

**DIVISION OF OVERSEAS MINISTRIES
GLOBAL MINISTRIES**

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*“and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria
and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8 NASB)*

Introduction

The church of Jesus Christ is growing at an exponential rate. The center of Christianity has moved from west Asia to northern Europe to the Americas and now to Africa. The *Atlas of Global Christianity* reported that in 1910, only two percent of all Christians lived in Africa. Today, nearly one out of four Christians in the world is an African. It is further reported in this publication that “Christianity’s center by 2010 had moved to a point near Timbuktu, in Mali”. Global Ministries is responding to this shift by directing support and accompaniment to partners in Africa and Asia. The Disciples of Christ Community in the Congo continues to grow and it now approaches a million members. It is reported by Xiaoling Zhu, Area Executive for East Asia and the Pacific that the church in China has anywhere from 25 to 100 million members. Global Ministries supports the efforts of partner churches not only in Africa and Asia but also in Latin America and other regions by providing leadership grants for the education of clergy and assisting partners in responding to the spiritual, physical and economic needs of their communities. Global Ministries has 290 overseas partner churches in 90 countries.

Another way Global Ministries accompanies overseas partner churches is through the presence of missionaries. A total of 117 missionaries served in 45 countries in 2015, which included 37 fully-supported missionaries, 15 global mission interns, 23 long-term volunteers, and 42 associates. In addition, 24 individuals served as short-term volunteers. The number of fully supported missionaries continues to decline due to the increase in expenses related to missionary support and the decline in revenue. Global Ministries initiated the Personalized Fund Raising Model for the support of missionaries in 2013. There are four units appointed under this model. Tom and Monica Liddle are the most recent missionaries appointed. They are serving along with their two children with the church in East Timor.

Middle East Initiative

Global Ministries introduced regional initiatives at the 2013 General Assembly. This type of initiative provides the church an opportunity to focus on a particular region for a specific time period. The first initiative related to the Congo was completed in December 2014. The Middle East Initiative was launched at the 2015 General Assembly. This initiative offers the church an opportunity to become familiar with the range of denominational partners in the region and the issues they face and the context in which they face them; to learn about ways that the Disciples and UCC continue to

build on a history of engagement; and to become active in education and advocacy as members of North American churches, as well as support the various programs and witness of partners in the region.

Mass Movement of People

The year 2015 saw the largest number of refugees and displaced persons in recorded history. The United Nations reported that there were 20 million refugees across borders, 40 million internally displaced persons inside war zones, and an additional 65 million temporarily in need of support to survive because of climate-related famine. Global Ministries supports Councils of Churches around the world and partner churches as they respond to the needs of this massive number of people who have been displaced. Global Ministries provided funds for the Church of Christ in Congo to assist with vocational training and agricultural projects that would provide food for refugees that have been displaced as a result of the war over natural resources in the Democratic Republic of Congo and also the flight of refugees from the Republic of Congo.

2015 General Assembly

The General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was held in Columbus, Ohio from July 18-22, 2015. The theme of the assembly was SOAR and approximately 4,000 individuals participated. The Middle East Initiative was launched at the assembly. Global Ministries sponsored sixteen international guests. The International Dinner was jointly sponsored with the Council on Christian Unity and attracted nearly 500 people. The key address was given by the Right Reverend Bishop Munib Younan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. Awards of Affirmation were presented during the dinner to the Rev. Dr. Lucas Amosse, President of the United Church in Mozambique; the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land; and the Orthodox Initiative. Also receiving awards in absentia were the Peace Community Movement Center of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea; Jairo Barriga, Milton Mejia and German Zarate, leaders in the Presbyterian Church of Colombia; and Marla Schrader, former Global Ministries' mission co-worker in Palestine. Global Ministries played a major role in the Global Ecumenical Learning Track, where Ms. Wafa Goussous of the Orthodox Initiative gave the keynote address. In addition, Global Ministries sponsored several workshops. The Division of Overseas Ministries sponsored Resolution 1519 Commemorating 100 Years since the Armenian Genocide at the 2015 General Assembly. Last year, 2015, marked the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in Anatolia (modern day Turkey) in the Ottoman Empire, during which 1.5 million Armenians, Syrian Orthodox, and other minorities were killed, more than 1 million displaced between 1915 and 1923 following the arrest of Armenian intellectual leaders in Constantinople. The Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries staff worked closely in writing GA-1522- A Call for Peace, Justice and Reunification in the Korean Peninsula. This resolution addresses the division of the Korean peninsula into North and South following World War II and the Korean War, which resulted in the separation of communities and families.

