As I walk down memory lane, I am reminded that my great grandmother and grandmother, traveled from their home in Wellsville, Ohio, to Washington, D.C., in October 1930 for the dedication of National City Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). They came with a gift from their home church to support Alexander Campbell’s dream of a “great Washington witness for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).” National City has lived up to Alexander Campbell’s dream. Designed by noted Architect, John Russell Pope, architect for the Jefferson Memorial and National Archives buildings, National City has been home to James Garfield, the 20th President of the United States, to Lyndon Baines Johnson, the 36th President of the United States, and even though he turned Presbyterian along the way, to Disciples born and educated, Ronald Reagan, the 40th President of the United States.

I was born into a loving family of four sisters and two brothers. My first dwelling was just about 6 miles away from National City Christian Church on Massachusetts Avenue, S.E. My mother worked for the Department of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and my father was a Captain on the Metropolitan Police Force. Dad stood duty here at National City during the Funeral Service for President Lyndon Baines Johnson.

I share with you all of this because the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at its core is relational and covenantal by design. We are bound to one another. According to the Preamble to the Design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ):

“... this church expresses itself in covenantal relationships in congregations, regions, and general ministries... bound by God's covenant of love... to the end that all expressions will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission.

The Preamble to the Design goes on to say that this church will nurture congregational ministries, provide for regional and general ministries, develop and recognize new forms of ministries for mission and witness... “and engage in continuing renewal, reformation, and adaptation as necessary to minister in the world.” 2017 will bring us to the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.
We at Disciples Home Missions have been involved in an intentional process to strengthen this covenant between our congregational, regional, and general ministries of the church. Our Refugee and Immigration Ministry program was relocated from Indianapolis, IN to Washington, D.C., to strengthen this covenant. Refugee and Immigration Ministries is a ministry of Disciples Home Missions in partnership with the Christian Church Capital Area, the Disciples Center for Public Witness, and is housed at National City Christian Church. It was designed this way to be a witness to the fact that we can do things better together than we can apart.

2016 was one of the best years for the United States Refugee Admissions Program in the past seventeen years with over 85,000 refugees resettled. As I write this, I am reminded of those years back in the 1990’s when we were resettling over 100,000 arrivals every year and during the Vietnam War, over 200,000 arrivals a year. It is anticipated that we will help resettle over 110,000 arrivals in this current fiscal year. We call on our elected officials to appropriate the needed funds to help accomplish this goal. We are appreciative for the excellent representation provided by the Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea, our Washington, D.C. staff.

Such is the case with our Green Chalice Ministry, the environmental justice ministry for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It is a partnership ministry between Disciples Home Missions, the Kentucky Region, and local congregations and regions throughout the United States and Canada. The Rev. Carol Devine and the Rev. Scott Hardin-Nieri help direct this program. Both are Disciples ministers with a passion for environmental justice. Carol is pastor of a congregation in Kentucky and Scott is currently searching for a congregation to serve in North Carolina. This is another example of strengthening the relationships between general church, regional church, and congregations. Resources are extended out from the general church to regional and congregation entities for support to a greater degree of what is already happening in communities throughout the United States and Canada.

The collaborative efforts that helped create Green Chalice Ministry have been extended over the past two years to include a covenantal partnership with Eco America and Blessed Tomorrow. We received our first grant of $25,000 in 2015 to help us educate Disciples clergy and congregations about climate change. In 2016-2017, Eco America and Blessed Tomorrow have extended our grant by another $40,000. A recent survey of Disciples clergy and members conducted just a few months ago, found 86% of our Disciples leaders and congregants knowledgeable about the effects of climate change and a willingness to do something about it.

Our partnership with the United Church of Christ and their Department of Local Church Ministries resulted in a National Youth Event, July 26-29, 2016, that brought together over 4,000 youth from both of our denominations. The General Youth Council and their adult leaders as well as youth groups from across the life of our church were represented at this gathering in Orlando, Florida. During these days’ together, general ministries, regions, conferences, and congregations from both denominations were
immersed in relationship building and extending the covenant across denominational lines.

Did you know that another of our partnerships that involve general church, regions, and congregations working across denominational and faith lines is our P.R.A.Y. Program – Programs of Religious Activities with Youth. Disciples have been an integral part of P.R.A.Y. for the last 33 years with the AME’s, AMEZ’s, ANG’s, AOG’s, BAP’s, BRE’s, CMA’s, to name just a few. Twenty-eight denominations are involved and work together to foster the Christian growth of children, youth, and families through churches and youth serving agencies. In 2016, 363 Disciples congregations housed Cub Scout Packs with 10,202 youth enrolled. Our congregations housed 368 Troops that reached out to 7,857 scout youth. Total youth involved in our Disciples programs is 18,405 with the help of 8,761 adult sponsors. For two decades, the Rev. Robert Thornton has been directing our Religious Activities with Youth Programs. Bob met with me a few weeks ago, to share with me his desire to retire from this ministry effective May 31, 2017.

Disciples Volunteering, a hands-on ministry of disaster response utilizing work groups and skilled long term volunteers, continues to respond on behalf of the church in the aftermath of natural and man-made disasters. Much of our work is ecumenical, rebuilding communities with teams from the Church of the Brethren, the United Church of Christ, and other partners. On occasion, the Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA] has leaned on Disciples Volunteering to support communities in distress. Our presence in recent months in South Carolina, Texas, and West Virginia has been phenomenal. Just recently, I received the following correspondence from Thaddaeus Allen, Regional Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Thad writes:

“Yesterday I spent the day with Josh Baird and Caroline Hamilton-Arnold in the badly flooded WV hills. We met with representatives of the West Virginia Council of Churches, the UMC and Presbyterians. Then we met with the Roane County, Long Term Flood Recovery Center. Then we visited some sites. It was important time . . . They represented you well. Thanks for having them on Staff. They are charged with important work. I hope we can work together in this time of recovery.”

I want to thank our Director of Disciples Volunteering, Joshua Baird, for the leadership he provides. Also, let me thank Week of Compassion for funding this vital ministry. This is another example of covenant between our congregations, regions, general church, and other ecumenical and interfaith partners. Josh has been about building a sustainable infrastructure for all Disciples Volunteering related responses in key areas throughout the United States and Canada.

For two years, Disciples Home Missions has been part of a deepening conversation with Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries, the Council on Christian Unity, and Disciples
Women’s Ministries leading to a closer alignment of our ministries with one another. On two occasions members of each of our Executive Committees have met to explore what possible future relationships would look like. Following the January 7-8, 2016, meeting of our joint Executive Committees, Ministry Leaders Julia Brown Karimu, Paul Tche, Pat Donahoo, and I, met to distill three or four common goals which can focus the work of all four ministries. Common areas identified are: Interfaith, Climate Change, Immigration/Migration, and Human Trafficking. Individuals from each of our four ministries met together in Cleveland, Ohio, on September 21, 2016, with our sister United Church of Christ Staff members to begin collaboration in each of these four areas. Disciples Home Missions staff involved in this event have acknowledged that the event was very productive. Collaborative work between the staff of these four ministries continues.

In addition to these expanding collaborations, Disciple Home Missions in partnership with Reconciliation Ministries and the Disciples Center for Public Witness has called Deirdre Harris-George to serve as a part-time Advocate for Racial Justice. As our denominational advocate, Deirdre will provide a Disciples presence at ecumenical and interfaith gatherings and events, including Congressional visits and briefings, that deal with public policy issues and concerns related to racial justice.

We have also called, beginning January 1, 2017, Rev. Marcus Leathers to serve as our Volunteer Director of Human Rights in a partnership with the Christian Church Capital Area and the Disciples Center for Public Witness. Marcus will provide a Disciples presence at meetings and conferences dealing with: criminal justice reform, the death penalty, gun violence, human trafficking, and torture. He will write articles for The Disciples’ Advocate, DCPW e-newsletters and updates, and provide regular content for the Human Rights Ministry website.

Our Program and Relationships Committee forwarded to the DHM Board of Directors at our April 26-28, 2016, meeting of the Board of Directors in Lexington, KY, a Draft Resolution intended to come before the 2017 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis, IN, July 7-12, 2017, entitled: “Repudiation of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery, A Call to Education and Action, And Support for Indigenous Voice in the Structure of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Board was asked to review this document and come to the November 2016 Board meeting prepared to determine our willingness as a Board to repudiate this doctrine and to be supportive of the proposed Resolution. Our Board drafted and adopted the first statement of any General Ministry repudiating the Christian Doctrine of Discovery.

DHM’s Board and Staff received Pro Reconciliation Anti-Racism training by Dr. Richard Grounds from the University of Tulsa, OK, on November 3, 2015, apprising us of the brutal settler-colonial structure and ideology designed to erase all traces of native/indigenous presence: genocide. Furthermore, DHM’s Staff and Board Members immersed themselves in Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz’s seminal work, An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States. I am also reminded of those clergy, including Disciples, who made their way to the Dakota’s a few weeks ago, to be a Disciple-presence at
Standing Rock. A group of Disciples leaders from The Disciples Center along with clergy from throughout the country, joined in a 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time Prayer Call, on November 1, 2016, to affirm our solidarity with our native/indigenous sisters and brothers and to bless those going to Standing Rock to represent the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The Disciples Home Missions Board of Directors adopted a ‘best practices’ document during the November 2016 Disciples Home Missions Board of Directors meetings. The document was created by our Pro Reconciling Anti-Racism Team and our Minister for Reconciliation, the Rev. April Johnson. It is a document that will be placed in our Board docket after the DHM Mission Statement and Statement of Board Members Covenant. It is entitled, “Process for our Reconciliation and/or Mediating Conflict.” It will guide the Board of Directors on what to do when a boundary has been crossed. It calls for the Board to suspend business as usual, immerse itself in prayer, state with clarity the mutual concern that needs to be addressed, listen to one another, note points of agreement and synergy, note points that call us to change something, establish steps forward, and close with a brief time of worship and prayer with communion or a shared meal. I commend this document to the whole church for study and reflection.

On June 28, 2005, Chaplaincy Endorsement Officer Steven Doan began his employment with Disciples Home Missions. For over 12 years, Steve has captured the heart and spirit of those who serve in specialized ministries to all branches of military service – Active Duty, Reserve, and Retired – and to Institutional Chaplains, Pastoral Counselors, Veteran Affairs Chaplains, and Federal Prison Chaplains. Steve has announced his intention to retire from this ministry he loves effective July 31, 2017, shortly after the conclusion of the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis, IN.

A pre-Assembly retirement reception for Steve will be held at the Indianapolis Repertory Theatre on Saturday afternoon, July 8, 2017, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. A Position Description for the Chaplaincy Endorsement Officer position was posted on November 15, 2016, detailing job duties, responsibilities, knowledge, and skills required. A minister holding standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with a history of military experience or a good grasp of Military culture is preferred. As I write, we have a growing group of interested candidates for this position.

On December 1-2, 2016, our Family and Children’s Ministry Team held an ‘Across the Generations’ Event, that brought together children, youth, young adult, and family ministry leaders from throughout the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to create a vision on best practices to help resource, and equip Disciples children, youth, young adults, pastors, churches, and families. The Event had representation from all sectors of the church, including each of our Racial/Ethnic Ministries.

DHM will sponsor a Youth Ministry Summit, March 5-7, 2017, at the Christmount Retreat Center in Black Mountain, North Carolina. Our current design for youth ministry
was adopted back in 1996, over 20 years ago, and is long overdue for review and revision.

At this event, Disciple’s youth leaders will gather for the purpose of sketching out structures, resources, and leadership needs for youth ministry for the next 5 to 10 years. After the Summit, a follow-up team will take the results from the Summit and refine them into a working document to bring to the DHM Board at its next meeting in July 2017. The General Youth Council and youth from across the life of our church will participate in decision-making regarding the outcome of these conversations.

Regions, constituency groups, General Youth Council adult leaders, and representatives from the UCC Council of Youth and Young Adult Ministries will participate in the event. The Oreon E. Scott Foundation has provided us with a grant to make this happen. Christmount and DHM will provide additional support to make this a low-cost event for all participants. Let me offer my gratitude for Rev. Randy Kuss for serving as our DHM Youth Ministry Consulting Team Coordinator.

2016 Advent Devotions were well received by many of our congregations and used throughout the recent Advent Season, the Office of Christian Vocations is working with the General Commission on Ministry to revise documents and refresh Search and Call processes, the Office of Evangelism and Congregational Transformation is working with Hope Partnership and its new Staff Person for New Church development, Terrell Tyler, to identify and learn about creative ministry enterprises like the Galileo Church in Arlington, Texas. The Rev. Dr. R. Wayne Calhoun, Sr. and the Rev. Terrell McTyer made a visit to the Galileo Church just before the Mission Council Event in December 2016.

Assistant to the President, Minister Sheila Spencer, continues to work toward the completion of her Master of Divinity degree at Christian Theological Seminary, a degree program designed for working professionals. She is making steady progress toward completion of the degree. The benefit to DHM is that academic learnings are immediately translatable into the workplace.

On November 17-18, 2016, Sheila and I met with Mark Anderson, President of the National Benevolent Association and Chris Dorsey, President of Higher Education and Leadership Ministries, to determine those areas of possible intersection between our three ministries. At present, NBA and DHM have a shared ministry position with the Rev. Monica Wedlock Kilpatrick. That shared position has served both ministries very well. It is my hope that DHM, NBA, and HELM can find areas of greater collaboration and shared mission.

I had the privilege to lead a Regional Elders Workshop in Wooster, Ohio, in September 2016. I met some of the finest church leaders you would ever want to meet. The Retreat was divided into two sections. Section one was entitled: “Beating the Odds: If God is For Us, Who Can be Against Us?” The scripture text cited was from Romans 8:31-39. Hear, in part, what the scripture says:
“If God is for us, who is against us? . . . Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? . . . No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

I shared with those elders that we need to find a way to stop the negative, defeatist thinking that has pervaded the life of our congregations and reclaim the fact that through Christ the odds are stacked in our favor and not against us. Let us be, as Leander Keck suggested, The Church Confident.

Section two of the retreat was entitled: “Regrouping for the 21st Century Frontier.” The scripture text cited was from Acts 1: 15-26. The scene is the death of Judas and the need for the community to regroup and fill the vacancy left by Judas’ betrayal and death. Two candidates rose to the top of the candidate pool, Joseph called Barsabbas, and Matthias. The text continues:

“Then they prayed and said, ‘Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place. And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.”

The broken circle of apostolic leadership is restored with the election of Matthias and the mission of the early church continues to touch lives and restore wholeness.

During the retreat, I introduced the elders to what I think is the single most descriptive definition of leadership. The definition is attributed to Ron Heifetz. Heifetz says that: “Leadership is disappointing people at a rate they can tolerate.” Old paradigms for ministry are quickly fading. New paradigms are being birthed, sometimes painfully, into existence. The role of the leader is to bring glimpses of the new paradigm to the faithful in a way that invites them to feast on what is yet not, but what is certainly yet to come.

