Foundation and its donors; and maintain the facilities in a manner that protects the Foundation's assets and honors perpetual care agreements. For the purpose of reporting to the 2019 General Assembly, the following information includes activities in 2017 and 2018.

Richard L. Hamm led the Foundation as the chairperson for the Board of Trustees from 2009 to 2017. In November, 2017, National City Christian Church thanked Dr. Hamm for his eight years of distinguished leadership which has brought the Foundation to a place of strength and vitality. The Foundation is grateful for Dr. Hamm's continued service on the Board of Trustees. John Arterberry became the new chairperson following many years of dedicated service as the vice chairperson. Mr. Arterberry, now residing in Nashville, Tennessee, is the retired Deputy Chief for the Department of Justice Fraud Section and longtime member of National City Christian Church. For Mr. Arterberry's depth of institutional knowledge and longstanding, gifted leadership in the Foundation and the congregation, National City Christian Church is truly grateful. In March, the Foundation was delighted to welcome Steven Baines to the Foundation staff as Senior

Strategist for Foundation Development, Outreach, and Spiritual Formation. The Foundation is appreciative and humbled by the remarkable leadership and generous support from the Board of Trustees, Disciples of Christ leadership throughout North America, the National City Christian Church staff, and the congregational leadership.

National City Christian Church Foundation, in partnership with the congregation, completed a two-year capital campaign called “Renew and Transform” with the purpose of addressing deferred maintenance and repairs to the facilities. The goal of \$800,000 was overwhelmingly supported with over 1.1 million dollars being raised. The following projects were completed: boiler replacement, Beasley Building roof replacement, air conditioning repair, security entry system installation, carpet for the Sanctuary and the Beasley Building, courtyard pavers replacement, courtyard fountain repair, portico railings replacement, flat roof of the Sanctuary repair, exterior Sanctuary doors restoration, and the front steps received some much needed repair to its damaged limestone. The Foundation is grateful to the capital campaign leadership team led by chairperson Kathleen Burger Gerada and consultant James Powell. In conjunction with the capital campaign, the congregation launched a new permanent fund policy for legacy gifts that will support both Foundation and congregation in its future work and ministries. Christian Church Foundation Vice President Randall Johnson gave superb leadership and skilled guidance in this endeavor, and the congregation commends the work of Christian Church Foundation to all congregations interested in establishing permanent funds.

The Board of Trustees is in the midst of a discernment process concerning the sale of the 64-year-old education building that was formerly occupied by a public charter school. With expert assistance from Rock Creek Properties, the Foundation has been able to successfully navigate the complicated D.C. requirements of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, the Zoning Board, and the Historic Preservation Board. Presenting before each board or commission, we were delighted to hear board members and commissioners speak so highly of National City Christian Church and its contributions to the Washington, D.C., community. We were impressed that municipal organizations valued our ministries and wanted to preserve – what one commissioner described as – “the jewel of Thomas Circle.” The education building has been cleared, and the asbestos abatement and other demolition work has been accomplished.

The Foundation is grateful to the staff and congregational leadership that is engaged in ministry and mission in the greater Washington, D.C., area. In 2018, the congregation entered into a time of strategic planning with Hope Partnership through the Epiphany program. The congregation has enjoyed many highlights, including the 175th anniversary of Disciples of Christ worshipping in Washington, D.C., the ordination of Chaim Abramowitz Rodriguez and his installation as Pastor of Iglesia Cristiana Nacional, and the PhD graduation of Assistant Pastor Beverly Janet Goines. National City opened its doors to share with many neighbors: 10,000 bags of food were distributed to those who were hungry; hundreds of persons were welcomed with

hospitality and face-painting at the church booth at Capital Pride; and many neighborhood pet owners and their canine companions joined in the annual blessing of the animals on the portico steps. In 2018, the congregation began hosting “My Neighbor Ministry” to employ an advocate to work with the poor and teach members how they can extend greater hospitality and care to those who live on the streets.