Educational Material

The Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries has produced mission curricula for youth and adults. The youth curriculum is called, R.E.A.D.Y. (Revolutionary Engage and Driven Youth) and the adult curriculum is called R.E.A.C.H. (Renewing, Engaging, and Advocating Churches). Also, Global Ministries has produced a book that will be helpful for congregations to understand the theology of mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ. The book is titled, Restoring Dignity, Nourishing Hope; Developing Mutuality in Mission. The chapters were written by lay people, theologians, missionaries and Global Ministries' overseas church partners.

Collaboratively work with the DHM, COCU, and the Disciples Women

The Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM), Disciples Home Missions (DHM), Council on Christian Unity (COCU) and the Disciples Women are working collaboratively in identifying one or two bold new ways they may engage in God's mission together. The Executive Committees of the Boards of Directors of DHM, DOM, COCU, and the Disciples Women met in Indianapolis January 7-8, 2016.

College of Mission Intern Program

The College of Mission Intern Program provides an opportunity for seminarians to have a first-hand experience working a long side of Global Ministries' Indianapolis staff on specific assignments. College of Mission Interns also participate in cross-cultural "people to people" pilgrimages. This summer the interns visited partners in Cuba. Catherine Nichols, Mission Personnel Executive led this pilgrimage, which included additional persons with an interest in the work of Global Ministries' partners in Cuba.

Robin Danielle Cox, a member of First Christian Church in Houston, Texas and a third year seminarian at the University of Chicago Divinity School served as a College of Mission Intern from June 8 through August 15, 2015. Danielle worked with the Executive for Mission Education on the creation of resource material for the Middle East Initiative.

Lee Ivey III, a member of Light of the World Christian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana and a second year seminarian at Christian Theological Seminary served as a College of Mission Intern from June 8 through August 15, 2015. Lee revised the Africa's partnership booklet and provided administrative support in the Africa Office.

Anti-Racism Training

The staff of the Division of Overseas Ministries participated in anti-racism training on October 29, 2015, which was led by Rev. April Johnson, Executive Director of the Office of Reconciliation.

FINANCE

Lonna Owens, Treasurer

The Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM) total revenue for 2015, from all sources both operating and designated giving was over \$7.4 million, up \$221 thousand from 2014. Operating revenue was down \$80 thousand but designated giving was up \$301 thousand.

Of the total revenue, \$2.6 million or 35% is designated for special programs, projects, endowment contributions and capital and new church funding. \$1.7 million or 24% is from Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ as part of the funding of our joint work together as Global Ministries. The balance of the revenue, \$3.1 million or 41% comes from Disciples Mission Fund (DMF), investments of DOM, United Christian Missionary Society (UCMS) endowment distributions, Christian Church Foundation (CCF) permanent fund distributions, operating fund gifts and miscellaneous income.

The DOM Endowment assets are invested with the CCF in the Beasley Growth Fund and the Campbell Multi-Strategy Fund. Annually DOM takes a draw, which is 5% of the average prior 20-quarter rolling market value of the total investment. This draw is used to support operations and designated spending based on the restriction of the endowment. In 2015, this draw was \$618,168 (*as compared to \$604,712 in 2014*).