I would like to think that my ministry since my ordination 43 years ago, this past October 14, has been one of a faithful leader “disappointing people at a rate they can tolerate,” and leading them into the new paradigm of what it means to be church today.
The great majority of my ministry has been spent in the local parish. It was there I learned to be a pastor and to love the people. Even during times of great distress there was always love for the people. Back in October 2008, I was called to become President of Disciples Home Missions. My service as your President began on January 1, 2009. Disciples Home Missions became my congregation and the Disciples Home Missions Board of Directors became my employer. I was supplied with a gifted and talented Program Staff and Ministry Associate Staff that freed me up to lead.

Back on April 26, 2016, the Personnel Committee and the Executive Committee of the DHM Board and I had our first conversation about pending retirement. We prayed for each other and for God’s wisdom in determining what timing might be best for both DHM and for me. Since that time Deniese and I have been in prayer about the best time to retire.

On September 20, 2016, after much prayer and consideration about retirement, I informed DHM’s Personnel Committee of my decision to retire as President of Disciples Home Missions on August 31, 2017. I informed DHM Board Chair, Candyce Black, about my decision to retire.

I met with Staff of Disciples Home Missions on Thursday, November 3, 2016, at a specially called Staff Meeting, to inform all DHM Employees of my intention to retire as President of Disciples Home Missions on August 31, 2017. Due to issues of transparency and honesty, I wanted the Staff I work most closely beside to know my intentions before my report to the Disciples Home Missions Board of Directors.

On November 8, 2016, I shared this decision with the Disciples Home Missions Board of Directors on the opening evening of our Board meeting in Washington, D.C. so that the Board could be prepared for the report of the Personnel Committee during the next day’s Plenary Session. No surprises on anything we do at Disciples Home Missions, only openness, transparency, and truth.

All I can say to the General Board is that it is a privilege to serve as President of this most unique and needed General Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). All of my life I have benefited from White Privilege. At an early age, I received honors and awards in academics and sports. I traveled throughout Europe and the Middle East studying theology at Oxford University and participating in archaeological digs at Megiddo. I was ordained to the ministry when 19 years old and served my first student pastorate in Possum Valley, Tennessee. Yale University became my theological home and my Master’s degree opened up doors to serve in some of our finest congregations, even as President of Disciples Home Missions. I have been immeasurably blessed!

My ministry began in the District of Columbia with my ordination many years ago. It seemed a fitting thing that I announce its ending while meeting as a Board of Directors in the District of Columbia. Life always comes full circle.
Now is the time to step aside and open up this position for another one, whom God is now preparing, to take a major leadership role in the life of this church. Leadership is not only “disappointing people at a rate they can tolerate.” Leadership is handing off the baton to a whole new generation. I will do so next August 31 and we together will see what new thing God will do with Disciples Home Missions and with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
The Association of Disciples Intentional Interim Ministers (ADIIM) was established in 2006 by a group of trained, intentional interim DOC ministers who wanted to provide a resource to both ministers and congregations. In 2008 it was recognized as a Relational Partner of Disciples Home Missions (DHM) and provides recognition and support for DOC ministers who are called to serve in the unique contexts and capacities of transitional/interim ministry. The focus of ADIIM is to support both established intentional interim ministers and to nurture those who want to explore a sense of call or are ready to be trained. ADIIM seeks to provide information, resources, support, and connections by working with regional staff and the general units of the church as they service congregations during the time between installed pastors.

We seek to provide opportunities for connections between established and potential DOC intentional interims through the ADIIM website, the Faster Pastor Express newsletter, and the availability of the ADIIM Steering Committee members to provide 1:1 mentor relationships or supportive teleconferences to discuss transitional ministry related challenges on an as-needed-basis. In 2015, Continuing Education was also provided through 20 webinars that spanned 22 subjects related to transitional/interim ministry. ADIIM was represented at General Assembly in Columbus with a table and display.

In February and September 2015, ADIIM was graced to participate alongside the Hope Partnership Leadership Academy sessions and provided Interim Ministry Network (IMN) directed training to four and then five participants respectively. This training was led by a Disciple IMN Faculty Member, Leigh Earley. ADIIM is thankful and hopeful for this ongoing relationship with Hope to prosper. Currently, on an ecumenical level, the Disciples of Christ are represented on the Interim Ministry Network General Board by the ADIIM Steering Committee Convener, Chuck Rolen.

2015 – 16 saw the ADIIM embark on an exciting and promising initiative. The Steering Committee aspires to begin identifying and nurturing prospective interim ministers who have passion and calling to serve culturally, racially, or ethnically-minority congregations within the Disciples movement. The initial phase has been engaged which is to establish connections among Disciple General Church leaders whose calling and focus is to engage minority groups and congregations (e.g., National Convocation, North American Pacific/Asian Disciples; Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries). ADIIM is establishing relationships in order to raise awareness about the discipline of
intentional transitional/interim ministry and to begin developing accessible and relevant educational tracks that will equip and nurture ministers who are called to serve minority congregations. To aid in this process ADIIM has a modest scholarship fund (balance to date: $1,535) and is exploring ways to provide culturally informed and relevant training and support for prospective intentional interims who are called to serve distinct communities of faith.

In August of 2016 ADIIM made it possible for Steering Committee member, Reverend Bill Meyer to attend the NAPAD gathering in California. Bill made a presentation about how the Interim Ministry Network and ADIIM are committed to developing culturally-specific training and support paths. Reverend Meyer also presented a $200 scholarship gift to encourage ministers to seek out entry-level training that is being provided by the Ohio Region of the Christian Church (DOC). This relationship is ongoing with dialogues occurring within NAPAD, The Interim Ministry Network Board, and ADIIM.

ADIIM remains poised and committed to supporting informed, trained, growing transitional/interim ministers who claim the movement known as The Christian Church, Disciples of Christ in proclaiming and embodying a welcoming presence that aspires to bring wholeness in and to this world.

Respectfully submitted,

The ADIIM Steering Committee:

Chuck Rolen, Convener
Peggy Hickman, Treasurer
Kathy Bryant, Membership
Katrina Palin
Bill Meyer
Richard Newman
Kevin Colvin
Rick Truitt
Leigh Earley, Emeritus Founder/Convener
All Peoples Community Center

Saundra Bryant, Executive Director
822 E. 20th Street, Los Angeles, California
(213) 747-6357
allpeoples@allpeoplescc.org
www.allpeoplescc.org

Founded in 1942, by the Christian Church Disciples of Christ – United Christian Missionary Society is now a mission center of Homeland Missions. Prior to the civil rights movement, All Peoples was a revolutionary concept that sought to be a place in the inner-city where all people could unite under one roof to share a vision for a stronger, more self-reliant community and to help turn the dreams of struggling local youth and adults into reality. The values and principals continue today, 75 years later.

The services provided; day care, pre-school, comprehensive after school program, summer residential camp (held at Loch Leven Camp and Conference Center,) charter high school, sports and recreation, parenting, parent support groups, domestic violence support group, counseling, Supplemental Food Distribution, legal clinics, health education classes, employment referrals/placement, health screenings, financial literacy and coaching, English as a Second language (ESL), immigration services, VITA tax services, College readiness classes, Domestic Violence support group, Food Growers Network and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.

The support received from Disciples Home Mission is primarily through Disciples Men’s Cookin’ for Mission and the “Remember there are no Undeserving Children in the World fund”. These funds are designated for our “Tomorrows Leaders” Program, Urban Adventures Summer Day Camp Program and Joe Ide residential camp program. All Peoples completed a successful accreditation process through American Camping Association (ACA) for our Joe Ide residential camp. The Joe Ide camp is held annually, at Loch Leven Camp and Conference owned and operated by the Christian Church Disciples of Christ, Pacific Southwest Region

Volunteers are important to our work with youth. In partnership with the Pacific Southwest Region and National Benevolent Association, All Peoples is a host for an NBA X-PLOR intern. Our intern this year is Eliud Peralez, a member of Iglesia Cristiana Emmanuel; San Benito, TX. A housing developer is donating a 40 x 150 lot to develop a micro-farm. The intern will work community members to design a micro –farm including usage and find resources. Potential opportunities include farmers market, education, and other possibilities. This is an exciting assignment for community development from the inception of this major gift to the conclusion.

All Peoples has been recommended to serve as the FamilySource Center for the City of Los Angeles South East community. This program is designed for families with children 7-17 years of age to increase economic stability and educational attainment. Through partnerships in the community we will offer more than 26 services i.e. counseling, case
management, financial literacy/coaching, tutoring, performing arts, ESL, immigration services, legal assistance.

Highlights of the Family Source Center Program include; 26 parents completed ESL classes, 30 parents completed financial literacy training and were able to open a savings account with $100 - $300 dollars. The participants will continue with financial coaching and All Peoples will match up $1,000 in monies saved for a particular goal i.e. small business, car. Thirty –five students and parents toured Cal Poly Pomona, University and University of California Riverside. Parents have participated with students in workshops for our “College is Possible” program. Two College Advisors have been hired to work with students and parents.

Immigration is a critical issue in our community. Our partner in immigrations services held a town hall to prepare community members with “know your rights” and potential changes that may occur in immigration laws for the upcoming year. The City Attorney for Los Angeles also selected All Peoples as a location for his town hall meeting to gather input from community members regarding issues of concern.

All Peoples will celebrate 75 years of service this year. The board and staff are planning various ways to celebrate our accomplishments with donors, participants and community stakeholders. It is my hope that Disciples will join in our celebrations throughout this year. Our witness in South Central Los Angeles is because 75 years ago, UCMS had a vision to follow in the footsteps of Christ and be a beacon of hope and love for persons regardless of their race, ethnicity or economic status.

“Mission First” is not a new theme for the All Peoples Community. Our legacy is built on a movement for wholeness in a fragmented community. We are grateful to Disciples for your support in the past and look forward to opportunities to continue our relationship in the future.
Continuing my status as both co-pastor for a United Methodist two-point charge here on the Eastern Shore as well as part-time Endorser for Chaplains and Counselors of the Christian Church (disciples of Christ), I began the year once more with my annual attendance at the National Council for Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) and ECVAC--VA Chaplain Endorsers--in January. For four days I spent time with nearly 200 endorsers and was able to visit with a number of our chaplains and counselors in the DC area. I plan to attend the same conference this coming January.

I made several trips to South Carolina this year, to attend graduations for chaplains at the Chaplains Schools at Fort Jackson in Columbia. We have seen an increase in the number of our active duty Navy Chaplains, as more and more young clergy are seeing the military as a real calling for their gifts of ministry. In addition, I continue to interview three to four clergy a month for various forms of specialized ministry, most of them for hospital and hospice ministry.

At the end of June, Donna and I concluded our three years of service with the UMC, having attended four annual conferences in the Virginia Conference. While it was a most gratifying ministry for us, we have missed attending Disciples of Christ churches--and live over 70 miles from the nearest one. In semi-retirement, we have been able to attend Regional activities here in Virginia. In June I spoke at the ministers and Mates luncheon at the Regional Assembly here, as well as giving a workshop on helping clergy and congregations relate to returning veterans. At the end of June, our church sponsored a breakfast for our chaplains at the annual APC Conference in Orlando, FL--at which over 30 chaplains were in attendance. The three days gave me opportunity to have private conferences with a number of our hospital and hospice chaplains.

This past year I was able to attend the farewell ceremonies for two of our great chaplains who left for duties in combat zones--Chaplain (CPT) Marta Conway, from Fort Lewis, WA, who just returned from a highly successful tour of duty in Afghanistan, and CH (MAJ) Jonathan Fisher, who recently returned to Fort Campbell, KY from Iraq. One more remains in Iraq, Chaplain (CPT) Owen Chandler, a National Guard chaplain in the Army, who serves a church in Arizona. I ask your prayers for these as well as all our men and women who continue to serve in harm's way.

There are several more trips planned before year’s end, and my objective for the coming year is to prepare to transition to full retirement. Looking ahead to the General Assembly in Indianapolis in July, I will have completed 12 years in this position, and as I just passed my 71st year, think it might be high time to have fresh ideas and enthusiasm in this vital area of ministry. I covet your prayers as I discern the next step.

DHM and each president I have served with--and especially Ron Degges--have been an important part of my life. Serving with the men and women of DHM and the General
Staff has enriched my life immeasurably and filled me with a great sense of pride for what our church is doing in the world. Anne Marie Moyars has been the rock of this office. As the Administrative Associate, she has given superb service to hundreds of chaplains over the course of the nearly six years in this job. It has been my great joy to serve our specialized ministry clergy with her. Finally, it is all about our chaplains and counselors who serve the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) so faithfully and well, with servants' hearts and unshakeable dedication to doing God’s work wherever God leads them.

Blessings in Christ,
The nature of ministry through the Office of Christian Vocations is expressed mostly through areas related to Search and Call (clergy relocation), Ministers Directory (clergy credentialing), and Ministry Educational/Formation (Scholarships & Grant programs for students and credentialed clergy, & Spiritual Formation resources). Along with Ministry Associates in these areas, I strive so that those making use of our ministries have a positive experience that is ultimately fruitful for their life and vocational calling.

Within the day-to-day responsibilities of this ministry, there is much detail-oriented work, troubleshooting of complexities and needed attention to minutia. For such, I count on the three Ministry Associates of this office to offer a high degree of professionalism upon all that must be dealt with. With gratitude, I am proud to say Anne Marie Moyars, Brenda Tyler and Kelly Harris each offer significant and generous service to those who need our care. They, each, empower our ministry to be one that is trustworthy, compassionate, just, and fair.

Once again, we’ve successfully moved through another year of major systemic updates to our clergy data system (CDM+ and WebMinPro). As a result of improvements, clergy data will now be able to be better shared between regional databases and our General Church database with greater automation. Such will increase efficiency within, both, regional and general offices. It eliminates a significant level of redundant workload, and manual data entry. This effort also helps increase the accuracy and fidelity of clergy data between regional and general databases.

For a second year in a row, we worked with our vendor, Suran Systems Company, to provide a training event for regional staff-persons who also use the CDM+ system. Anne Marie, Brenda and I helped provide leadership for this event that was attended by regional ministers and administrative staff from many regions. As a result, regional and general staff in attendance received valuable training on systems we use daily, developed deeper collegial relationships, shared information/wisdom that will enhance regional staff performance, and fostered partnerships for future collaboration.