The first weekend of November, 2017, was yet another historic moment for National City Christian Church. Newly-elected General Minister and President Teresa Hord Owens preached a challenging message on the importance of knowing one’s history. The Foundation dedicated the Oscar Haynes Exhibit on permanent loan by the Disciples of Christ Historical Society. This new exhibit celebrates 100 years of the African American Convention movement that is now called the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Associate General Minister and National Convocation Administrative Secretary Timothy James, Central Rocky Mountain Regional Minister Joan Bell-Haynes, National Convocation Board President Patricia Penelton, and Historical Society President Emeritus Peter Morgan each spoke eloquently and powerfully on behalf of the National Convocation and the Oscar Haynes family. During that same weekend, National City was honored to host the installation of Historical Society President Richard Lowery and the Kirkpatrick Lecture presented by the Reverend Dr. Delores Carpenter.

The facilities of National City Christian Church continue to be a gathering place in the U.S. capital for Disciples of Christ and ecumenical partners. Some of the gatherings and significant events that have occurred in the past two years have included:

- Disciples Home Missions Board of Directors meeting; Higher Education and Leadership Ministries Fellows annual training; U.N. Youth Conference of the Ohio region, Moral Revival of the Poor People's Campaign teach-in led by William J. Barber II and James A. Forbes; Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice, National Interfaith Prayer Service for Marriage Equality, National AIDS Conference, National Masonic Day of Thanksgiving and Remembrance, and D.C. Interfaith Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Service with Sister Simone Campbell speaking.
- The Festival of Homiletics welcomed 1,600 clergypersons to National City Christian Church for four days of preaching and worship, lectures and fellowship. During one of the evenings of the Festival, Sojourners hosted Reclaiming Jesus candlelight vigil, filling the sanctuary with nearly 1,000 people and hundreds more listening out on the steps of the church building. Disciples speaking that evening included Teresa Hord Owens, Sharon Watkins, and Dick Hamm, along with other impressive ecumenical leaders including Bishop Michael Curry, Jim Wallis, Barbara Williams-Skinner, Richard Rohr, James Forbes, Walter Brueggemann, Otis Moss, and Tony Campolo.
- National City hosted several musical events, including weekly Friday organ concerts for the community and quarterly two-day Heritage Festival choral adjudication events for high school groups from across the U.S. Musical groups from around the community

also performed in the sanctuary: the 120-voice Congressional Chorus, Fessenden Chamber Ensemble, Heritage Signature Chorale, Thomas Circle Singers, and the National Children's Chorus (which is housed at National City).

- Partnering with the Christian Church Capital Area, National City hosted a region-wide leadership training event called "Salt and Light" and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. worship service with CTS Professor Frank Thomas preaching.

As a partner with the General Church, National City is pleased to provide offices and meeting space for the Disciples Center for Public Witness, Disciples Home Missions' Refugee and Immigration Ministries, the Ecumenical Poverty Initiative, and the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. In 2017, National City Christian Church shared worship materials for the Sunday before the U.S. Presidential Inauguration that were made available to Disciples congregations and ecumenical partners for worship experiences.

Church Historian Peter Morgan and Videographer John Scott Williams have created a four-part educational DVD on the history of National City Christian Church in the context of the Stone-Campbell movement. Copies of the DVD may be obtained by contacting Church Administrator Colleen Walsh at cwalsh@nationalcitycc.org.

As a multiracial/multicultural, bilingual, open and affirming congregation, National City Christian Church enjoys welcoming and worshiping with Disciples from all around the world. National City is *your* church in the U.S. capital. Tours of these facilities are available during the week upon request. All are invited to learn more about this unique Disciples witness at www.nationalcitycc.org or by visiting 5 Thomas Circle, N.W., in Washington, D.C.

Reconciliation Ministry – 2019 General Board Report



Mission Statement: *Reconciliation Ministry advances the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)'s journey toward wholeness by empowering each expression of the Church to implement structural change to address historic fractures caused by racism and the systems that perpetuate it.*

Context:

As one of the four mission imperatives of the 2020 vision, “becoming a Pro-Reconciling and Anti-Racist Church”, we are well on target to achieving this identity. The Church is living a new normal, a church that is both transformed while it is transforming. We have made significant qualitative and quantitative progress toward embracing this identity.

Ministry Highlights –

Equipping: Training in the analysis of anti-racism has become embedded in our institutional identity. In the 12-month period that encompasses this reporting period, our ministry has facilitated full day or two-day training events in every regional expression of the Church. At this juncture in this component of the equipping program of our ministry, over 75% of our Regions have an anti-racism educational requirement either for clergy and leader standing or as part of their Region’s healthy boundaries cycle. Of the seven Regions that do not currently require this educational element, all are intentionally addressing ways to incorporate an ongoing commitment to AR training. We have officially turned a corner in developing the capacity for self-examination of our policies and practices as well as building our capacity for structured dialogue about the continuing impact of our racialized histories.