An independent audit is performed annually of the financial records and accounting systems of DOM. A complete audit will be provided for the Yearbook upon completion of the audit and a report sent to the audit committee of the board. The audit committee will address any material internal control weaknesses found during the audit and suggested improvements to internal controls in the management letter to the board. In the past 15 years there have been no material internal control weaknesses found to report.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Jane Sullivan-Davis, Executive

David Owen, Associate

Kelsey Cameron, Program Associate

Although the Global Ministries Resource Development Office participated in several of the Global Ministries Strategic Directions during 2015, including Nurturing Community and Sharing the Story, the focus of the work is on Strategic Direction #4: *Developing Resources -- To recognize God's abundance, and growing opportunities for collaboration and generosity by strengthening existing and exploring new funding mechanisms and sources for God's mission.* Some highlights of the last period are shared below.

With the December 24-31 gift report yet pending from Cleveland as of this writing, in year 2015 Global Ministries received almost \$2.1 million through Cleveland and Indianapolis in direct gifts, both unrestricted and restricted, from individuals, local

Disciple and UCC churches, regions and conferences, churches of other denominations, organizations and foundations.

In addition, almost \$700,000 from about 60 donors arrived to Wider Church Ministries and Division of Overseas Ministries during year 2015 in the form of planned gifts -- bequests, residuals of life-income planned gifts, and contributions to new and existing permanent funds.

A continuing highlight in special giving to Global Ministries during 2015 is the increase of online donors, especially new donors who give online through the Global Ministries website. In 2014, 140 new donors gave online through the Global Ministries; this number increased to 173 new donors giving through the website in 2015. These 173 new donors made a total of 231 online gifts, and included 20 individuals giving at or above the \$500 level. Total giving online (from new and repeat donors) through the Global Ministries website in 2015 was over \$118,500, as compared to approximately \$93,500 given online in 2014.

During the year, the 2015 Global Ministries Spring Appeal was sent on April 6 to roughly 26,500 households with a connection with Global Ministries, and the 2015 Indianapolis Year-End Appeal was mailed November 23 to approximately 13,300 households of Disciple constituents, individual constituents from denominations other than the UCC, and constituents for whom no denominational affiliation is known.

The fourth personalized fundraising experience to support the new mission personnel appointments of Monica and Thomas Liddle to serve in East Timor was launched in May 2015. In early January 2016 the staff team declared the appointments viable financially, based on gifts received to cover the first year of the appointment, and intentions/other funding sources identified to cover approximately 50% of what is needed for years 2, 3 and 4 of the appointments. The fundraising goal for these two appointments is \$127,500 total per year for four years. As of December 31, 2015 Global Ministries received over \$140,000. The Liddles are scheduled to depart for East Timor in the spring of 2016.

The other three personalized mission personnel fundraising campaigns continued on track in 2015. The first trial experience to raise funds for the missionary appointments of Kim and Erik Free to serve in Mozambique received over \$124,000 as of January 31, 2016 toward the goal of \$200,000. The Frees completed two years of their four-year term January 1, 2016. As of January 31, 2016, almost \$88,000 was received toward the goal of \$150,000 for Anne Gregory to serve in Thailand. Anne completed the first year of her three-year term in December 2015. As of January 31, 2016, more than \$247,000 has arrived toward the goal of \$360,000 for Paul Turner to serve in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Paul will complete the first year of his four-year term on May 1, 2016.

Special Giving promotion related to the Middle East Initiative centers around five special giving themes, with specific countries emphasized during one or two months during the Initiative. The special giving themes are: a) Exile and Diaspora; b) Christian Presence and Witness; c) Justice, Peacemaking and Human Rights; d) Education for the Future;

and e) Health, Wholeness and the Environment. Support for displaced Syrians and Syrian refugees was emphasized during the Global Ministries 2015 Alternative Christmas campaign. Since the launch of the Middle East Initiative in June 2015 through January 31, 2016, Global Ministries received more than \$145,000 for the special giving themes and specific partners working in those theme areas, as compared to about \$24,000 in the previous year, during the same timeframe.