This last year saw an upgraded replacement for the Ministry Position Listing Website. The new incarnation of this tool is now entirely Web-based, and allows for better management of ministry position listings by each regional office. It also archives all listings for future use/reuse by regions, and provides all users greater ability to sort and view position listings by various criteria.
Once again, one of the creative resources provided by The Office Of Christian Vocations that continues to be a popular resource is the Well-Fed Spirit Website: www.wellfedspirit.org. This site is unique within our denominational system in its offering of wellness and spiritual formation/practice resources for church leaders (clergy and lay). My plan for next year's sabbatical is to begin a major update of this site, using a new platform to increase stability and function.

One challenge in the past year, and one we foresee continuing into the near future, is related to turnover of Senior Regional Ministry Staff. As several of our regional ministers have retired, and more are scheduled for such in the next year, a need continues for my office to provide care and consultation to new regional leadership, and nurture new collegial relationships. This includes helping new regional leaders build technical and ecclesiastical capacity in areas of ministry data and clergy records, Search and Call, and policies that bind our mutual ministries in areas for the support of local clergy.

Throughout all of this work, my office is committed to serve professionally and effectively, as partner and initiator, so that leaders in the Christian Church are more able to be who G_d calls us to be in this world.
Mission Statement:
To provide opportunities in the heart of the mountains for Christian hospitality, provide rest for the soul, and renewal for the journey.

Christmount is the retreat, conference, and camp center for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. It’s a place for education, spiritual renewal, church retreats, camps, family reunions, and many other events. In the ecumenical spirit of the Disciples of Christ, the facilities are used by many faith traditions, organizations and non-profit groups.

After serving Christmount for 33 years, Michael Murphy recently retired from his position as the Executive Director. Not to be outdone, Helen Johnson retired from her position as the Associate Director after a run of 38 years. The Rev. Rob Morris assumed leadership as the new Executive Director on July 5, 2016. Rob and his wife Beth live in Asheville with their two teenage daughters and a 10-year-old son.

Christmount has been busy completing renovations to the Conference Rooms and restrooms in the Gaines Cook Guest House, with plans to complete renovations to the Assembly Hall during the winter months.

Christmount is finding new and exciting ways to connect with the local community such as providing wall space for local artists from the Red House Art Gallery to showcase their artwork in our newly remodeled Conference Rooms, and offering space for the local Kiwanis group to meet & eat every week!

As the national camp & conference center for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christmount is exploring ways in which we can support the programs and ministries that stem from our General Church (DHM, Reconciliation Ministries, DOM, et al), Regions, and local congregations. We are excited to partner with Green Chalice to offer SOIL (Social Opportunities for Intentional Listening) Camp for the summer of 2017. This will be like a “Summer Camp-meets-Mission Trip-meets-TED Talks” experience for youth and adults!

Contact Christmount sometime – we would love to hear what you’re up to and discuss how we can work to create a better church together.
The Disciples Center for Public Witness, a ministry started by the Christian Church Capital Area and National City Christian Church in Washington, DC, is more and more becoming a ministry for the whole church. Now an officially recognized organization of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, the Center is increasingly recognized and utilized by diverse congregational, regional, and general ministries, as well as constituency groups and grassroots organizations, as a Disciples office for social witness in the U.S. Capitol. But with an active presence in New York and Ontario, and a growing network of justice advocates throughout the U.S. and Canada, the Center is more than a Washington office: we are also a denomination-wide ministry that works cooperatively with other ministries effectively to inform, connect, and empower Disciples and other people of faith for ecumenical and interfaith justice advocacy in the United States and Canada.

MAIN PROGRAM AREAS

Care for Creation: Working with creation care advocates from various Christian denominations through Creation Care Ministries, Green Chalice and the Center were part of collective efforts to promote clean water, protect endangered species, support the Environmental Protection Agency’s Methane Rule, urge states to quickly implement the Clean Power Plan, highlight the need for rebuilding just communities on the 10th year anniversaries of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, activate the grassroots to advocate for a Green Climate Fund, co-host a roundtable conversation on creation care by representatives from six major historically black denominations, and propose to congressional staff ideas for increased participation in our National Parks and Monuments system by a greater diversity of racial and ethnic groups.

Criminal Justice Reform: The Center is working closely with Disciples Home Missions (DHM) and the National Benevolent Association (NBA) to speak both prophetically and practically to issues related to prisons and criminal justice reform. For example, the Center joined with NBA and DHM to organize a special event (reception and panel discussion) for Disciples and members of the United Church of Christ attending the
2015 Ecumenical Advocacy Days conference—where nearly a thousand Christians from across the United States came together to worship, share information, network with one another, and advocate for criminal justice reform to their elected officials in the U.S. Congress. (Note: criminal justice reform is one of the few issue areas in which there is growing bipartisan support in Congress).

**Gender Justice:** The Center works closely with denominational, ecumenical, and interfaith coalition partners on issues that affect the lives of women in the United States: we have a presence on the board of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice; we provide leadership to a Religious Advocacy Working Group that deals with reproductive health care; we are involved in a religious-secular coalition which has as its focus equal pay for women; and we actively participate in an interfaith coalition to end domestic violence.

**Health and Wholeness:** This year was a significant anniversary year for several important pieces of legislation related to health care: the 5th anniversary of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the 25th anniversary of the Americans for Disabilities Act (ADA), and the 50th anniversary of the legislation that created Medicare. Through our Health and Wholeness ministry, the Center has been actively involved in these and other areas of public policy related to health care.

For example, the Center provides an active Disciples presence in IDAC (the Interfaith Disabilities Act Coalition), a group that has long been working with faith groups to encourage and help them to advocate for the preservation, extension, and implementation of the ADA. We also actively participate in the interfaith Health Care Working Group, which had a lead role in coordinating the efforts of people of faith to secure the passage of ACA, and which now focuses on issues related to the implementation of ACA by the states.

**Immigration and Farm Workers:** The Center carries out its work on immigration reform and farm worker Justice in conjunction with Refugee and Immigration Ministries (RIM), a ministry of Disciples Home Missions in partnership with the Center and the Christian Church Capital Area. Under the leadership of RIM, Disciples have been very active in efforts to promote both immigration policies and farm worker employment practices and conditions that are more just, humane, and compassionate.

In the area of farm worker justice, this activism includes supporting tomato farm workers, tobacco workers, and berry workers. In the area of immigration reform, RIM has taken a leadership role in mobilizing Disciples and other people of faith to advocate for the closing of family detention centers, to counter anti-immigrant legislation, to support Syrian refugees, and to end harmful rhetoric and actions against immigrants and refugees.
The Middle East: The Center provides a Disciples presence on the Interdenominational Networking Group, a coalition that informs and mobilizes people of faith around the U.S. Campaign to End the Occupation of Palestine. The Center also supports and participates in the important work of Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) by attending meetings with Congressional and White House officials, and by sharing CMEP information with our network of grassroots advocates. And the Center joins with other ministries and organizations to organize conferences such as the one held at Howard University, the theme of which was "Occupied Palestine: How Should the Black Church Respond?"

Poverty: The Center carries out much of its work on poverty issues in cooperation with national, state, and local ecumenical partners through our Ecumenical Poverty Initiative (EPI). Working with coalition partners in the Circle of Protection, EPI took a leading role in getting nine U.S. Presidential candidates to address via video how they would work to address poverty if they were elected. Through the "Pastors Ending Poverty" campaign, EPI helped highlight the issue of payday predatory lending. And, joining with diverse faith-based and secular worker justice groups, EPI successfully pushed for a wage increase for underpaid federal contract workers.

Public Education: The Center is currently communicating with potential partners among religious and educational leaders with the goal of exploring possibilities for creating a national network of faith-based advocates for public education in the United States. Although we stay involved in ecumenical and interfaith conversations about public education issues throughout the year, specific work around the formation of an advocacy network happens mainly in the summers when our capacity for such work is increased by consultants and interns.

Racial Equality: At the invitation of the Center, a diverse group of thirty-six guests participated in a conversation about "Disciples and Racism in the United States." The framework for the conversation was "Do You See Me?" and was based on the assumption that "before Black lives can matter, Black people must be seen." The event included presentations, one-on-one conversations, and table discussions about "really seeing each other" and the structures of accountability that might allow and encourage this to happen more often. Among the next steps identified by the gathering were (1) a continuation of this conversation online, (2) the promotion of this or similar conversations in other contexts, and (3) the formation of a group or groups to put more thought into the issues of accountability related to actually "seeing" people of color, especially from the perspective of Black Lives Matter.

Religious Liberty: The Center is an active member of the Coalition Against Religious Discrimination, a coalition of more than 40 faith-based and civil rights organizations in the United States. Currently, this coalition is working closely with the White House
Office for Faith Based and Community Partnerships, to implement appropriate rules to govern government funding of faith-based charities.

**Torture:** The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is a member of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT), and the Center provides a Disciples presence on NRCAT's Participating Members Council. Recent shared activities have been focused primarily on solitary confinement. These include follow-up support for a General Assembly proposal for reflection and research (GA-1525), a letter to the Obama administration, and a webinar co-sponsored by NRCAT, NBA, and the Center.

**Worker Justice:** The Center promotes greater worker justice through its active participation in the ministry of Interfaith Worker Justice (IWJ), a Chicago-based organization with chapters, workers' centers, and coalition partners throughout the nation. Working with and through this organization, the Center has helped pass over two dozen ordinances to protect workers throughout the U.S. from wage theft and unsafe working conditions; publicly certify and celebrate those businesses that pay a living wage to their employees; and help craft key portions of the "Wage (Workplace Action for a Growing Economy) Act." (This legislation would amend the National Labor Relations Act to help ensure that workers have a voice in the workplace, and it would crack down on employers who break the law by forbidding and then retaliating against workers who seek to unite with other workers to exercise their right to collective action).

**CANADA:** Through our partnership with our sister ministry, the Disciples Centre for Public Witness in Canada, we are involved in ecumenical and interfaith witness with various Canadian ministries on issues of global warming, poverty, and the rights of indigenous peoples (First Nations).

**INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:** In the summer of 2015, the Center was blessed with six talented interns: three from Washington College in Maryland; one from Eureka College in Illinois; a Colonel Clarence Hodson Trust Intern from St. John's College in Annapolis, MD; and an Oreon E. Scott Intern in Prophetic Ministry from Yale Divinity School. One of our interns was from India and another one was from Peru. Our college interns worked on issues of public education, worker justice, refugees, environmental racism, and business support for raising the minimum wage. Our seminarian helped coordinate social media at General Assembly and also worked on the production of an online resource for congregations wanting to get more involved in justice advocacy. (This resource can be found at www.disciplesadvocacy.net).

**GATHERINGS and MEETINGS:** At General Assembly 2015, the Center joined with other ministries and organizations to sponsor five workshops, three after sessions, two youth advocacy trainings, three small-group conversations, a special concert, and a public rally outside the Convention Center.
Other conferences in which the Center participated in 2015 include the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice, a conference on the use of lethal drones, and the Black Ministers' Retreat. Board meetings in which we participated include Interfaith Worker Justice, Creation Justice Ministries, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, National Farm Worker Ministry, and the National Religious Campaign Against Torture.

The Center and its partnership ministries participated in numerous meetings with Congressional leaders and staff on various issues and concerns. We also participated in White House meetings on criminal justice reform, Central America, Cuba, domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse, employment non-discrimination, health care, immigration reform, the minimum wage, and worker safety.

REMEMBERING OUR SAINTS: In January, 2015, Brian Adams, our Minister for Economic Justice left this finite world to become more fully part of God's eternal life. To honor the memory of his life, his ministry, and his passion for justice, the Center established the Brian P. Adams Justice Education Fund. Monies given to this fund are used to help young adults participate in justice-oriented gatherings and events. A web site with more information can be found at www.bpadamsfund.org. The web site for general support is www.centersupport.org.
Disciples Volunteering

Josh Baird, Director

Disciples Volunteering assists and enhances Disciples serving community, especially through the servant missions and ministries of congregations. By focusing on supporting local mission interests, developing servant leaders, and sending teams in mission, Disciples Volunteering is promoting a fundamental shift toward service and missions that are more sustainable, flexible, effective, and, ultimately, a better witness to our faith in action. To this end, Disciples Volunteering continues to Call, Connect, Equip, and Send Servants and the Church for Service with the Community. Disciples serving community move from volunteer to servant to neighbor to friend as we Get Dirty for Jesus together. Disciples Volunteering also seeks partners from across the life of the church – including other general unit ministries, regions/areas, and local congregations – and a growing array of faith-based and community service agencies to enable servants and promote service opportunities. This report lifts up work that is currently underway as well as emerging ministries and developing partnerships through a creative openness to how God is leading Disciples Volunteering in service with and for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Sending Teams in Mission
Disciples Volunteering’s disaster response ministries and related host Mission Stations continue to evolve as a core collaborative ministry. While immediate relief and response is best facilitated locally, Disciples Volunteering (DV) has the experience and servant leadership to promote appropriate long-term recovery, calling Disciples to participate long after the camera crews have left the scene of a disaster. When appropriate, a Mission Station is established, usually in a Disciples church, as a partnership with DV, Week of Compassion (WOC), the Region/Area, and local congregation(s). The mission station with First Christian Church in Rowlett, TX, opened in May and will continue through August 2017. Following a recent visit to southern Louisiana, steps are now being taken to open a mission station with First Christian Church, Baton Rouge, to support the recovery from August flooding. Disaster responses are also often ecumenical – not just in function, but in structure – and sometimes interfaith. The initial flood response in Louisiana may be in partnership with NECHAMA, a Jewish disaster response organization. From February through May, DV partnered with the United Church of Christ’s Disaster Ministries (UCC) to facilitate a mission station outside Austin, TX. And in Columbia, SC, DV and WOC have partnered with the UCC and Church of the Brethren’s Disaster Ministries (COB) to implement the next phase of our cooperative Disaster Recovery Support Initiative (DRSI). International Orthodox Christian Charities has also been a partner with housing provided at a local Orthodox congregation.

The DRSI has two aims: helping communities shorten their timeline from disaster impact to long-term recovery; and enabling Disciples, UCC, and COB mission teams’ earlier entry into a disaster affected community in order to better assist with the
recovery. In Columbia, we achieved the second goal as mission teams have been on the ground making home repairs since January, just three months after the flooding. Collectively, we have secured $80,000 in grant funds to support this effort, including $50,000 awarded to DV/DHM from the United Way of the Midlands (South Carolina). To move the DRSI to the next level, it is clear that staff need to be hired. To achieve this, each partner denomination has committed the funds necessary for DHM to staff positions for Case Management, Construction Supervision, and Long-term Recovery Specialist.

Another exciting development is taking place in partnership with WOC and the Pacific Southwest Region (PSWR). In February 2016, the PSWR Board approved a proposal to develop a Regional Disaster Recovery Ministry. Together, we prepared for a November training for geographically disbursed response coordinators and regional response teams who facilitated congregational preparedness, response, and recovery. Our hope is that the model that was developed can be adapted to other Regions, to create a stronger denomination-wide network.