Engaging: Two of our newer projects were designed to invite Disciples to creative engagement toward our anti-racist identity. One Bag of Tea, One Conversation, One Relationship, launched at the 2017 General Assembly, has provided opportunities for our congregations to learn about their own socio-cultural history as well as that of their inter-faith and ecumenical neighbors. It has had a warm reception and a moderate implementation. Congregations have also been invited to make this conversational model their own. A follow-on project from One Bag of Tea launched last Fall was our “What’s the Tea with Reconciliation?” bi-monthly podcast. It has featured guests included Terri Hord Owens, our General Minister and President, Rev. Debbie Griffin of Downtown Disciples in Des Moines, IA a new church start, and Phil Snider, Pastor of Brentwood Christian Church and author of *Preaching Resistance* published by Chalice Press and has been shared broadly on social media.

Empower: We have spent significant social media bandwidth re-presenting Reconciliation as a mission fund. This means that the most visible presence of our ministry rests in our capacity to fund anti-racism and pro-reconciliation activities and projects in the three expression of the Church through our granting program. We awarded four diverse projects that included intentional dialogue between four historic Disciples congregations in Atlanta, GA; a racial justice conference and an organizing and equipping training in Mid-America; a mentoring program with NBA Prison and Jail ministries; as well as a story-telling project in the Coastal Plains area of the Southwest Region. Part of empowering the saints for a pro-reconciling identity has allowed us to also support an immigration attorney in collaboration with Disciples Home Missions and other ministry partners through this granting program.

Funding: Attention to promoting Reconciliation Ministry as a Mission Fund resulting in a small increase in overall giving. This in light of Disciples simultaneous generosity during a devastating hurricane season in September.

Opportunities: As we live into this new reality of equipping, engaging and empowering the Church to embrace our 20/20 vision's missional identity, we are inviting Disciples to pray and support our future-ing efforts to build capacity to continue to interpret reconciliation in every expression of the Church. In order to accomplish this re-visioning of our current and future reality, the Reconciliation Ministry Commission with our ministry partners will begin a planning process to structure a response to Resolution 1721 – "A Renewed Commitment to Reconciliation Ministry."

Submitted by,

Rev. April G. Johnson
Minister of Reconciliation
January 2019

Treasury Services

John Goebel, Vice President of Finance

OGMP Treasury Services' (TS) team has grown to 7.5 members as a new position (Controller) was created. Our HR consultant, Gregory & Appel, has been a great assistance in hiring the Controller, improving our evaluations, job descriptions, and professional development. We look forward to enhancing our ministry to the church.

We are thankful for the following partnerships as we provide accounting services:

- seven ministries of OGMP (as Year Book and Promotion merged with TS & Communication Ministries (CM)),
- six general ministries: Council on Christian Unity, Christian Church Services, National City Christian Church Foundation, College of Regional Ministers, Disciples of Christ Historical Society, and Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries, and
- 20 regions: Florida, Greater Kansas City, Upper Midwest, Illinois-Wisconsin, Indiana, Kentucky, Northwest, Mid-America, Capital Area, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Central Rocky Mountain, Southwest, Oklahoma, Great River, Ohio, Arizona (2018), Michigan (May, 2018), Nebraska (September, 2018) and Virginia (2019).

THE UNITED CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

1099 North Meridian Street,

Suite 700, Indianapolis, IN 46204-1036

P. O. Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1986

Sotello V. Long, President

Julia Brown Karimu, Vice-President

Email: shansen@cef.disciples.org

The United Christian Missionary Society continued to furnish financial support for the Division of Homeland Ministries, dba Disciples Home Missions (DHM), and the Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM), by investing and managing its endowment and permanent funds for the benefit of the two Divisions.