Global Ministries Alternative Christmas 2015 saw an increase in the total amount received, more than \$22,000, as compared with 2014. The number of individual donors continued its increase begun in 2014 (92 as compared to 87 in 2014 and 47 in 2013), while the number of local churches participating in Alternative Christmas stayed steady at 11 in 2015, 2014 and 2013. For the first time, the Alternative Christmas materials emphasized giving by special giving themes: general gifts, support of Syrian refugees and displaced through the Middle East Initiative, Peace with Justice, People in Mission, Water, Health, Education, Microcredit, Child Sponsorship and Church Capacity Building.

The same aforementioned themes used for Alternative Christmas are reflected in the organization of the Global Ministries Alternative Giving Catalog, which was launched at the November 2015 meeting of the Common Global Ministries Board. The Alternative Giving Catalog is being used broadly on Global Ministries display tables and is available for special giving ideas for birthdays and other special events.

In early 2016, the Global Ministries Case Statement for Support is in its final editing stage and should be printed and available at the April 2016 meeting of the Common Global Ministries Board.

AFRICA

LaMarco Cable, Area Executive

Introduction

Church partners in Africa have displayed strength and resiliency as they have responded to natural and human made disasters. Global Ministries has accompanied partners in their ministries to persons affected by terrorist attacks, floods, droughts, political unrest, and Ebola. Although many of the tragedies affecting partners in Africa often go unnoticed in mainline US media, the Africa Office has been able to respond to and invite others to participate because of the strong relationships between Global Ministries and Africa partners. Partners share eyewitness information from local communities and invite Global Ministries to join them in responding. The Africa Office has had the joy of accompanying partners in their innovative and resourceful development of ministries that speak to the needs of their local communities. These initiatives inspire Global Ministries as it lives into the mission “to receive and share the Good News of Jesus Christ by joining with global and local partners to work for justice, reconciliation, and peace.

Update of Work in Africa

African partners have been very engaged in the African Union Agenda 2063. Agenda 2063 is a set of goals for the continent developed to effectively learn from the lessons of

the past, build on the progress currently underway and strategically explore opportunities for socioeconomic transformation. These goals are being advanced along with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals have strong implications for Africa; they aim to build on the work of the Millennium Development Goals and seek to rally the world around a common fifteen year agenda to tackle poverty. Seventeen of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are directly related to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030.

The All African Conference Churches (AACC) has responded to challenges and political tensions on the African continent. The Council has divided its work into four programmatic areas: (1) Family Life and Gender Justice, (2) Peace and Advocacy, (3) Empowerment, Diakonia, and Development and (4) Theological, Ecumenical, and Interfaith Relations. In addition to these areas, the AACC is working with National Councils of Churches to fulfill its mission to mobilize member churches to faithfully live the message of God's love; to nurture a common understanding of the faith; to interpret and respond to the challenges to human dignity and to act prophetically in Word, Life and Service for healing. Collaborations between the AACC, Councils of Churches and Global Ministries are centered on Muslim/Christian relations, leadership development, poverty eradication, gender justice and climate change. The AACC has played an active role in responding to the attack of Garissa University on April 2, 2015 in Kenya and the 2015 Baga massacre in Nigeria that took place between January 3 and 5, 2015 in the town Baga located in north-east Nigeria. They have organized counseling and other resources for individuals affected by these attacks in the region and have created training programs on prevention strategies.

The Community of Disciples of Christ in the Congo is experiencing tremendous growth in membership as a result of the church's focus on evangelism. The Disciples are expanding its ministries in new provinces with the building of churches, hospitals, and schools. The church is present in the country participating in civilian education related to the upcoming election in November, advocating for rights of women and children, and providing training for communities to create income generating and sustainable agricultural projects.