Disciples Volunteering also continues the work of expanding connections with and referrals to other Disciples related mission locations under the designation of “Mission Inns” and “Hospitality Stations,” where traveling mission teams can serve for a time or simply rest for the night on their way to or from a mission destination. Support continues as well for the historic Mission Centers as DV encourages the engagement of mission teams for service and learning opportunities at the Centers. Next year, the vision for an expanded network of Mission Inns and Hospitality Stations will be refined and implemented.

**Shaping Servant Leaders**

Three Summer Mission Interns, including two second summer interns, served this summer with Urban Spirt and the Urban Mission Inn. While five positions were initially offered and accepted, two young adults later withdrew in order to pursue other opportunities. This is becoming a regular challenge, leaving potential placements without an intern. New this year, Sandhya Jha assisted Deb Conrad with the interns’ week-long intensive training, further enriching their training experience.

Long-term Volunteers (LTVs) continue to serve in a number of capacities, including as Mission Station Managers and Registrars. They also represent DV at a variety of events across the life of the church and in ecumenical settings. Disciples Volunteering is continuing to develop LTV cross-training with their counterparts in the United Church of Christ and Church of the Brethren.

The LTV ministry will undergo a potentially significant restructuring to begin in October 2016. Thanks to a $2500 Leadership Education at Duke Divinity Innovation Grant that DV was awarded, current and prospective LTVs will gather for retreat. We will celebrate the many ministries LTVs have shared in and dream, vision, and begin to construct a new future for the ministry as it aims to better serve the church and communities in need of servant leadership.
Disciples Volunteering also continues its collaboration with WOC, DHM’s Family and Children’s Ministries, and the National Benevolent Association (NBA) to support the expansion of Children’s Disaster Services, a ministry of Church of the Brethren.

Supporting Local Missions
DV supported two significant local missions’ projects this year. The first was the continuing construction of a new church building with Lynnville Christian Church in Lynnville, IL. The participation of mission teams was lower than initially hoped for, but it seemed to keep pace with the congregation’s sense of timing and capacity to fund materials. A second project supported Urban Spirit, enabling that Mission Center to move to new facilities which are better serving their mission of poverty education and justice work.

I am grateful, as always, for the on-going support from and partnership with Week of Compassion staff and the Week of Compassion Committee. Thank You!
Disciples Men

Stephen Bentley

Most of the excitement in Disciples Men’s ministry this year has been planning and experiencing Session 2016 July 8-10, 2017 in Fort Worth, TX. We were welcomed with open arms by Texas Christian University who went out of their way to make us welcome. As we gathered around the theme “You are Called by Name!” almost 100 men from across the General Church to experience good food, meaningful fellowship, and be spiritual enriched. The attendees at Sessions 2016 voted unanimously to hold Sessions 2020 at Texas Christian University and have set the date of July 10 – 12, 2020 for this event.

We continue to sponsor the “Men Cookin’ for Mission” project to raise money for our four Mission Centers: Yakama Christian Mission, All People Christian Center, Inman Christian Center and Kentucky Appalachian Ministry. I spent the last month of my sabbatical visiting 3 of these mission stations and hope to visit KAM soon. We postponed my visit because of the forest fires Kentucky was experiencing at the time as KAM was helping in the recovery effort.

Our current leadership team consists: Archie Jenkins - Past President, Dan Crawford – President, Brian Burton – President Elect, and David Grandgeorge - Pastor-Counselor. Members at-large include: Stuart Price, Remmie Crawford, Harvey Anderson, Ken Marston, Ron Petrick, and Arnold Hayes represents National Convocation. We are currently looking for representatives from NAPAD and Hispanic Ministries. All of these are currently involved and working with the Disciples Men's Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee is meeting in San Antonio, TX on Feb. 10-12, 2017 to plan the next couple of years as well as finalize plans for the General Assembly in Indianapolis, IN. In addition to this annual face-to-face gathering we meet monthly via conference call to keep each other up-to-date on our work.

We once again were excited about the possibility of a receiving an Orem E. Scott Grant from the Christian Church Foundation. This grant would be used to call together men from every Region of every ethnic group within that Region partnering with NAPAD, National Convocation, Hispanic Ministries, and Young Adult ministries, in building a database of Models of Disciples Men's Ministry. Unfortunately, we did not receive the grant. However, this has not dampened our spirits.

Disciples Men continues to work on two emphases. First, strengthening local and regional men’s groups following a three pronged approach: 1) Strengthening Relationships with God (Spiritual) 2) Strengthening Relationships within the Group (Fellowship) and 3) Strengthening relationship with the local and wider community (Mission). Second, we continue to emphasize our mission to hungry children at the local, Regional and General church manifestations of the church. Our “Men Cookin’ for Mission” program allows local and regional men’s groups to raise moneys and split the
funds so that one half of the funds can be used locally for a ministry that serves hungry children and the other half will go to support our four mission centers that each support ministry to hungry children.
Disciples Women Ministry Report

Pat Donahoo, Director

Personnel: Elizabeth Clough began working as a part time ministry associate in February 2016 after Beverly Ledwon’s retirement. She is on a steep learning curve both with her work and understanding how Disciples Women works. She will also be working part time for HELM since their offices have been moved to Indianapolis allowing her to have full time work while Disciples Women pays only half.

Our vice president of IDWM has resigned. She was promoted to a new ministry in her chaplaincy that requires a great deal more of her time.

Ministry: Pat Donahoo and Chesla Nickelson have led or participated in a number of events with congregational, regional, general and ecumenical connections. Chesla led the W2WW group to South Africa/Ghana and Pat and Marilyn will be attending the World Convention in India in January 2017.

The Executive Committee (EC) requested that interregional gatherings be expanded beyond leaders and potential leaders to include a wider group of women so more connections can be made that might otherwise have been made at our national event. In the hopes of expanding these events, both Heartland and W WOW have postponed their dates from 2017 to 2018. The EC will be asking each planning group to use our developing #DWConnect as part of those gatherings helping to connect well-versed Disciples Women to women who are unfamiliar with the ministry.

Resources: Chesla has led a number of changes in Just Women staff including a new editor, designer, publisher, etc. We have also been working to address issues that are difficult and cause uncomfortable conversations. We have also added a “Connections” section providing a place for women across the DOC to connect with one another. The theme for 2017 will be “Freedom: The Promise and the Struggle”. 2018 will be our 10th year with our anniversary being January 2019. Chesla is beginning conversations to consider how we might commemorate this milestone. We are also researching ways to provide Just Women in Spanish while being aware of the large cost that goes along with it.

We have some outdated resources that need to be updated and we are searching for writers for our annual general programs.

Chesla will be seeking funds to finance another volume of Wisdom of Women. We are hoping to focus on one of the leaders of NAPAD.

We are partnering with Refugee and Immigration and Children and Youth Ministries for a subscription to gotowebinar so we can conduct trainings and have conversations with a wider group of women.

Finances: Pat and Chesla will be attending the Disciples Development Conference in January 2017, as well as the Lilly seminar on the spirituality of fundraising. We continue
to look for ways to financially sustain the ministry. Blessing box giving, as well as DMF continues to decrease.

Future: The EC began conversations about what changes might be necessary to sustain the ministry in the future. A personnel and/or structural change may be required to keep the ministry healthy.

We are also looking at changing the structure of the EC so that team members rotate off at different dates rather than replacing the entire team and having a long learning curve.

Conversation continues about who we are and where God is calling us to serve and how that fits in our current ministry and structure. Marilyn Williams, IDWM President, has called us to share our picture of what it means to be a Disciples Woman. This is a process we are working on and will, hopefully, be ready to share at GA2017.

GA 2017: We are making plans for our booth space to tell our story of who we are and what it means, as well as highlighting the need for continued work to combat human trafficking. We will be hosting a luncheon on the last day of GA, as well as an after session on Monday evening.

Advertising/PR: Pat and Chesla are working on a social media plan so we can be intentional about when and what to post. Lashaundra McCarty, designer for Just Women, has provided some specific details about what this plan should include.

Clergy: While we recognize the need for women clergy to have a support system that deals with their specific needs we are still trying to discover what the support should look like. Two of the pastors on the EC team are working to develop how we move forward.

At Marilyn’s suggestion we agreed to spend time in prayer for those on the team with specific struggles on Thursday mornings at 9:00 a.m. Any specific requests will be posted to our EC Facebook page to share with one another.

Disciples Women’s Ministries is a conduit for diverse connections empowering each woman to find her voice and live out her call. Micah 6:8
The DHM Office of Evangelism & Congregational Transformation in a 21st Century Context

In the fall of 2003, I came to DHM to be the new Minister of Evangelism and Merger staff (for National Convocation) for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. October first of this year began my fourteenth year as part of the ministry team that makes up Disciples Home Mission. It has been a great fourteen years and I still enjoy the rewards and fulfillment that this position continues to bring to me as I strive to make a difference in the life of this community of faith called the Disciples.

I would like to share what evangelism looks like in a 21st century context and the nature of my work with Pastors, Clergy teams, congregational leaders and congregations. I think the most effective way for me to do that is not by giving you a list of things I have accomplished over the past years or activities I have been engaged in, but demonstrate the nature of my work and ministry through the sampling of some of my work with a local congregation. To that end I have included as a part of my report a sampling of my work with a local congregation in Southwest Virginia. I would ask that you review the sampling first and then continue reading the rest of my report. (Please see pages 3 & 4 below)

At this point you might be asking why I included a sampling of my work with a local congregation. Well the answer is simple; my portfolio says that I am to do the work of evangelism and transformation. Both evangelism and transformation are not a one shot deal. In other words, once a Disciples congregation engages the ministry and services that the Office of Evangelism has to offer it becomes a lifelong partnership. With that stated, I would like to report to you the present day status of Unity Christian Church of Radford, Virginia. As part of my continuing work with the Pastor, congregational leaders and the congregation, the first goal which this congregation and I agreed upon was to begin by taking a serious and critical look at their mission, ministry and vision for the 21st century. I am elated to report that this is one Disciples congregation which understands that the first step in becoming a transforming church is to have a relative mission and vision in order to do effective evangelism in a 21st century context. This congregation now continues to find ways to be relevant in doing mission and ministry as they strive to accomplish their vision in a 21st century context.

The Office of Black Ministries:
I have requested and have been granted by Ron Degges, the President of Disciples Home Missions, to step away from the responsibilities of the Office of Black Ministries. This action will be effective at the end of 2016. I am proud to have been a part of
building a great relationship that DHM has now established in partnership with the National Convocation as we have striven to effectively serve African-American Disciples clergy and congregations. One of the accomplishments of my time and service to this task is the strengthening of the Annual Black Ministers Retreat. I will continue to be available for consultation as DHM decides what the next best steps should be in continuing the service of the Office of Black Ministries.

My work and ministry continues,

Rev. Dr. Reginald W. Calhoun, Sr.

Executive for Evangelism & Congregational Transformation and
Director for the Office of Black Ministries

Welcome to Unity Christian Church. We are glad you are here. If this is your first time worshipping with us, please stop by the Welcome Center table for a small gift.

At Unity Christian Church, we strive to be a transforming 21st Century, Disciples of Christ congregation, gifted and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be a faithful witness in our congregation, community and beyond. We believe God calls us:

OUR VISION:
To be a spiritually vibrant congregation intentionally committed to the discernment of God’s will, growth and understanding of what it means to be a disciple, and serving God by serving others.

OUR OBJECTIVES:
(We will know we are living into our vision when the following are observable)
--Transformation of disciples resulting in enthusiastic and committed participation in worship and all ministries in the life of the congregation. (Spiritually Vibrant)
--Commitment to Prayer of all disciples resulting in personal faith sharing and conversations of God’s movement within the life of the congregation (Committed to discernment of God’s will—Reaching Up)
--Emphasis on Study and Growth resulting in biblical knowledge, awareness and sharing of personal and congregational spiritual gifts, and regular practice of spiritual disciplines (Commitment to growth and understanding of what it means to be a disciple—Reaching In)
--Opportunities for Mission and Service to respond to the ongoing needs of our neighbors in our community and beyond (Serving God by Serving Others—Reaching Out)

We lift these values that bind us in covenant: (From our Positive and Desired Core Values)
--The promotion and practice of ongoing mission
--Spiritual Growth and Renewal of disciples of all ages within the congregation
--Reaching out to children, youth, young adults, and young families and nurturing their faith and growth into discipleship
--The importance of witnessing and sharing our faith with one another as well as our neighbors.

OUR MISSION:
To transform lives, our congregation, and community based on God’s unique vision for us, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and sharing the unconditional love of Jesus Christ. (Romans 12:2)

To accomplish this, we shall: Reach Up. Reach In. Reach Out.

Unity Christian Church of Radford, Virginia, is the new congregation formed from the joining of First Christian Church and Radford Christian Church.

In Sept. 2010, exploration of a joint congregation progressed into forming a Unity
Committee composed of 6 members from each Church. In just 3 short months it was determined that the formation of a joint Church between the two congregations was warranted. On Sunday January 2, 2011, the first joint worship service was held in the sanctuary of First Christian Church on Tyler Avenue. Since that first joint service in January, excitement, anticipation and love grew in the hearts of every member. The thirst to be together as one large family of Christians grew rapidly and by June, joint worship services were moved from once a month to twice a month.

Both congregations voted overwhelmingly in favor to join together under one name and come together under the new name of Unity Christian Church.

Starting the first Sunday in November 2011, both congregations worshiped together at the Carter Street location of Radford Christian Church in order to make way for renovations to begin at the Tyler Street location. In early January 2012 both congregations transformed from 2 into 1 new large family. On that Sunday, there were celebrations marking the first meeting together as Unity Christian Church in the newly renovated church facility that once was First Christian Church.