During 2018, there were three gift annuity contracts released. The total residual released

amount was \$9,904. There was no activity on released life income contracts. When gift annuities or life income agreements are released, the funds are either distributed outright to DHM and DOM or added to the permanent endowments of the Society depending on the beneficiary designation. The Society received \$84,625 through 8/31/2018 in Miscellaneous Unrestricted Receipts with \$15,000 each distributed to DOM and DHM and the remainder is invested in the pool of the Campbell Multi-Strategy Fund and Beasley Growth Fund at the Christian Church Foundation. A small undesignated mineral interest in Lincoln County, OK was also received. The Society received \$16,616 in Estate Distribution from the Ethel Hartman estate designated for overseas ministry and the Cloe Kelly Estate was \$1,402.

The Society continued to be involved with ethical issues which related to its investments and was active with the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR). ICCR is an ecumenical organization of 17 Protestant denominations and approximately 200 Roman Catholic orders which cooperate concerning ethical and social concerns as expressed by actions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The Society, which has eight trustees and four officers, has no active employees. Beginning in 1993, the Society contracted with the Christian Church Foundation, Inc. to perform the treasury services for the Society. The current officers of the Society are as follows: Sotello V. Long, President; Julia Brown Karimu, Vice President; Kathy Watts, Corporate Secretary, and Lonna Owens, Treasurer. Four trustees are nominated by each of the two Divisions served by the Society. They are elected by the General Board of the church and serve a term of four years. Their responsibilities are to oversee and determine policies concerning the investments of assets owned by the Society. The protection as well as the income realized from these assets is of paramount concern for the trustees. Their invaluable service is recognized and this report is submitted on their behalf.

The Society distributed the following from the investment pool in 2017: DHM - \$735,710; DOM - \$1,038,021; and other entities - \$59,205.

The Society distributed the following from the investment pool in 2018: DHM - \$726,429; DOM - \$1,022,942; other entities - \$59,000.

WEEK OF COMPASSION

Cindy Kim-Hengst, Chair, Board of Stewards

Vy Nguyen, Executive Director

P.O. Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206

317-713-2442

www.weekofcompassion.org

Mission: As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world.

Vision: A world where God's people transform suffering into hope

Core Values:

<i>CONNECTION-</i>	Partner with individuals, congregations, and organizations to serve the needs of the world
<i>INTEGRITY-</i>	Honor the commitment to faithful stewardship, ensuring gifts entrusted to Week of Compassion are making the most impact
<i>ACCOMPANIMENT-</i>	Embody God's grace by committing to a long-term presence with communities in need

As the number of displaced people worldwide rises daily as a result of natural disasters and civil and political conflicts causing millions of people to seek refuge, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), through Week of Compassion, stands in solidarity with these families and communities. By working with international partners we not only provide immediate and long-term relief, but also we continue to be the church serving and caring for our most vulnerable neighbors at home and around the world.

Severe natural disasters and global conflicts continue to displace more people every day. By the end of 2018, we were faced with the highest levels of displacement on

record—an unprecedented **68.5 million** people (an increase of 2.9 million since our last General Assembly in 2017). Among them are nearly **25.4 million refugees**, over half of whom are **under the age of 18**. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, about **44,400 people a day** are forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution; that is roughly one person every two seconds. This has been largely fueled by new crises in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Myanmar, as well as the ongoing conflict in Syria.

Week of Compassion is grateful for our partners, especially Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, Disciples Home Missions' Refugee and Immigration Ministries and Legal Counsel, Church World Service, and ACT Alliance. These ministries work closely on the ground with internally displaced people and refugees here in North America and around the world, especially in Bangladesh, Myanmar, the Middle East, and the Horn of Africa. Through these partnerships, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) accompanies those forced to flee encroaching danger by walking with them as they seek refuge in different countries. In Central America, many mothers and children are fleeing imminent threat and severe poverty by walking thousands of miles to reach our southern border, only to be turned away. Our partners at Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries in South Texas and Global Ministries partner, Centro Romero Center in San Diego continue to provide emergency medicine, food, shelter, and protection for these individuals.

At home in North America, Week of Compassion continues to respond to myriad small- and medium-scale disasters that affect communities where Disciples have a presence, as well as to large-scale disasters. In the fall of 2017, powerful Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria impacted Texas, Florida, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, causing extreme flooding and destroying billions of dollars' worth of infrastructure and homes. 2018 saw another damaging hurricane season with Hurricanes Michael and Florence causing extreme damage in Florida and North Carolina. Today, Week of Compassion is working with communities in these places to help rebuild through Disciples Home Missions' Disciples Volunteering and other partners. With Disciples Volunteering, we have established a mission station at First Christian Church, Texas City, Texas, that continues to receive volunteers. In the U.S. Virgin Islands, our response has been through the Disaster Recovery Support Initiative, a collaboration among Week of Compassion, Disciples Volunteering, United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries, and Brethren Disaster Ministries to provide support, mentorship, and encouragement in the development of local Long-term Recovery Groups through a sustained on-site presence.