The Church of Christ in Congo, the ecumenical ministry in the Congo, has worked closely with the Africa Office in encouraging the United States government to put pressure on the DR Congo president, Mr. Joseph Kabila, to respect the country's constitution by having scheduled elections. Mr. Kabila has threatened to extend his stay in power, thus violating the constitution, by not holding the scheduled election in November. There have been reports of violence against protestors who are calling for transparent and peaceful elections. Global Ministries has sent letters to Secretary of State John Kerry encouraging his office to put pressure on President Kabila and his senior advisors now, by placing his inner circle on targeted sanctions lists before it is too late, beginning criminal investigations into their abuses and corruption, and supporting civil society with legal aid. Global Ministries sent an action alert inviting congregations and individuals to send a letter to Secretary Kerry stating that it is time to put pressure

on President Kabila to hold free and fair elections in November because of the risk of violence against democracy activists. This letter also called for targeted sanctions.

The United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA) spans countries of Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The assembly reaffirmed the denomination's initiative to be a missional church, a church that claims an identity of being agents of hope and instruments of salvation in a world that has lost sight of the meaning and significance of community. As part of this identity, the church is responding to the growing gap between the rich and poor on the continent of Africa, the floods in Mozambique, and investigating the mysterious deaths of leaders of the opposition party in Botswana and the dismissal of ministers in Government in Zimbabwe.

The UCCSA is also responding to a decrease in membership that is a result of the increasing number of prosperity gospel and charismatic churches that have been started in the region by Western groups. This shift in membership has prompted conversations in the UCCSA related to evangelism and motivated the church to create study curriculum that focuses on their congregational identity and to create a structure that can be sustained with fewer financial resources.

The South Africa Synod of the United Congregational Church and the South Africa Council of Churches organized rallies, protests, and campaigns responding to xenophobic attacks in the KwaZulu-Natal region during the first two weeks of May 2015. These attacks are most commonly referred to as "afrophobia." The term "afrophobia" was formed because the attacks against non-nationals have specifically been aimed at Africans who have migrated from other countries. Specifically, these attacks have been on enterprising African immigrants from Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Nigeria and Malawi—often ruining shops, stalls and other businesses in the informal economy. The sentiments that have led to the violence are a result of the frustration with rising unemployment, deepening poverty, and increasing frustration with the lack of opportunities. The violence primarily in Durban and surrounding communities resulted in deaths, injuries and hundreds of people fleeing their homes in fear of their safety. The South Africa Synod in partnership with the South Africa Council of Churches have been providing forums to discuss the attacks, creating safe spaces for targets of these attacks to find refuge, and working with authorities to increase the protection of shops managed and operated by immigrants.

The Council of Churches in Sierra Leone has led the faith community in responding to Ebola. With the drastic reduction of new cases, the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone has begun post-Ebola programming. They are assisting Ebola "widows" - the women who lost spouses to Ebola and Ebola women survivors. The assistance includes vocational training - equipping them with skills to provide for their families and dependents in a sustainable fashion including food, shelter, medicines, school fees and related school costs. In addition they are assisting young people who have survived the Ebola virus with vocational training.

Climate Change

Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, Zambia and Swaziland have been the most impacted by droughts. Global Ministries has received reports from partners of malnutrition and food insecurity due to below-average rainfall that are threatening these communities that are highly dependent on the growing seasons. New figures from the U.N.'s World Food Program say 40 million people in rural areas and 9 million in urban centers who live in the drought-affected parts of Zimbabwe, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, Malawi, and Swaziland will need food assistance in the next year.

The Lesotho Evangelical Church in Southern Africa (LECSA) has experienced the driest summer (October, November, and December) in memory with elevated temperatures and severe winds. This has resulted in water shortages in communities where the majority of the population depends on community taps or natural springs to supply their daily water needs. This drought has interrupted classes at the church's seminary because the seminary relies on piped water from springs on the Makhoarne Plateau to source their buildings and dormitories. The church is working with Global Ministries to provide water to affected communities and is drafting plans to respond to the shortage of food that is expected later in 2016 and into 2017. This humanitarian crisis has the potential of causing starvation in many remote rural communities.