God has enriched our lives and blessed us to witness and participate in the most exciting event in the history of over 200 combined years of two of Radford's longest standing congregations.
Families and Children Ministries

Olivia Updegrove
Website: http://www.docfamiliesandchildren.org/
Newsletter: http://www.docfamiliesandchildren.org/newsletter
Text Message: 81010, @weeklyfc

- Kate Epperly rejoined the team and began to deal directly with our advocacy and justice needs. She continues to help put together our Kids to Kids material. She has started a blog http://www.disciplesjustice4children.org.
- Olivia Stewart has started to gather together an ecumenical group that will oversee the shifts in the Children Worship & Wonder program over the next generation. Our Disciple trainers are included in this shift and discussion.
- Our 40 day devotional, Light a Candle for Children was themed, “Helping Children Heal from Violence.” We have had a wonderful variety of Disciple voices participating. Our daily posts reached an average of 800 people per day.
- **Disciples 5K:** See Images for results.
- **Ministries across Generations:** We had our first intergenerational/cross-constituency meeting December 1-2, 2016. We had representatives from each constituency group, across a variety of ages, experiences, and locations. We gathered to do intentional work together to cover all aspects of our denomination needs in the lifelong journey of faith.
- **North American Youth Event (NYE):** Kate and Olivia U. attended the UCC/Disciples Youth Event in Orlando, Florida. They introduced some family elements to the worship and event experience. Spent a lot of time making connections with our other ministries and our General Youth Council.
- **FYI:**
  - Olivia Updegrove attended: DYMN Retreat, NAPAD, & NYE (Kate Epperly), and the Youth Specialties Conference
  - Olivia Updegrove: “Family Matters” article in Just Women, curate website, and basic responses to our Facebook and ministry avenues to resourcing and curating.
  - Olivia U. is working as a team member for the Intergenerational Conference which is connecting her with some of the top names and insights to shifts that are happening.
  - Kate participated in the Global Ministry meeting in Cleveland, and the GA Worship Planning
- We continue to work with the Children’s Disaster Service.
- Randy Kuss has been a part of all of this and is bringing together some important provisioning ideas from the youth aspect to all of these shifts. He is also bringing together this year’s DYMN event with the Progressive Youth Ministry Event.

The hardest part of our year was losing our amazing administrative assistant, Jessica Kramer. We are currently in the process of hiring a new person to fill some very big shoes. Please pray for us.
The General Youth Council (GYC) is excited to have increased its membership by adding additional youth and adult members during last year's application cycle. We currently have eleven council members and Rev. Trayce Stewart is serving in her second year as the DHM liaison to GYC. The council will focus on leadership development and clarifying its purpose in the coming months to better serve youth within the denomination as well as the wider church.

Last year it was announced that the Disciples would partner with the United Church of Christ for their biennial youth gathering, National Youth Event. GYC has several current and past members who are serving on leadership teams to bring this event to fruition and continue to establish this partnership so this truly becomes a joint youth endeavor.

GYC is looking forward to taking a more active role in planning and implementing youth programming during the 2017 General Assembly and are looking forward to this creative process of learning and service.
The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. Out of our call to “do justice” (Micah 6:8), we strive to demonstrate the fullness of God’s shalom through living out our faith by caring for God’s creation. From Hawaii to Ontario to Florida, and everywhere in between, Disciples’ congregations are caring for creation in unique and inspiring ways. Our mission is to connect Christian faith, spiritual practice and creation consciousness in order to demonstrate the fullness of God’s shalom.

Green Chalice committed to another year and a half in partnership with the faith arm of EcoAmerica called Blessed Tomorrow. Blessed Tomorrow provided $25,000 to Green Chalice to support our work for 2016. Sharon Watkins and Ron Degges have been involved and very supportive of this work.

Work Summary
- Monthly e-newsletter, Green Chalice News
- 109 Green Chalice Ministries (Congregations, Camps, Regional Office)
  - 7 - Certified Green Chalice Congregations
- Green Chalice Regional Teams in KY, OH, IN, and OR/ID, Pacific Southwest Region
- Green Chalice Covenant - Individuals, creation care teams and congregations continue to sign.
- Community Gardens – updates to the map with Disciple’s community gardens regularly.
- Numerous phone calls, emails, meetings and workshops about creation care every month.
- Website – updates to website greenchalice.org has been very liked
- Facebook over 185 New Posts in 2016, total new likes this year is 1261

2016 Writings
- Just Women – Carol
- Disciples Advocate in Spring and Fall – Scott
- Numerous e-publication articles
- Patheos Blog – Scott

Growing Partnership with Eco-Palms (ethically & sustainably grown and harvested.)

New Green Chalice Advisory Team includes:
- Rev. Stacy Sheldon, Ion Community Church, OR
- Rev. Kevin Howe, Harvard Ave Christian Church Tulsa, OK
- Rev. Seung Un (Paul) Tche, Council on Christian Unity
- Rev. Katherine Raley, First Christian Church, Columbia, SC
- Rev. Johnny Wray, High Hope Farms, MS
- Rev. Monica Wedlock Kilpatrick, National Benevolent Association
- Carol is Chair of the Creation Care team of the Kentucky Council of Churches
- Carol is Secretary of the Executive Board of Creation Justice Ministries and traveled to DC for the annual Board Meeting in D.C.
- Carol helped write and edit the Creation Justice Ministries Earth Day Worship Resources.
- Carol spoke on the KY Capitol steps about Climate Justice for the Moral Day of Action, 9.12
- Scott preached at FCC, Black Mountain, NC for Green Chalice
- Scott presented to Cyprus Creek Christian Church in Spring, TX
- Scott gave 10 sermons, spoke at 26 events or vigils and 7 testimonies and visits with N.C. legislator in 2016
- Scott attended and led a climate and faith panel at Wild Goose Festival in Hot Springs, NC

**Believe Youth Event, Orlando 2016**
- Green Chalice Booth – with Jinga interactive game
- Premiere of Green Chalice “Butterflies Effect” video
- 4 Workshops for Youth Led by Scott
- Collaboration with UCC leaders to start “Generation Green” a youth social media empowerment and education group.

- Carol met with Kara Ball from EcoAmeria/Blessed Tomorrow in Washington DC in May
- Carol and Scott co-edited Blessed Tomorrow Faith ClimateCommunications Guide
- Carol and Scott traveled to NYC in June 2016 for a week long training called The Gospel and the Ecological Crisis where Al Gore and the Climate Reality Project presented along with other great faith and creation organizations.
- Carol and Scott are working hard to prepare for GA 2017 with workshops for adults and youth and a resolution on climate.
- We submitted a Scott Grant Application that would have enable us to have clergy leadership training but it was not accepted.
- Scott is working with Christmount to lead a youth camp/mission experience on ecojustice.
- Scott will be presenting at Brite Divinity Schools “Minister’s Week” on youth ministry and creation care in February.
- Sharon Watkins and Ron Degges attended and provided leadership at the EcoAmerica Leadership Summit, Washington, D.C. September 2016
- Midway Christian Church is a model Green Chalice Congregation and was a runner up in the Interfaith Power and Light national “Cool Congregation” challenge in the area of Sacred Grounds.
Work Visas
This summer has brought a significant uptake in full representation cases for reasons that are not entirely clear to me. I currently have twenty-one open active full representation cases. Several of these cases are for individuals who consulted with me years ago and are finally eligible to apply. Several pastors currently on religious worker visas are due for renewal this year.

I continue to provide full representation for churches and regions filing nonimmigrant religious worker petitions (R-1 and R-2 visas), special immigrant religious worker petitions (which lead to a green card), and professional employment petitions (H-1B visas).

Since the wait time for initial R-1 religious worker cases has stretched to an average of ten months, I have been doing H-1B visas for anyone who qualifies. A few Regions have stepped up to hire pastors directly so that they are not subject to the H-1B visa lottery, which is significant progress in Regions’ willingness to support immigrant pastors.

Voter Participation
Due to the upcoming presidential election and some candidates’ anti-immigrant rhetoric, there has been a strong push in immigrant communities to become eligible to vote by November. I am handling a few of these last-minute naturalization cases for pastors who are part of Obra Hispana and NAPAD.

Consultations
This summer the correlation between world events and brief service cases has been more apparent than usual. Due to economic crises in South America, I have heard from more Venezuelan and Colombian families wanting to immigrate. Options are limited for most of these families who do not already have family or employment connections in the U.S. Due to ongoing terror and war in Syria, I have heard from more Syrian and Jordanian families seeking refuge in the U.S. Thankfully, the Department of Homeland Security has recently designated Syria for Temporary Protected Status (TPS), so there is help for Syrians who are already in the U.S. However, refugees who remain abroad do not benefit.

Communications
I increased the Immigration Legal Counsel presence on Facebook and have been surprised by how useful this mode of communication has been for the ministry. It has driven traffic to the disciplesimmigration.org website and increased subscriptions to Legal Updates. All of these means have helped me get the word out about raids of Central Americans and the Supreme Court decision on President Obama’s Executive Actions.
Community Education
I attended Obra Hispana’s National Bilingual Assembly in July and spoke at the Women’s Pre-Event. The women were particularly receptive to the launch of a new initiative to train community navigators to be expert immigration resource persons in their own communities. I attended NAPAD’s Convocation in August and presented a workshop with Sharon Stanley-Rea. As usual, both of these events were a productive time to connect with current and former clients and to provide consultations for many individuals seeking legal help.

On the Horizon for the Ministry of Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel
1. Beginning this summer and continuing through at least the next year, Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel will be collaborating with Refugee & Immigration Ministries to provide more in-depth community education than we have ever provided before. We will be using the Community Navigators model to train Disciples to be resources to immigrants in their congregations and communities. They will be equipped to provide reliable information about the immigration system, help protect others from scams, and empower their communities, all while avoiding the unauthorized practice of law. A key component of the training is equipping Disciples to train others so that we expand our reach and multiply our impact. We will offer webinars, podcasts, and in-person sessions in both English and Spanish.

2. International seminarians face the usual challenges of discerning God’s leading in their lives and finding a call following graduation. However, their challenges are compounded by the fact that they cannot remain in the U.S. legally unless they receive a call in time to petition for a work visa. Seminary graduates whose job prospects do not fall perfectly into place either have to leave the U.S. or become undocumented, thereby jeopardizing their entire future ministry in the U.S. When this happens, we risk losing the next generation of leaders of our Church.

I have been addressing this recurring issue from the legal immigration side, but over the next two years I plan to invite leaders of the church—including Office of Search and Call, HELM, College of Regional Ministers, General Commission on the Order of Ministry, and Regional Committees on Ministry—to create more structural solutions. This joint effort will likely begin with information sharing as I hope to develop a deeper understanding of the regions’ various standing and ordination processes. At the same time, I hope to impart a better understanding of the legal process and requirements to everyone involved. I also envision listening sessions to hear from current and former international seminarians willing to share the challenges they face.
In the loving memory and caring spirit of Jesus Christ, Kansas Christian Home exists to provide social and health services to meet the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs of its residents. Kansas Christian Home’s emphasis of service is to older adults, although recognizing God’s love has no limits.

· Karen Sturchio is now the Chief Executive Officer of Kansas Christian Home. She started in an interim role in April 2016 and transitioned into the permanent role in June 2016. She brings a wealth of experience in long-term care and has a powerful vision for the future of Kansas Christian Home.

· Mark your calendars for the 2017 Legacy of John Dinner, which will be held on August 26, 2017 at the Meridian Center in Newton.

· Kansas Christian Home is embarking upon a capital campaign to make additions and improvements to its facility to better serve the future generations of senior citizens. For more information on how you can be involved with the exciting project, please contact Jason Ault, Director of Development, at 316-283-6600 x116 or by email at jault@kschristianhome.org.
Executive Summary
There are several exciting things happening with Connect this fall that puts us on course for a very full year in 2017. As you will read below, NBA through the Mental Health and Congregational Care Affinity Group is partnering with the Christian Church (DOC) in Georgia for a 2-year regional pilot initiative focusing on mental health and wellness for clergy and congregations. It is our hope that this will be a model for other regions and the general church as we seek to live out the 2015 GA resolution of becoming a welcoming church to those with mental illness. I give thanks also for the ways we are moving forward in our work with established health and social service partners and their leaders. The Executive Leaders peer group is proving to be a much needed space for leaders to share in confidence and with one another the joys and challenges of leading such impactful work in our church. One question that continues to surface in conversations is what does it mean to be Disciples-related today? My sense is this is not a question of moving away from this relationship, but more so of finding ways to deepen the relationship even among real challenges such as board makeup or hiring other key leadership who may not be Disciples. The Prison and Jail Ministries Affinity Group is expanding its scope to include issues of immigration and detention, and a new research & design team has begun thinking about the need and purpose for an affinity group focused on faith and activism.

Affinity Groups
Mental Health and Congregational Care Affinity Group (MHAG) (led by Angela Whitenhill) - Since launching the MHAG in May we’ve received inquiries/interest forms from nearly 30 Disciples from across the country interested in the work of and partnership with the MHAG. We have been hosting small group meetings and individual calls to learn more about their interests, experience and passions for serving. We are noticing that as the expertise and enthusiasm of our partners grows, they are not only serving as our connection to the local and regional expressions of the church, they are also serving as inspiration for future topic areas and direction for the months and years to come related mental health and congregational care.

Self-Care Clergy Workshops
- After overwhelming receptivity of a clergy self-care workshop facilitated at National Convocation this summer, we launched an online webinar series, “Clergy Self-Care: Leading by Example”. This pilot webinar series seeks to prepare clergy for a lifestyle of balance, self-care and wellness. This four-part series is offered each Monday beginning October 17 through November 7th, and serves as a prelude for an upcoming clergy peer group in 2017. Our hope is to
create a safe, non-public space for education and dialogue regarding clergy wellness. The pilot is also helping us learn how we might offer this ongoing for clergy groups in the future, and/or how we might use this content for potential liturgical brainstorm ideas and Commission on Ministry training resources.

**Mental Health Regional Initiative**

- After a number of fruitful and strategic meetings with Rev. Denise Bell, regional minister in Georgia, and a stellar presentation to the Georgia regional board by Angela Whitenhill and Rebecca Hale, the Georgia region voted unanimously to establish a 2-year partnership with NBA MHAG focused on mental health and congregational care with a particular lens to clergy wellness! This partnership initiative seeks to: (1) cultivate welcome / counter stigma, (2) provide MH education, resources and services, (3) develop processes, protocols, and infrastructure for clergy care and support, and (4) promote sustainability of a regional MH team, protocols and trauma care resources.

- Additionally, Angela was able to participate as a panelist at a regional clergy town hall meeting as they discussed the life of the church in Georgia and sparked great interest in the MH initiative. And so we are excited that this initiative will not only address issues of mental health, but is already proving to address a common relational divide within the region by giving clergy a universal common issue to rally around.

**Contingency Events**

- We have carved out a space for the MHAG to aid in clergy and congregational care after social justice crises beginning with the Ferguson Initiative and most recently, helped host a celebration and healing retreat for clergy and activist involved with the Ferguson Uprising. The honoring and retreat was a powerful combination of clinical, pastoral and activist knowledge and skill and the first of its kind in interdisciplinary congregational care after community crisis.

- Unbeknownst to us, the weekend also served as preparation for crisis clergy care after the Charlotte Uprising, where Angela was invited by John Richardson, regional minister, in North Carolina, to listen to the needs and concerns of the clergy in Charlotte, and provide a meaningful and much welcomed general church presence.

**Prison & Jail Ministries (P&JM) Affinity Group** (led by Dean Bucalos and Hector Hernandez)- We continue to focus upon our three principle areas of impact: education, inspiration and advocacy.

**Education**

- Hosted “**Becoming a Welcoming Church: Safe Sanctuary Protocols**” –a webinar focused on equipping congregations to welcome people who have been
convicted of sex offenses. Presenters: Dean Bucalos and Nick Haynes, attorney experienced in representing people accused of sexual offenses.