In Puerto Rico, we continue to provide grant support to the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, a bilateral partnership through the Division of Overseas Ministries. This grant supports repairs to buildings and campus infrastructure, cash-flow assistance (due to decreased tuition income), tuition assistance for students, and emotional and spiritual care for students, staff, and faculty. Home repairs continue through the

Programa Edifiquemos of the Iglesia Cristiana (Discípulos de Cristo). With Week of Compassion's support, ICDCPR hired a full-time program director, Jose Molina, and a part-time construction manager, Rev. Rafael Rivera Bidot. They have created and assessed work plans for more than three dozen homes and have acquired materials for at least half of those projects. Our partners in Puerto Rico continue to be in need of more volunteers, and they are ready to receive Disciples from the mainland to help rebuild.

Climate change is creating more powerful hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, and other major disasters on a more regular basis. In the fall of 2018, one wildfire in Northern California wiped out 95% of the town of Paradise, while two other major wildfires simultaneously roared in the southern part of the state. In Zimbabwe and Kenya, extreme droughts block communities' clean water access, forcing many to migrate to new areas. In India and Bangladesh, severe flooding continues to destroy homes and roads, making rebuilding more challenging for volunteers. We are grateful for our partners at ACT Alliance and Church World Service who are on the ground providing relief and long-term recovery in many of these areas. Disaster response organizations, especially in the United States, have collected concrete data showing that destructive natural disasters have increased in the last several decades. A comprehensive report was recently released stating that climate change could soon imperil our way of life, changing every part of the world, imposing frustrating costs on the global economy, and harming the health of virtually everyone. Climate change will have a major impact on Week of Compassion and how we will be able to respond to many of these ever-stronger disasters, thus making our disaster preparedness initiatives more crucial in the near future. It is vital to help many of our churches, regions, and general ministries prepare to serve communities when severe disasters hit.

Our partners continue to provide crucial, sustainable infrastructures that are improving lives in many communities. Week of Compassion's Women's Empowerment Fund has provided vital resources to many women who have gained entrepreneurial skills that have lifted their families and communities out of extreme poverty. Our partner at IMA World Health has been providing vital health services in Africa to women, while our partner at Prosperity Catalyst is providing livelihood skills to Iraqis to generate revenue to support their families. From providing access to clean water in Mexico, to girls being able to go to school in Cambodia, to mothers receiving loans to open up businesses, the impact the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) through Week of Compassion is making a difference in creating peace and justice around the world.

Financially, Week of Compassion continues to remain strong due to the many generous donations from local churches and individuals, enabling this ministry to have an important impact in vulnerable communities. As of the end of November 2018, Week of Compassion's year-to-date undesignated giving totaled over \$1.7 million, a decrease of 19.14% from the prior year's giving. This is a result of the extremely generous giving in 2017 for the various hurricanes in the Caribbean. Comparing the undesignated giving of

2018 to our budget, Week of Compassion giving is slightly up, by less than .10%. Designated giving at the end of November 2018 is at \$550,000, a decrease of 75% from the prior year. Again, the designated giving in 2017 was for major hurricanes, which accounted for that significant difference.

The nature of relief, refugee response, and sustainable development continues to shift and change in significant ways. Week of Compassion continues to build strong partnerships and position itself to respond to the greatest needs in our world. In 2019, Week of Compassion welcomes a new full time Associate Director for Communications and Marketing to help us better share our impact, stories, and resources with our partners and congregations. As we work together through this life-saving ministry, we serve as a vital, visible sign of our witness to Christ in the world, so that we can bring healing, reconciliation, and wholeness in a fragmented world.

