Disciples Women continue to address the four priorities of the 2020 Vision by informing new congregations about resources for women’s ministries; providing resources to strengthen and transform women’s ministries in existing congregations; training and developing leaders in women of all ages; encouraging and seeking to assure diversity through all aspects of women’s ministries.

In response to the needs of women’s ministries and efforts to continue to resource those ministries of the United States and Canada, we developed a new annual Bible study for *Just Women Magazine* written by Disciples Women scholars. The women have responded by increased demand for the Bible study necessitating a reprint of its first issue. We are now working on our third Bible study to be published early 2016. *Just Women* is the official study resource for Disciples women and is a quarterly publication.

Disciples Women shared sponsorship of a peace intern with Disciples Center for Public Witness to support and provide information to share concerning women’s ministries in peace and justice. Cara McKinney served primarily during the Quadrennial Assembly in supporting the Civil Rights celebration.

Last summer over 1200 women gathered for the 2014 Quadrennial Assembly to worship, learn, network, celebrate, do hands-on mission, celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act and walk against Human Trafficking in the streets of Atlanta.

- More than 350 women marched in the streets to demonstrate against human trafficking. The *Walk Against Trafficking* raised just over $6,400 for *youthSpark*, an Atlanta organization that works against human trafficking
- The *Masks for a Cause* had 37 entries and raised over $1,000 for the *Wellspring Living* Program that provides trauma therapy to women who have been sexually abused.
- *City of Refuge* mission: 400+ books, 650 pieces of underwear, 550 pairs of socks, 840 hygiene items were taken to the women and children
- 2,200 pairs of eyeglasses were donated to the Lions Club
- Blessing Box offerings: $ 9,363
- DW offerings: $12,431
- DWEF offerings: $11,589
- Continued emphasis on human trafficking was announced: *Breaking the Chains: Link by Link* that will be populated with resources on three areas: sex trafficking, labor/immigration trafficking and demand
- Nearly half of the women visited the *Martin Luther King Jr. History Center* on guided tours
- 80 workshops: on ministry tips to self-care to global concerns to autism
Global Ministries had frequent talks in the exhibit hall by mission partners and a large contingent of visitors from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

Minnie Vautrin, an Illinois Disciple who taught in China in the early 20th century, was remembered and honored for her protection of 250,000 Chinese people on the grounds of Gingling College during the Japanese invasion of Nanjing in 1937.

More than 300 gathered at First Congregational Church (UCC) to remember the anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, signed into law on July 2, 1964.

Mary Frances Early, the first AA graduate student of the University of GA (1962) and Joan C. Browning, a freedom rider (1961) were both on hand to tell their first-person stories of the time leading up to the passage of the Civil Rights Act.

Morning plenary sessions featured a focus on a biblical woman with a telling of her story and then a reflection ("unpacking") of the story by scholars followed by a "modern day story" and a time to reflect in small groups.

Evening and Sunday worship had a series of dynamic speakers from the general expression of church as well as global and congregational perspectives.

Attendance has dropped from over 3000 through 2006 to just under 1900 in 2010 and just over 1200 in 2014. While the QA budget was based on this decline, registration dropped below that planned and resulted in a loss that drew upon funds expected for other women’s ministries. GA registration has been tracking similarly decreasing numbers as have many other national church events in other denominations. Additionally QA always falls in the same year as constituency assemblies and women often have to decide between the two. We understand that there are many possible reasons for this decline and we understand the passion of the women who want to see QA continue into the future. Keeping all that in mind the executive committee will be spending time in discernment, dreaming, and brainstorming to consider the future of QA. We know that it will not look like past QAs and we embrace that reality knowing that there are other ways to include all the essential pieces of QA while completely re-imagining its look and feel.

Disciples Women are planning for General Assembly 2015. Inspired by the Soar! theme, we began last summer to invite the Church to fold peace cranes to add to our display at GA with a prayer written on each. Like the Japanese legend, our goal is to have at least 1,000 peace cranes with a prayer on each by the end of GA when we will gather to pray together for those blessings, intercessions, and guidance prayers; many groups and individuals have already contributed to this effort. Knowing that Disciples women are always on the move in mission and service we are currently collecting pictures and stories of women in ministry and mission through all sorts of social media by asking them to be noted with the hashtag #DWsoar. These efforts will be celebrated at the Disciples Women luncheon on Wednesday during GA. Officers of the Executive committee will be leading a Bible study on “Women of the Bible” on Sunday. There will be an aftersession for all women on Monday evening. A partnership has also been formed with Disciples Youth to assist in their mission activities that will be linked to their workshops. One of those workshops will be on Human Trafficking. We are gathering crochet hooks and plastic bags needing recycling to make mats/blankets to be given to people who are homeless and will be providing volunteers to help teach youth to
crochet and to support the mission effort. The Youth will also take time to fold peace cranes and add their prayers to end Human Trafficking to them; Disciples women will be on hand to teach and support crane folding. Disciples Women staff and officers will be available at their booth during General Assembly to talk about the changing ministries of women throughout the church and to hear more about needs for resources and mission support.

A new Executive Committee began its work at the 2014 QA. These officers reflect the diversity of the Disciples church and the women who are part of it. They are gifted and ready to make the necessary changes in women’s ministries to reflect the needs of the transforming church. With this committee we have begun to make the necessary changes in meeting time and length to continue to make leadership more accessible to a wider group of women.

The Reverend Chesla T. Nickelson was called as the Program Director – Merger Staff person and began her ministry with Disciples Women the first day of QA. Chesla is open to the changes necessary for a healthy ministry and has already become an asset for this ministry.

The new social action emphasis for the next quadrennium was announced at QA 2014 which will be a focused rededication to working to end human trafficking. The new theme is “Breaking the Chains of Human Trafficking: Link by Link”. The links we will focus on are sex trafficking, labor trafficking and demand. The new web pages for this focus are being built every day as more information is contributed about resources and opportunities for mission. The executive committee is currently working on a portfolio of recommended efforts to support for those women who are raising funds and are not sure what to do with them. The funds so far have been supporting projects from buying smokers for villages in Ghana to inserts for bars of soap in hotels to reach trafficking victims when they are alone.

The Woman-to-Woman Worldwide (W2WW) journey in 2014 sent a delegation to France and Italy to discover the life of Protestant women in a highly secular and Roman Catholic society where they have been persecuted and marginalized for their Protestant beliefs. This group of fourteen had the opportunity to meet with women from a variety of churches to hear their stories of persecution, violence, and even social shunning. While France has a very strict understanding of the separation of church and state, our global ministry partners have helped find a way for this year’s project to support one of the programs we visited in Paris where immigrant and victimized women find a way to move from homelessness to home ownership.

Our new Program Director is updating and improving our Leader Apprentice Program (LAP) to continue to provide leadership training for women of color. Past graduates are now serving at all levels of the Disciples church. Training is also provided at the annual gathering of regional leaders, interregional gatherings, and venues where staff are asked to assist.
Disciples women continue to contribute to the whole mission of the church through their ministries and giving. Funding for Disciples Women's Ministry is through a portion of what Disciples Home Missions receives from Disciples Mission Fund and through a portion of the giving through Blessing Boxes. These funds are budgeted and administered by the Disciples Women Executive Committee.

Disciples Women are on the move.

Respectfully,

Pat Donahoo
Patricia A. Donahoo
Executive Director, Disciples Women

Recommended Action:

The General Board receives the report from Disciples Women of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and forwards it to the 2015 General Assembly for consideration and discussion.