**Inspiration**
- Blog posts featuring issues of immigration/detention, Black Lives Matter, and the power of social entrepreneurship in the area of prison and jail re-entry; as well as guest bloggers, Lisa Sherman, a jail chaplain, and Ford Rowan, who works with Kairos Ministries.
- Dean led a workshop and hosted the NBA table in the exhibit hall of the Kentucky Regional Assembly.

**Advocacy**
- A continued focus on the NBA sponsored General Assembly resolution on the extended use of solitary confinement, the criminal justice reform bill out of the Joint Senate Judiciary Committee, banning the box promoting restorative justice practices, educating people about expungement procedures and pursuing the restoration of voting rights for ex-felons. Addressing concerns about mass incarceration and the disproportionate impact on people and families of color continues to be a high priority.

**Peer Group Update**
- Group has met online monthly since their first gathering in April 2016. During our monthly meetings we are intentional in sharing with each other how are ministries are going, how are we doing (professionally and/or personally) and we also share our joys and each with each other. Not all the group members have been able to meet each month, but as group convener, Hector is always reaching out to them either by e-mail or phone calls to see how they are doing.
- During the August online meeting, we hosted a guest speaker: Sister Kathleen Erickson, RSM. She has worked for decades in immigration-related ministries, including 18 yrs. on the U.S.-Mexico border and for a period of time as chaplain at Dilley Immigrant Detention Center.
- In September, the group reflected upon the topics of Suffering and Hope. Many of the members are dealing with multiple difficulties. Hector is working to create a safe space in which as a group we could share our stories.
- The peer group will participate in our 2nd face-to-face meeting at the Franciscan Renewal Center near Scottsdale, Arizona. We will be sharing some quality time and we will be welcoming our guest speaker James Croft, who will be offering a workshop on Public Narrative: the Story of Self, Us and Now.

**Disciples Faith and Activism Research & Design Group (DAct)** – a group of 9 Disciples activists are gathering as an activist and organizer think tank to outline a structure and next steps for the formation of an affinity group for activists and organizers in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and to consider if/how to help create an infrastructure for justice work in our denomination. Rev. Dr. Dietra Wise Baker is the convener for this research & design group and has begun with individual and small group conversations to gain a better understanding of the history, goals and contributions of the current DOC justice ministries, assess what might be missing in our
church regarding justice work, and consider what could be the unique purpose of the NBA activist and organizer affinity group.

**Health and Social Service Ministries**  
**Executive Leaders Peer Group**  
Nine CEO/executive directors from our health and social service ministry partners have been gathering since July as an Executive Leaders Peer Group to cultivate peer support/encouragement, participate in mutual dialogue, share in spiritual renewal practices, and engage in peer-to-peer learning experiences. This group includes: Mark Anderson (NBA), Debbie Dobbins (SCSYC), Milele Hobbs (Gomer’s House), Mark Palmer (Woodhaven), Feliberto Pereira (Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries), Sabrina Porter (Juliette Fowler Communities), Elaine Sanford (HER Faith Ministries), Don Stump (Christian Church Homes), Kimberly Weir (Florida Christian Center) and Monica Wedlock Kilpatrick serves as group convener. We will meet for our first face-to-face on Oct. 28-30 at the Historic Banning Mills Conference and Retreat Center outside Atlanta, Georgia, with the theme of *Mission in the Murkiness: Health and Social Service in the 21st Century*. We plan to visit to the National Civil and Human Rights Museum as we reflect on how our ministries relate to the historic and current struggle for such rights, create individual and collective Soul Collages to claim our individual stories and their connection to the work of our ministries and the greater story of Disciples health and social services, reflect on a colleague’s case study, and enjoy getting to know one another over social activities and meals.

**Project Updates**  
**Christian Services for Children in Alabama (CSCA)** – The board is diligently moving forward with the CEO executive search process. Rebecca Hale and Monica Wedlock Kilpatrick visited with the board in late September to guide them through a strategic planning process related to the search. We were able to create space for affirmation of their mission and unique work in the Selma and greater Alabama community, uncover areas of much needed clarity for the board and the search committee chair, guide them towards finalizing a position guide, search process, and confirm a timeline for transition. Additionally, we have supplied the board with resources such as a sample budget for the search process, a listing of possible back office support services, and offered another consultation with Bob before the end of the year.

**Cleveland Christian Home (CCH)** – CCH is in a time of transition and has just welcomed a new CEO, Charles Tuttle, on October 1st. The development officer at CCH has been tasked with taking on new responsibilities related to marketing and approached NBA for support in learning this new role. Kasi Zieminski was able to offer an initial consultation and brainstorm some starting points for CCH. This has led to a new avenue for learning more of the stories of their work and sharing those out through NBA.
networks. We look forward to discovering new areas of partnership and support for CCH in the coming months.

REFUGEE AND IMMIGRATION MINISTRIES REPORT
Report on RIM’s Refugee Ministries to DHM Board

Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea, RIM Director
5 Thomas Circle NW, Washington, D.C. 20018

Website: https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/missions-advocacy/refugee-immigration-ministries/
Email: sstanley@dhm.disciples.org; Twitter: @StanleyRea
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/RefugeeAndImmigrationMinistriesChristianChurchDoc

“We live in a globe where 21 is ANYTHING BUT a lucky number: There are over 21 MILLION REFUGEES in OUR world…in our world where EVERY MINUTE 24 people are forced to flee their homes because of war or persecution—where a total of 65 million together are displaced…meaning 1 in each 113 people globally is an asylum seeker, internally displaced, or a refugee. Over 51% are children, nearly 100,000 have become separated from their families—including unaccompanied minors from Central America at our own border. And Filippo Grande, UNHCR High Commissioner for Refugees—reminds us ‘this represents an almost 10% increase of persons on the move from last year.’” Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea, Faith Press Conference on Refugees, D.C., Sept. 15, 2016

Refugees are unable to return to their country due to a “well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” (UN Geneva Convention on Refugees)

Refugee Arrivals and Engagement Report thru Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Disciples of Christ work through RIM and in partnership with CWS’ 34 refugee resettlement affiliate offices across 21 states to resettle refugees assigned for welcoming to our denomination. Disciples are assigned to work with approximately 8% of CWS’ total refugee arrivals.

Our Global Refugee Realities, and National Hospitality Challenges
This report period saw continued legislative pushback against refugees, in the face of unparalleled refugee needs. See this gripping 5 minute video of the global refugee crisis, produced through UNHCR: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RstxqdvvFlo.

RIM engaged in consistent interpretation of refugee concerns, and supported congregational engagement through both advocacy and relational resettlement support for the world’s most vulnerable populations. Also early this Fall, the US met its goal of resettling 10,000 Syrians during FY2016—out of a total of 85,000 total refugee resettlements anticipated this FY from all populations. As comparison, the US had
resettled only 1,682 Syrian refugees throughout FY2015. (Note: the federal Fiscal Year for resettlement extends from Oct. 1 thru Sept. 30).
In mid-September, the White House announced a goal of 110,000 refugee resettlements from multiple populations into the U.S. for FY 2017 (covering the time of October 11, 2016-September 30, 2017).

To help Disciples participate actively in helping to meet these challenges, RIM has engaged in the following:

1) RIM’s Director helped launch and continues to provide ongoing convening leadership in a national and proactive faith campaign called “Refugees Welcome,” and will continue to engage Disciples in central roles to welcome refugees over the months ahead!
   • Over 25 faith and refugee communities from multiple backgrounds around the country were recruited to endorse the campaign before its official national launch through two launch calls and multiple launch welcome events in April. Go here for more info.: www.refugeesarewelcome.org.
   • RIM provided leadership in March and in April for premier events of the campaign, including a “Refugees Welcome Dinner” and program in Baltimore, MD. in March, and at University Christian Church in Hyattsville, MD. in April (each with 200+ participants (including multi-faith community members and leaders, regional legislators, numerous Syrian refugee families, and visiting global leaders.)
   • RIM sponsored a DC area “Refugees Welcome Week” the first week of April, which including preaching on refugee themes, visits by Syrian leaders, Syrian food, and a cultural photography exhibit held at National City Christian Church. We supported multiple “Interfaith Iftar” events to build multi faith understanding during Ramadan.
   • RIM encouraged congregational participation in refugee engagement events around “World Refugee Day” and the seasons surrounding the date of June 20. Since this time, RIM has supported multiple advocacy efforts, awareness building events (such as the “DC Rally for Refugees” on the National Mall on August 28th), and has served as a national faith voice in encouraging the welcome of refugees (for example, through the Director’s interview with CNN’s anchor Alisyn Camerota in September. See pic below.)
   • The goal of the Refugees Welcome campaign is to provide opportunities for refugees to share their experiences with faith and community groups to:
     *build friendships among diverse cultures and faiths
     *strengthen public and private welcome of our refugee neighbors
     *promote refugee integration and leadership, &
     *celebrate refugees’ community contributions.

We will continue to work with faith leaders to encourage Refugees Welcome to promote hundreds of refugee welcoming opportunities around the U.S.!
2) RIM continues to offer special Syria resources for churches through the following website:
   - This site will continue to be added to as helpful resources are available. The page has been relocated on our new website to the following link:
     https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/missions-advocacy/refugee-immigration-ministries/refugees/background-resources/syrian-refugee-resources/

3) RIM underscores its request for “Refugee Hospitality Kits” to assist our CWS offices throughout the country.

   See the full Hospitality Kits alert at: https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/missions-advocacy/refugee-immigration-ministries/refugees/hospitality-kits/

4) RIM participates in and supports refugee advocacy at national and local levels, and seeks to engage Disciples in constant advocacy to strengthen U.S. support globally for refugees, and to ensure adequate resettlement and integration assistance for most vulnerable refugee populations, regardless of race or religion.
In this report period, RIM worked consistently with denominational partners and Interfaith Immigration Coalition colleagues to provide proactive responses to often overwhelming and immobilizing refugee challenges. As refugee numbers have continued to multiply, more than 300,000 people of faith around the country have demonstrated their support for refugees through combined organizations’ postcards and petition campaigns. Among these has been a campaign sponsored in part by Disciples of Christ (See postcard below). 10,000 of these postcards were delivered to the President, House and Senate leadership, and other appropriate senators and representatives of signers, following a faith leaders press conference to support refugees on September 15th—ahead of the U.N. and President’s Global Refugee Summits.

The postcard requests additional support for refugee resettlement, enhanced opportunities for refugee education and work, and increased humanitarian aid for the hurting. RIM recognizes this as a moment where our nation can LEVERAGE a NEW WAY of shared relief responsibility, where we can call forth the world to better shoulder shelter among many nations, where we can encourage a hospitality that gives MORE of our households opportunity to build hope for those wearied by war.

5) RIM works with regions and congregations in encouraging and supporting their understanding of and outreach to refugees, and is available and interested to visit and speak with Disciples throughout the U.S. & Canada to encourage regional and single church projects!

- Examples of partnerships during the time period have included outreach through N.C. and VA. Regional Assemblies, Outreach and Educational presentations at
the National Hispanic Asamblea, at National Convocation, and at the North American Pacific Asian Disciples (NAPAD) conferences. Special training and consultation was also offered to the Kansas City Region of churches, along with interested Missouri congregations, and to the Illinois Valley Cluster of Churches. A “Hospitality Truck Caravan” is in planning for the Virginia region and nearby CWS office affiliates, and the RIM Director will be presenting in the next weeks to the Christian Church Capital Area Region and the Illinois-Wisconsin region gatherings. Refugee Hospitality items have also been gathered through churches in Ohio, Oklahoma, Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, and other sites.

**Week of Compassion Refugee Emergency Assistance Provided through RIM**

In partnership with Week of Compassion, RIM continues to provide emergency assistance to Disciples-assigned families through support of the Week of Compassion’s “Compassion in Action” Fund. Requests are often received through CWS refugee affiliate offices for cases where refugee families face extreme and unmet family, health, and mental health needs. Funds are provided to RIM by WOC, and then are disbursed, if and as emergency needs require, from the RIM office. All disbursements to families indicate the support is given in partnership with WOC. (Picture above is in the CWS affiliate/Refugee One office in Chicago, IL., with RIM Director & Illinois Disciples, in Feb. 2016.)

Emergency aid given during our report period has included:

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>9/7/2016</td>
<td>200-800-800-8475</td>
<td>Community Refugee &amp; Immigration Service - NP-138675 Man Bahadur Rai (Nepalese), for rent and utility assistance; wife on dialysis, husband unable to work and care fulltime for wife and 1 yr. old baby.</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/7/2016</td>
<td>200-80-800-8475</td>
<td>Community Refugee &amp; Immigration Service –KE-565790 Charles Chanmera (Kenyan), for rental and setup assistance. Refugee is single, and organization unable to locate appropriate roommate for cost sharing.</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/3/2016</td>
<td>200-800-800-8475</td>
<td>Refugee Services of Texas - ET-129378 Farah, Farihya Abdulahi –(Ethiopian) 3 months rent and utilities</td>
<td>$1,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/29/2016</td>
<td>200-800-800-8475</td>
<td>Community Refugee &amp; Immigration Service - NP-142062 Hari Prasad Pokharel –(Nepalese) funeral expenses for son.</td>
<td>$1,400.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• As seen in the above graph, four emergency grants were given for refugee assistance over the time period of the report. Funds were requested, and then distributed, through case workers in our CWS refugee affiliate offices.

• In addition to the above grants, RIM and WOC continue our unique partnership with First Christian Church of Lynchburg, and their outreach to Hawa Bakhteyari, a local young adult Iraqi woman who came to the US seeking asylum status after fleeing persecution due to threats received after her father’s murder and her public support for the freedom of young girls to not be required to marry at age 12 or 13. Hawa received final notice of asylee status in March 2015. Since, the church continues to provide supplemental support to Hawa as she works and continues her education. The church donates support funds through WOC, and they are passed through RIM and paid out as necessary to support Hawa’s needs.

Unaccompanied Minor Children/Central American Refugees Crisis Response

RIM continues to consistently partner and strategize with DHM, WOC, Global Ministries, and DCPW regarding the ongoing unaccompanied Central American children and families refugee crisis. Root causes and violence in the Northern Triangle nations of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala continued again to escalate during the period. And, the U.S. practice of detaining nearly three thousand mothers and children who have sought protection in the U.S. continued also to grow. Three family detention centers remain, in Dilley, Texas, Karnes City, Texas, and in Berks County, Pennsylvania. RIM consistently partners with multiple faith communities through the Interfaith Immigration Coalition to advocate for the protection of these migrants, and seeks constant opportunities to educate and engage our Disciples congregations to support those seeking asylum, and to seek to end family detention.