WORLD CONVENTION
(CHRISTIAN - CHURCHES OF CHRIST - DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

Gary Holloway Executive Director/General Secretary

PO Box 50998, Nashville, TN 37205-0998 USA

Phone: +1 (615) 830-7210 Email: office@worldconvention.org

Home Page: <http://www.worldconvention.org>

2018 REPORT

Plans for Global Gathering

In 2018 World Convention continued its mission of embodying and encouraging fellowship, understanding, and common purpose within the global family of Christian-Churches of Christ-Disciples of Christ churches in 199 countries and territories. We did this through personal visits to national meetings, through our website and newsletters, and through planning for our next Global Gathering.

As I reported last year, the World Convention board approved holding our Global Gatherings more frequently. They accepted an invitation from churches in Swaziland to have our next Global Gathering in Manzini, eSwatini, April 18-21, 2019. However, internal tensions among Churches of Christ in southern Africa made it impossible to have our planned Global Gathering in eSwatini.

Our board has accepted an invitation from our churches in Poland to have our next Global Gathering there in June 2021.

Third Global Christian Forum

World Convention related our churches to other Christians in many ways in since our last meeting. The most notable was participation in the third gathering of the Global Christian Forum, held in Bogota, Colombia April 24-27, 2018. Paul Chimhungwe, President of World Convention, and I were blessed to attend, along with 251 other Christian leaders from 64 countries and 24 church families. Paul Tche and Angel Luis Rivera-Agosto from the Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council were also there.

The Global Christian Forum (GCF) is a unique gathering of global Christian churches and organizations bringing together all the major streams of world Christianity. The GCF is an open space where all Christians can meet to nurture unity by fostering mutual respect and understanding as well as by addressing together common challenges.

The formal sessions in Bogota were of great benefit. Some of the greatest blessings were informal discussions around meals and between sessions. For me, these included:

- A Christian from China sharing how the church has been faithful there even though local political leaders are destroying church buildings and Christian schools.

- Testimony regarding a woman who walked four hours to receive a Bible in her own language for the first time.
- Christians in Athens, Greece who feed 2500 hungry people each day.

The list of blessings goes on and on, from uplifting worship together to sharing our faith stories to fellowship around dinner tables to discussion of how to work together.

Year Book & Directory

PO Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206

317.713.2453

John Goebel, Vice President of Finance

Cherilyn Williams, Assistant Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Emily Martin, Communication and Disciples Mission Fund Coordinator

The editorial team worked to review many of the data collection and production processes as the 2018 Year Book & Directory was produced. Generally, Treasury Services staff process orders, financial data and relate to the database providers. Communication Ministries staff gather congregational data and produce the final document. Regional ministers and staff are vital partners in connecting directly with congregations.

Changes in 2018 included:

- Inclusion of the 2018 General Board reports. In past years, those reports have not appeared until the following year. The 2018 book included **both** the 2017 and 2018 reports. The 2019 Year Book will include the 2019 General Board reports.
- Payment for Year Books occurred at the point of order, saving invoicing and collection costs.
- Fonts and format were updated slightly for legibility.
- Forms were translated into both Spanish and Korean.
- No CD versions of the year book were produced. Electronic access is provided via PDF files of the various sections of the book.

Changes in processes for 2019 include:

- Additions to the reporting form to include information about mission participation and giving that has not been requested before. There are also a few opportunities to connect to ministries for additional information.
- Elimination of full page pre-filled forms mailed to congregations that will be replaced with postcards encouraging online submission (Paper forms can still be downloaded.)
- More frequent information provided to regional staff to assist in raising response rates and offer opportunity to connect

General Minister and President Terri Hord Owens is encouraging several ministries of the Church to integrate the data that makes up the Year Book with the hope that we will be able to access real-time data in the next biennium. This will involve cooperation between the databases currently maintained in at least four formats and locations.

With sadness, we report that our communion had some losses in numbers for 2018.

- 7 were removed by their region for inactivity (lack of reporting or contact with the region or general ministries)

- 14 were reported as closed
- 16 formally withdrew

With great joy, we report that we have added to our numbers with 20 congregations recognized in the following regions:

- Alabama/Northwest Florida (3)
- Canada (1)
- Central Rocky Mountain (1)
- Florida (1)
- Illinois-Wisconsin (1)
- Kentucky (1)
- Mid-America (1)
- North Carolina (2)
- Northwest (2)
- Oklahoma (1)
- Oregon/Southwest Idaho (1)
- Pacific Southwest (2)
- Southwest (2)
- Upper Midwest (1)