The United Church of Zambia (UCZ) has coordinated programs that will provide food and potable water to the most vulnerable communities: elderly persons, children and house-holds headed by women. They are working with Global Ministries in finalizing a project that has a goal of strengthening women and youth participation in climate change adaptation. The project is being designed to educate communities about climate change and teach them about climate-smart agriculture, environmental stewardship and rainwater harvesting. Zambian authorities have imposed an export ban on maize meal in an attempt to boost its reserves in light of the drought. Zimbabwe will be impacted the most by this decision because the country needs more than 1.8 million tons of maize to avert the crisis.

In Memoriam

Ben Hobgood, former missionary to Democratic Republic of the Congo died December 13, 2014. Ben and his wife Betsy spent most of their professional lives working in the Congo. He was instrumental in the formation of the Free University of the Congo (Congo Protestant University), an ecumenical institution that has four faculties and more than 8000 students.

Howard Trumbull, former missionary to Botswana died December 27, 2014. Howard served along with his wife Marjorie (who preceded him in death) for fifteen years in South Africa and Botswana.

Mabel Alice Christofersen died June 15, 2015. Mabel served in South Africa and taught Home Economics for a number of years at Inanda Seminary, a secondary-level boarding school for girls, now affiliated with the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA).

Helen Agnes Mitchell Weeks, known as “Mama Ncimbo” to Congolese family and friends, passed September 6, 2015, at the age of 96. She and her husband, Clayton, served as missionaries with Disciples of Christ Congo Mission in Congo from 1945-1984.

Lillian Moir died on November 13, 2015 at the age of 75. Lillian served in Swaziland, Botswana and Namibia. She also served on the Division of Overseas Ministries staff in the Office of Mission Education and Interpretation.

EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Xiaoling Zhu, Area Executive

The Pacific Conference of Churches

The churches in the Pacific Region are going through an important time of transition. In the last two years almost every member church of the Pacific Conference of Churches has a new president and/or moderator. Challenging issues face these countries like climate change and the manipulation of smaller island states by bigger countries like Australia, Indonesia, and New Zealand. An Australian mining company in a joint venture with two Japanese mining companies paid millions of dollars to the Fiji government to mine the interior of the largest island in Fiji. Awaiting the implementation of COP21, the international climate change agreement for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, smaller island nations (mostly atolls) continue to face the blunt force of climate change, tropical cyclones, heat waves, and prolonged drought.

China

Invited by the China Christian Council (CCC), Xiaoling Zhu, Zach Wolgemuth and Vy Nguyen provided a disaster relief workshop to Guiyang, China, August 16-17. More than 30 provincial Christian Councils sent their representatives to attend the training.

Jiangsu TV Station published 10 part television documentary: The Nanjing Massacre in the Eyes of Foreigners, in which there are stories about Searle Bates and Minnie Vautrin.

On November 1, 2015, Linqing Hospital, founded in 1886 by Dr. Edward Wagner, a Congregational medical missionary, celebrated its 130th anniversary in Linqing, Shandong Province, China. James Moos and Xiaoling Zhu attended the celebration and activities. Fifteen of Dr. Edward Wagner’s descendants also attend the celebration.

Taiwan

The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) celebrated its 150th anniversary of Christian mission in Taiwan, October 24-26, 2015. Global Ministries sent three representatives: Nancy Lear, CGMB board member, and Don and Nancy Pittman, former mission personnel to Taiwan. The PCT is one of the long term partners of Global Ministries. Taiwan had its election and Ms. Yingwen Cai, the leader of the opposition party won the election.