During this report period, highlight actions to support Central American refugees included:
• Leadership at a Prayer Vigil outside the White House for detained
Central American mothers and children held on March 28 (during the day of the WH Easter Egg Roll)
• Organizing leadership of a Mother’s Day “Blooming Hope” vigil outside the White House which honored Central American mothers with gifts, offered prayers for their families, and provided opportunities for sharing their experiences while in detention.
• Assistance with the August-early September “Diapers in Detention” campaign, which raised awareness about family detention, and encouraged congregations to contact Immigration Detention Offices to urge the ending of the practice.
• Publicized support for Central American mothers and children ahead of the President’s Refugee Summit, in support of a “Shadow Summit” on the day of the President’s summit.

**RIM likewise continues to encourage churches and individuals to GIVE TO WEEK OF COMPASSION, marked “Refugee Children Aid to help Disciples continue to reach out to assist Central American migrants, and to access multiple resources about the crisis at:** [https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/missions-advocacy/refugee-immigration-ministries/asylum-seekers-migrants/background-resources/central-american-refugees/](https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/missions-advocacy/refugee-immigration-ministries/asylum-seekers-migrants/background-resources/central-american-refugees/)

The RIM office continues to track the very small scale “in country” Central American Migrants (CAM) program established in early 2015, which is targeted to assist up to 400 Central American migrants.

**Additional Refugee Support and Interpretation with Congregations**
• RIM Director continues to strengthen partnerships with Disciples Women through shared human trafficking/labor abuse work, and unaccompanied children and mother refugee concerns and actions.
• RIM Director continues to support Southeast Asian refugee and new American communities by serving on the national Board of SEARAC (Southeast Asian Resource Action Center).

**Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries Support**

- RIM continues to serve as our Disciples Home Missions representative on the Board of SWGSM, and sometimes often also serves as DHM & WOC representative, as well, in its twice annual meetings. During the report period, the RIM Director had speaking commitments at the NC Regional Assembly during the time of the SWGSM Board Meeting, and so was unable to attend. However, she provided a sermon for inclusion in the “Epiphany Emphasis Toolkit” for congregations to use in educating and lifting up SWGSM’s ministries.
- Director Feliberto Pereira consistently expresses great appreciation for the support of Week of Compassion grants which assist him in meeting critical refugee needs as above, and which also assist with the ongoing distribution of rice and beans throughout multiple border communities and projects.

**Farm Worker Ministries**

- RIM provides coordinating leadership to educate and engage Disciples in ministries to increase justice for farmworkers throughout the U.S. Building upon
our Disciples heritage of helping found the National Farm Worker Ministry 40 years ago, RIM’s Director serves on the Executive Committee and Board of the NFWM organization. In partnership with over 15 other ecumenical partners with the NFWM, RIM engaged in the multiple critical farmworker campaigns. Most active in this report period included our:

--Support for tomato farmworkers in Immokalee, Florida and workers in other states and crops through the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). The primary efforts of the CIW continue to be to reduce modern slavery in the fields through the furtherance of the “Fair Food Program.” At this time, the CIW is striving especially to encourage Wendy’s restaurants and Publix grocery to join the Fair Food Program. On May 25, Disciples joined 13 other denominations to pledge our commitment to BOYCOTT Wendy’s, as a way to push for its positive decision to join the Fair Food program. Go here for more details: http://www.ciw-online.org/blog/2016/05/heads-of-communion-letter-to-wendys/. THE WENDY’S BOYCOTT REMAINS IN PLACE.

--Solidarity with the farm workers’ organization of Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ), in its efforts to encourage Sakuma Berry Farms, Driscoll Berries, and additional business which purchase Sakuma berries (such as Haagen Dazs, who uses the berries in its strawberry ice cream) to enter into negotiations to recognize FUJ and allow them to represent farmworkers. Sakuma berries is located in Washington state. See more here: http://nfwm.org/2016/09/important-message-familias-unidas-por-la-justicia/. The pressure of a boycott has been effective, and as of Sept. 5th, FUJ requested its partners to END THE BOYCOTT, due to successfully being granted a process toward negotiating toward a collective bargaining agreement. In solidarity with FUJ, WE HAVE ENDED ALL BOYCOTT ACTIVITIES AGAINST SAKUMA BROTHERS FARM AND DRISCOLL’S.

--Partnership with farm workers represented through the United Farm Workers, in their efforts to secure passage in California of the Farmworker Overtime Pay bill, AB1066. This law passed on August 29, and was signed into law by Governor Brown on Sept. 11. See more at: http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article101400142.html

--Support for farmworkers in N.C., Ohio, and elsewhere linked through the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC). FLOC continued in this period to work on enhanced rights for tobacco and other crop workers, and especially focused on campaigns against Reynolds Tobacco and Philip Morris International. See more here: http://nfwm.org/campaigns/floc-campaign/. For the third year in a row, Pastor Jose Luis Cartegena of Park Avenue Christian Church represented NFWM faith partners at the Philip Morris International Shareholders’ meeting in New York City—pushing for bargaining and labor protection rights for tobacco farm workers.

**Immigrant Rights Support**

RIM leads our denomination’s communities in understanding and engaging in the promotion of immigrant rights.
RIM provides consistent education and ongoing leadership to engage Disciples in understanding the complex issues and movements related to immigrant rights. RIM works in partnership with ecumenical colleagues to further the collaborative faith goals of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition. See: www.interfaithimmigration.org

During this time period, RIM built relationships to strengthen ministry opportunities among Hispanic, NAPAD, and African American Disciples constituents thru attendance and leadership at the Hispanic Asamblea in Miami, FL, at the National Convocation in Kansas City, KS, at the Black Ministers’ Retreat in Jackson, MS., and at the North American Pacific Asian Disciples gathering in Sunnyvale, CA.

One special development during this period was the reception by University Church, Chicago of an immigrant named Jose Juan Moreno as a “Sanctuary” case into the protection of their facilities (beginning April 15th). Since that time, Disciples around the country have been invited to offer him support, and members have done that through support letters, videos, photos, and more.
During all months of the report, advocates and immigrants eligible for “DACA+” and “DAPA” programs (which had been introduced by President Obama in November 2014, and held up by opponents through the courts since that time) continued to encourage a positive Supreme Court decision on these issues. Multiple prayer vigils were held in the months leading up to the release of a decision. On June 23, the decision released by the Supreme Court was a 4-4 tie, leaving the potential for a future re-consideration by the Court, and resulting in great disappointment by eligible persons and families.

**Additional Special Partnerships with Week of Compassion**

- RIM continues to appreciate the joy of partnering as often as possible to share in the interpretation of WOC’s work. Caroline Hamilton-Arnold (in photo, below left) from WOC conveys her welcome for refugees at RIM’s display during the Black Ministers Retreat in Mississippi in March.
- RIM will be traveling with Global Ministries, together with WOC staff, to the Middle East to view Disciples mission projects with refugees in Israel/Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, and Jordan on Sept. 24-Oct. 7, 2016.
- RIM plans again to assist with worship materials and promotion of the WOC offering efforts, and consistently lifts up RIM’s partnership with WOC in presentations. WOC and RIM Directors, and related Global Ministries area staff, network regularly to share resources on advocacy efforts, statements, and other needed coordination to serve refugees.

Please contact the RIM Director, Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea, at sstanley@dhm.disciples.org or 202-957-7826 to engage together in advocacy priorities. Call upon us to encourage your local immigration and refugee work, and come alone or with a group to join our ministries and visit our office in National City Christian Church, 5 Thomas Circle NW, Washington, D.C. For legal immigration assistance, contact Tana Liu-Beers, at: tana@dhm.disciples.org or at 317-289-1407.

RIM is a DHM ministry, which is located in the Christian Church Capital Area, and works in a covenantal partnership with the CCCA and with the Disciples Center for Public Witness.
Thanks for the joy of serving together with you!!—Sharon (at left)

(See RIM’s Vision for Future Partnerships with denominational groups in the pages following.)

RIM VISION OF DENOMINATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE UPCOMING 12-24 MONTHS
AUGUST 25, 2016

RIM’s identity as a DHM ministry, and consistent and core partnerships with Week of Compassion, will continue to focus upon engaging Disciples in the resettlement of refugees throughout the geography of our churches in the U.S. and Canada, and in responding to refugee emergency needs. In addition, however, RIM hopes to engage together with denominational partners in the building of justice for refugees, and thus provides the following reflections on additional visions for partnership in the 12-24 months ahead:

Hosea calls in 12:8 for the Israelites to, “with the help of God, RETURN, return to love and justice!” Isaiah likewise reminded the Israelites in Isaiah 56:1 that they would find community restoration only when they “return to justice, and do what is right!” Therefore, Refugee & Immigration Ministries—in partnership with DHM, WOC, and GM—invites an ongoing “return to justice” of faith family members throughout the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) by engaging to honor and strengthen the rights of, show compassion for, and help integrate refugees, immigrants, and farm workers into our communities. Key areas of partnership in the 12-24 months ahead include:

**”Refugees Welcome” Movement:** With over 60 million people displaced worldwide, and nearly 20 million refugees (the largest number since WWII), Disciples helped birth a movement in early Spring of 2016 which seeks to provide opportunities for refugees to share their experiences with faith and community groups to build friendships among diverse cultures and faiths, strengthen public and private welcome of our refugee neighbors, promote refugee integration and leadership, and celebrate refugees’ community contributions. The movement provides a toolkit of resources for hosting welcoming events, shares stories of successful connections and local/state policies of welcome, and provides advocacy resources to assist refugees be supported nationally, locally, and globally. Already, more than 50 faith organizations have joined the movement, including WOC, DHM, and GM. RIM’s director looks forward to continuing to help convene this national partnership, and to expanded partnership actions through it with WOC, DHM, GM, and other interested partners.

**”Disciples Refugee and Immigrant Welcoming Network”:** RIM seeks to establish and grow—hopefully also in partnership with DHM, WOC, GM, and other interested groups—a network of knowledgeable, passionate, and engaged welcomers for refugees
and immigrant families and communities throughout our faith communities in the U.S. and Canada. This network would be strengthened by ongoing sharing of opportunities information through the “RIM WRAP” newletters and advocacy alerts, sharing of interactions and advocacy of partners, as well as through envisioned webinars, structures, and interactions with resources included in these visions. This team could also serve as “inspirers” and “refiners” of language for future potential resolutions in support of welcoming and supporting the community inclusion and integration of refugees and immigrants.

**“Around a World of Refugees” Webinars:** RIM is interested to offer periodic webinars and/or workshops in partnership with Week of Compassion and Global Ministries which invite Disciples to understand root causes of refugees around the world, introduce participants to the world of WOC’s partnerships in various regions of the world that assist refugees globally, share stories of resettlement relationships within the U.S. between congregations/regions and refugee families, explain refugee resettlement processes, offer opportunities for our Disciples faith communities to strengthen our engagement in refugee resettlement, and promote policies that support refugees. Suggested topics could include: “Disciples and the Congolese: Mission Partnerships Globally Resettlement Opportunities in the U.S.”; “Central Americans Escaping Violence: How Disciples Can Help”; “Helping Syrians Escaping War, and Settling as New Neighbors in Our Communities”, “Ministries in the Middle East, and Middle Easterners in America,” “Liberians and Rwandans: Powerful Witnesses Around the World—and Perhaps Around Your Block!”, “Haitian Disciples: Roots of Faith, Power of Hope!”, and etc.

**“Community Navigators” Trainings:** RIM to continue to work together (begun August, 2016) in partnership with Immigration Legal Counsel to prepare and conduct periodic Community Navigator trainings in Spanish, English, and other languages as requested, to build the capacity of Disciples to offer informed support and quality resources to strengthen the lives of immigrants and families in their communities. These webinars will provide consistent advocacy updates to lift the voices of immigrants and supporters together, and will cover topics such as avoiding fraudulent legal practices, understanding immigration laws, preparing documents, deportation defense and enforcement education, screening for various forms of relief, workers’ rights, naturalization, DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), expanded DACA, and DAPA (Deferred Action for Parents of Americans), and etc. Resources are adapted from the Committee for Immigration Reform (CIRI) and the Administrative Relief Resource Center, and are augmented with resources through RIM’s partnerships with groups such as the Interfaith Immigration Coalition.

**“Intersections of Brown and Black Struggles for Freedom” Trainings:** Increasingly, Latino movements for immigrant rights, and efforts to resist the growing criminalization of immigrants, are finding and developing points of intersection and shared goals with efforts to improve the lives of Black Americans, as well as black skinned Caribbean, African, Haitian, and other immigrants. Groups such as the Black
Alliance for Just Immigration and the Black Immigration Network provide resources to foster alliance building between communities committed to racial equity, to economic justice, and to the reduction of mass criminalization of communities of color. Likewise, Asian American and Pacific Islander immigrant rights networks such as Asian Americans Advancing Justice, Southeast Asian Resource Action Center, and the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund are increasingly working for immigration reform and to strengthen immigrant rights. *RIM hopes to encourage the linkage of our related African American Convocation, Hispanic Ministry, and NAPAD partners with resource networks, as well as to assist in sponsoring conversations that build new understandings among interested denominational partners about shared goals and strategies. These conversations could perhaps be developed as a part of Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racism Trainings, and could be linked with other denominational efforts focusing on racial justice.*

**"Faith and Welcoming the Stranger":** Together with WOC and other interested partners, *RIM would develop a series of webinars/powerpoint and print resources/training sessions to be mutually shared, which cover the connectedness of our faith and opportunities and essential questions related to how Disciples are working with, and CAN develop deeper relationships with, refugees, immigrants, and farm workers. These core sessions would include topics such as: "Faith and Refugee Support 101", "Faith and Immigration Advocacy 101", "Faith Along the Borders 101", and "Faith and Farm Worker Partnerships 101".*

**Scout Ministries**

Rev. Robert Thornton, Director

This report covers the activities for the calendar year of 2016 for the Director of Scout Ministries.

**Meetings attended on behalf of Disciples Home Missions:**
Three times during the year, February, May and October I attended the BSA Religious Relationship Committee of the Boy Scouts of America. The February and October meeting is always held in Fort Worth, just north of the Dallas / Fort Worth Airport. This year our attentions have been on plans for the 2017 National Jamboree, where the Disciples will have a booth to promote the Religious Awards that we have for young people. There are four awards: God and Me and God and Family for young people (8 to 10 years of age) and God and Church for those (11 to 13 years of age). The awards are for young people who are Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, as well as all young people within our churches, including our Chi-Rho and Christian Youth Fellowship. Like our General Assemblies, to have a booth means to raise money for the space. Cost this next year is $1,495. I was able to raise $1,000 and still working on the last $495. Originally, I was hoping to share our space with the United Church of Christ, but at the last minute they decided to put their emphasis on recruiting chaplains and not staffing a booth.

We are also trying to recruit chaplains from the Disciples. In the past we have had three to four chaplains on staff. Chaplains have had to pay their own way to the Jamborees,
which makes it that much harder to recruit them.

I have also attended the Board meetings of P.R.A.Y., the organization that writes the curriculum for the Religious Awards. Those meetings are held in March and in September. This organization was first associated with Christian Board of Publication, but due to reorganization, they became independent. The organization for the last thirty-three years has been directed by Mark Hazelwood, who took over upon the retirement of his father. Mark began the work thirty-three years ago, with the intent to run the program for three years. Three years has stretched into thirty-three, and he passed the torch on at the end of October. Mark and his father have been the head of PRAY since the beginning. I became a minister because of the minister that worked with me on the God and Country Award that I earned when I was 15. Mark and his wife, Debbie have been the backbone of PRAY for thirty-three years. They have expanded this ministry, and Debbie will continue to be employed with PRAY. Mark and Debbie are lifelong Disciples. Though PRAY is not an arm of Disciples Home Missions, I believe that we should recognize them at our next General Assembly.

Finally, I feel that it is time for me to pass the torch of this ministry to someone else. I have been in my position for about twenty years, serving under the leadership of four Presidents of DHM. I have two individuals who I believe could continue to lead what I believe is a vital mission of DHM. My first choice would be the Rev. Scott Thayer, who serves as Minister of Bethany Christian Church and Chaplain at Bethany College. He has served as a Chaplain at a number of National Jamborees, and currently is the treasurer of the Scouting Association. My second choice would be the Rev. James Gazaway, who recently retired from the military. He lives in Florida and served in this position prior to my coming to Disciples Home Missions.
November 8 changed things forever, folks are saying. That seems true and not in a
good way. At Urban Spirit, we know how bad it has been for such a very long time:
income inequality sucks the life out of us, devouring communities, devastating families,
and doing its dastardly self-perpetuating work. This isn’t new, and it isn’t going away.
We never expected a single election to save us; but, if the early cabinet selections and
confirmation hearings are a reasonable barometer, we can be sure it is, in fact, going to
get much worse.

From Pharaoh’s edicts to Augustus’ registration, scripture tells political stories, stories of
people in exile, people in captivity, especially captivity to economic systems that eat
alive the most vulnerable among us. Jesus challenged that system, tossing tables,
breaking rules, telling stories to empower laborers, and calling out the hypocrisy of the
religious leaders who bore images on the very coins in their pockets of an emperor who
called himself god. Not God, said Jesus. Not God.

In that faith, in that spirit, in that way of Jesus, Urban Spirit continues its work of
challenge, of tossing and breaking and empowering and calling out hypocrisy, in order
that people of faith may see a different future and lead in a new direction.

At General Assembly in 2015, I met a young woman working in the exhibit hall who
looked familiar. She reminded me that she had experienced Urban Spirit’s simulation of
poverty in 2005 – a decade before. She was in high school back then, and now was
completing a fellowship with Justice and Witness Ministries – her perspective informed
in part by a week-long summer mission trip program she couldn’t forget.

Urban Spirit, now 15 years old, is still changing minds. And in practical matters, we are
also seeing glimpses of the sustainability that has eluded us.

Last summer we moved into the remodeled facilities of Plymouth UCC Settlement
House in Louisville’s Russell neighborhood, facilities remodeled through the sweat of
Disciples Volunteering and with the financial assistance of the UCC. We welcomed our
first mission groups: young adult group which engaged in a week-long simulation of
poverty, and a middle school group, which participated in a 4-day social justice camp,
So Just. The point of course is education, perspective-shifting, eye-opening, rebellion-
inciting, faith-living, and world-mending. This is what we do, and now we can do it better
in our new place. We are beginning to hear from groups planning 2017 experiences with
us; it’s going to be a great summer.

Chief among our blessings are our denominational partnerships. In addition to space
solutions and denominational marketing mechanisms, our summer program staff comes
in part from DHM summer mission interns, students willing to think deeply and critically
about the mess we’ve made of the world. DHM is a valued partner in this among many ways.

Chief among our challenges is board development, the ongoing need for a strong and visionary group of rabble-rousers who will help make us known and make us strong. While we operate on a shoestring, we still need the shoestring! Secondarily (some would say primarily), we are challenged that our program director/facilitator lives 2 states away, and commutes for program weeks. We are fortunate to have an administrator and registrar on the ground in Louisville, able to oversee event preparation and ensure the wheels are greased.

We are not yet all that we will be. But we continue to hear stories from folks who experienced our program 2, 5, 10 years ago, and call it one they will not forget. That reminds me that Urban Spirit matters. In our world that is a mess, I am proud and blessed to continue to develop future leaders, to help them guide us into a future we cannot clearly see.
Yakama Christian Mission

David B Bell
Minister for Indigenous Concerns

Since the first of the year, the Yakama Christian Mission (YCM) has been in a state of reorganization as it has come within the organization of Disciples Home Missions (DHM). Finding place and opportunities to engage mission has a different spin than in the past due to the interconnected relationships that come along with the DHM relationship—for instance, the developing relationship between YCM and Disciples Center for Public Witness.

Let us take a look at the work of YCM since the first of the year by splitting it into two categories: Reservation and Off Reservation.

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Reservation

White Swan Art and Recreation Committee (WSARC)—local non-profit

Yakama Christian Mission worked with White Swan Art and Recreation Committee (WSARC)—local non-profit—to developed skate park feature drawings for the developing Community Park in White Swan. Alongside this, the mission worked with Job Corps and the local high school to have these features constructed. The first half of those features were designed and completed in 2016. Photos attached.

Due to having a long-term presence on the reservation and due to entrenched poverty, the mission often participants in family(s) structure in a manner to help meet basic issues that come up. Three examples: David met with family, tribal representatives, and federal representatives to give opinion and answer questions during a probate hearing. Second, David is working with a grandfather who cannot read and attends meetings both in and out of the courthouse concerning grandchildren custody issues. Last, David meets with families to help develop a conversation of intersectionality that might allow a conversation between traditional Yakama thought and Christian theology that allows the full community to attend traditional stone settings.

In partnership with the local United Methodist Church—Wilbur Memorial—David agreed to pastor on a part time basis. Core to this agreement is recognizing the UMC conference and DOC Mission will collaborate to help guide a local Yakama through the UMC Certificate of Lay Ministry process. The hope is that for the first time in the 156-year history of Methodists and Disciples on the Yakama Reservation, a Yakama person will become the pastor of the local community gathering.

YCM has continued to work with Between the Ridges (BTR), a non-profit the mission collaborated on as a start-up. In the spring, BTR held its third annual Meet Your Farmer event, allowing over two dozen farmer, fishers, gatherers, and ranchers to meet local people. With local musicians and local folk cooking food, relationships developed to bring traditional and non-traditional foods to the community. Additionally, through conversations with the local Episcopal Diocese, BTR has been recognized as a Specialized Ministry.
YCM participated in local events like the Farmworker March. As well as hosting Farmworker Ministry Northwest. Photos attached.

Late summer, in collaboration with Heritage University, YCM held a one-day training for Heritage faculty to include in their University 101 class considerations of the Doctrine of Discovery (DoD) and its effects on teaching, racial, and ecological issues. Then in the fall, half of all entering students spent a day with YCM in conversation of those issues. Photo attached. Additionally in the fall, Portland University visited YCM for an afternoon to talk about the ramifications DoD as they apply to farmworkers and Native Americans.

YCM in collaboration with DHM, Between the Ridges, Wilbur Memorial, and JustLiving Farm—along with donations from local business—developed a Garden to Foodbank project last summer. Planting began in the spring and harvesting began by mid-summer. By the time of the first fall freeze, the Garden to Foodbank provided nearly 1500 lbs. of vegetables to three reservation foodbanks and the only reservation homeless shelter. Additionally, the Garden to Foodbank provided two summer jobs to reservation youth who worked with children within a local afterschool program. Photos attached.

Off-Reservation

Since the first of the year, Yakama Christian Mission worked closely with the ad-hoc group Landscape Mending on a number of projects. The third annual Winter Talk was held at Philips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Ok, featuring the Eastern Shawnee legal scholar Robert Miller. Photo attached. Currently, YCM is working on the last aspects of the fourth annual Winter Talk held at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, TX, at the end of January 2017, which will feature the Native scholar Sarah Augustine who worked to develop the World Council of Churches statement on the Doctrine of Discovery.

Alongside Landscape Mending and Disciples Center for Public Witness, YCM has worked to bring awareness to US and Canadian Disciples about the prayerful protest of the Standing Rock Sioux concerning the Dakota Access Pipeline near Cannon Ball, ND. Currently YCM is exploring the possibility of having Disciples and ecumenical churches join the prayer in Cannon Ball during the 2016-17 winter.

Along with the Disciple Office of Reconciliation, YCM has broadened the understanding of the impact of Doctrine of Discovery. The DoD is now often a part of Reconciliation’s first-day anti-racism trainings. Additionally the DoD has had its first introduction to west coast seminarians at Pacific School of Religion, San Francisco Theological Seminary, and Claremont School of Theology. Furthermore, David has developed a new area of the Doctrine—EcoRacism—introduced this year at western Reconciliation trainings.

YCM also had David attend a meeting with the Directors of Disciple historical Mission Centers and Affiliates just prior to the spring DHM meeting. Conversations spanned areas from Mission Center’s current relationship with the DOC to what voice that group might or might not bring to the DOC in the future.

Additionally, David has worked to enhance YCM’s online presence. Having a continual, updated, presence is somewhat spotty. However, using Mailchimp, a free online newsletter provider, YCM has created and sent three newsletters since the first of the
year. Additionally, YCM’s presence on Facebook is somewhat better than a year ago. The greatest Facebook change though, has been to use existing Disciple Facebook pages to make comments and raise awareness on issues of indigenous justice.

If one were to ask what the one greatest focus of YCM is this year to date, the answer would be the development and proposal of a resolution before the 2017 Disciples General Assembly. Working closely with Landscape Mending, Disciples Center for Public Witness, and Ron Degges of DHM, David drafted a resolution that addresses the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery while also calling the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to action and accountability with/for Native Americans and First Nations people. Accountability to American Indians is core to this document. Therefore, while many had a voice in the drafting of the resolution, only American Indians decided items of accountability, tone, and challenge. YCM and Landscape Mending released the resolution—found on YCM’s website—at Winter Talk 2016. This release was well in advance of its January 2017 submittal to the Office of General Minister and President. The early release was so General Units, Ethnic constituencies, and congregations could have a year to study, analyze, and converse about the document and one-year to give input for wording change. To date, the document has seen a number of alterations, though the core of the document remains the same. As of this writing, five congregations have agreed to co-sign the resolution, at least five are having congregational meetings to discuss the DoD and consider co-signing, and one Regional Council has agreed to affirm the document as a Supporter and Advocate.

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The work of Yakama Christian Mission to bring about indigenous justice looks much different from 95 years ago. However, the work continues to be the same: To live out the Christian gospel to end hopelessness and hurt, and bring about caring and compassion.

Skate Park
Farmworker March

NW Farmworker Ministry

Heritage University Students

Garden to Foodbank
Coordinator of Youth & Young Adult Consulting Services

Randy Kuss

• Consultant Support – Provided Consultant Support for three YYA Ministries Leadership Events and Program Assessments:
  • DYMN 2016 – March 29–31, 2016 at Disciples Crossing, Athens, TX – Andrew Zirschky, Youth Ministry Architects, keynoting.
  • Florida – Regional Assembly Youth Event, October 21–22, 2016 – Jose Morales keynoting.

Looking Ahead:
  • Mid-America – Christian Regional Youth (CRY) 2017 – July 17–20, 2017 at Drury University – Erin Reed-Cooper keynoting.

• DYMN – Worked with the Disciples Youth Ministry Network (DYMN) to connect with and provide support to Disciples youth ministry leaders through the 2016 DYMN Retreat, March 29–31, 2016 at Disciples Crossing, Athens, TX, with Andrew Zirschky from Youth Ministry Architects as keynoter. Working now with the DYMN Team on the 2017 DYMN Retreat, March 5–7, 2017 at Christmount. This event will be a working event as the Youth Ministry Summit. (See YMS note.) There will be an option for leaders to stay over and attend the Progressive Youth Ministry Event at nearby Montreat Conference Center, thereby offering DOC youth leaders two excellent gatherings without incurring additional travel costs. (See PYM note.)

• Youth Ministry Summit – March 5–7, 2017 at DYMN Retreat at Christmount – The Design for Youth Ministry was last updated in 1996. Twenty years later we are long overdue for review and revision of the Design. This gathering of Disciples youth leaders will identify needs, issues, and goals for 21st century Disciples Youth Ministry and sketch out structures, resources, and leadership needs for the next 5–10 years. A follow-up team will take results from the Summit and refine those into a working document to bring to the DHM Board for approval. Each region will be invited to send one adult representative to the event. Constituency groups will be invited to send 2-3 adults each to ensure some diversity of voices. General Youth Council adult leadership will be invited along with some representation from UCC Council of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. The event is open to others who usually attend the DYMN Retreat as well. Oreon E Scott grant support and strong backing from Christmount as host site and from DHM will make this a very low cost event for all participants.

• Progressive Youth Ministry Events – Gathered 27 Disciples Youth Leaders together at the 2016 Progressive Youth Ministry Event in Dallas, February 18–20, 2016 for networking, event updates, sharing questions and concerns, and, of
course, some great southwest fare at Mario’s. Plans are under way for similar connecting at the **2017 Progressive Youth Ministry Event at Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina, March 8–10, 2017.** Worked with PYM planners to arrange event discount for DOC registrants and with Montreat to add a meals-only option for those choosing to stay at Christmount instead of Montreat.

- **Family & Children’s Ministries Collaboration** – Monthly online meeting with the Family & Children’s team for collaboration, networking, support, and resourcing each other as we increasingly move beyond siloed, age-specific ministries into **Ministry Across Generations.**

- **NYE** – Worked with Trayce Stewart and our DOC NYE Team in partnership with UCC colleagues lead by Waltrina Middleton on plans for NYE, a joint UCC/DOC youth event, in **Orlando, July 26–30, 2016,** which drew over 3000 UCC and DOC youth and adults.

- **General Assembly 2017** – Working with **Young Adult Commission** and with **General Youth Council** leadership on plans for General Assembly 2017.

- **CYYAM Dreaming Team Gathering** – Joining Trayce Stewart to meet with the UCC team gathering in **Cleveland, October 28–30, 2016,** to revision the UCC’s Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries, including ways DOC and UCC youth and young adult ministries might network and collaborate. UCC reps will be present at our own Youth Ministry Summit, March 2017.

**Recommended Action:** The General Board receives the report from Disciples Home Missions and forwards the report to the General Assembly for consideration and discussion.