Fiji

The Fiji Council of Churches is made up of primarily mainline churches. Working toward ecumenism, the council has now invited smaller churches to join the council in ecumenical formation to work together in addressing issues pertaining to the people and nation. The council is also working on interfaith ministries, since some church leaders fear exchanges with brothers and sisters from other faiths – especially Hindu and Muslims which make up over half of the country's population. Rev. Nicodemos Sopepa, long term volunteer of Global Ministries, is playing a key role in these ministries.

Philippines

Global Ministries together with UCC Disaster Ministries and Week of Compassion continue to provide direct support, collaboration and consultation in order to build strong relationships and capacity among partners in disaster stricken regions. In the Philippines, in response to Typhoon Haiyan, holistic recovery continues in the form of, typhoon resistant house reconstruction, water and sanitation efforts and the restoration of livelihoods. In August the first phase of house reconstruction for fifty families was completed. The second and third phases with an additional fifty homes each, has just begun along with the skills-based construction training for ninety individuals. Sustainable potable water has been provided in two communities without public water access and plans to reinforce and/or expand local school buildings, used as shelters during storms, are well underway.

Japan

Five years after the disaster in northeastern Japan, 177,866 people are still displaced because of the tsunami and nuclear disaster. The population along the coastal areas has decreased by 156,000. Many of those living in temporary housing are the elderly. They have lost their supportive community, and their livelihood. The Emmaus Relief Center in Sendai and Ishinomaki provided relief for tsunami survivors in the initial stage, and still continues to walk with those living in temporary shelters, and with farmers and children who still suffer. During the past five years, 7,711 people have joined the volunteer work of the Emmaus Center that continues to work "until the very last person moves out of temporary housing" in order to prevent their isolation. The Aizu Radioactivity Information Center in Fukushima and the Kyodan Nuclear Disaster Relief Task Force "Izumi" in Sendai are two projects that support those suffering from the ill-effects of the nuclear disaster.

In August a delegation consisting of UCC staff and One Great Hour of Sharing donors visited Japan and the Philippines to learn more about the collaborative work of UCC Disaster Ministries and Global Ministries among bi-lateral partners in the wake of disasters.

On September 17, 2015, Japan's parliament passed a controversial security bill. The bill is to repeal Article 9-- Japan Peace Constitution. Under this bill, Japanese troops can be deployed again in overseas operations in a combat role in support of its allies; in other words, for collective self-defense. This is a cause for concern as the people in Northeast Asia have never forgotten their suffering during WWII when the Japan army occupied their countries.

Korea

An extreme military conflict between the North and South ignited by a landmine accident on August 4th was resolved with an emergency meeting which lasted 43 hours over four consecutive days from August 22nd to 25th. Upon the agreement of August 25th, the two Koreas held their first bilateral officials meeting on September 7th and agreed to hold the reunion of one hundred families on October 26th. However shortly after that, the North Korean government announced and launched a missile derailing that meeting.

This year, General Synod of the United Church of Christ, USA (UCC) and General Assembly of Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada (DOC) passed resolutions: *A Call for Peace, Justice and Reunification in the Korean Peninsula*. Our two denominations are the first two churches who passed such resolutions to support Korea reunification. The East Asia and the Pacific Office has worked to implement the resolutions since then including the following steps: (1) Derek Duncan, program associate for advocacy, attended the PROK Conference on Peace and Justice, and delegates from DOC and UCC attended the PROK 100th Anniversary. (2) James Moos and Xiaoling Zhu visited South Korea in October 2015. (3) Xiaoling Zhu attended an international ecumenical meeting on Korea Reunification in Germany in December 2015. (4) PROK Presbyteries delegations attended DOC regional and UCC conference gatherings. (5) One UCC staff spend her sabbatical with PROK ministries in South Korea to get a deeper understanding of the Korean situation. (6) Global Ministries is supporting the NCKK Peace Treaty 2016 Campaign by sending two staff to receive training in South Korea, May 16-24, 2016. (7) The advocacy office is working with the Korean campaign team to collect 100,000 signatures of American Christians in support of reunification in July to be presented to President Obama for his consideration. (8) Global Ministries is supporting a PROK student to start his studies for his Th.M. at Eden Theological Seminary in fall 2016, who will advocate for Korea Peninsula Reunification during his time in the US. (9) The office will support a group of youth from PROK to attend National Youth Event, July 26-30, 2016. All these activities focus on the Korea Reunification mission.

In Memoriam

Michael McFarlane former missionary to China passed on February 22, 2015. Michael and his wife Doreen McFarlane served as missionaries in China for more than 20 years.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Angel L. Rivera-Agosto, Area Executive

Introduction

An ancient Quechua word, *Sumak Kawsay* means “good living” or the “good life.” Often when we hear this, we may think of easy living and a carefree yet connected lifestyle, but *Sumak Kawsay* is much deeper than this. Throughout South America, it is a way of living in harmony within communities and most importantly, nature. Thus the indigenous Quechuan concept of *Sumak Kawsay* “*identifies as goals the satisfaction of needs, the achievement of a dignified quality of life and death, to love and be loved, the healthy flourishing of all in peace and harmony with nature, the indefinite prolongation of*

cultures, free time for contemplation and emancipation, and the expansion and flourishing of liberties, opportunities, capacities and potentials.”¹

The following report contains a summary of the main activities related to our efforts to put the *Sumak Kawsay* at the center of our missionary vision in Latin America and the Caribbean. Accompanying our partners in their hopes and sorrows, sharing the story of salvation in Latin America and the Caribbean and advocating for peace and justice are the ways in which we mutually accomplish the kind of life that is worth living.

Haiti

Haiti continues to live in crisis and challenges in their post-earthquake situation. The death of 300,000 people and the suffering of new disabilities in 5,000 people in the 2010 earthquake practically destroyed the middle class economy and worsened the situation of the poor. The *Conseil Nationale Spirituelle et las Eglises du Haiti (CONASPEH)* continues defining and working with a profile of projects to deal with the difficult situation of the country. *CONASPEH* has worked on the recovery of what was lost and helped to reconstitute the basic economy through small projects. To date, one hundred and fifty-five families with physical disabilities have found funding for their small projects through this program. Some of these projects are the chicken coops, the shade garden, the trade school and food for learning.

House of Hope, also a Global Ministries' Partner in Haiti, is a program for children laboring as domestic servants, and it assists young people, single girls, and elderly women who have suffered abandonment. They provide the children with a safe place where they can learn social and professional skills. At this moment, House of Hope is working with almost 300 children, yet the needs surpass their capacity.

Puerto Rico

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Puerto Rico celebrated their 106th Annual Convention with the theme: "*Una Iglesia Que Reflexiona Sobre Su Visión*" ("A Church that reflects upon its Vision") from February 12-15, 2015. Global Ministries and the Disciples in Puerto Rico work together with the joint appointment of Rev. Amelia Casillas and Pedro Carlo as missionary and long-term volunteer, respectively, serving in Paraguay as consultants for mission development, as well as other projects related to leadership development, trauma resilience, justice and peace advocacy, youth formation and the defense of God's Creation.

Hope Builders Home (HBH), also a Global Ministries' Partner in Puerto Rico, is an orphanage that was founded by missionaries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Puerto Rico at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is located in Bayamón, Puerto Rico, and serves as a shelter for children from 5 years to 18, victims of abuse or negligence from their original families, until they reach an age of

¹ Ramirez, Rene, *Ecuador's National Buen Vivir Plan* cited in Irene Leon (2010), "Re-significaciones, cambios societales y alternativas civilizatorias," *América Latina en Movimiento* #457, Alai, Quito, July 2010.

independence. Thanks to the help of the Disciples Church in Puerto Rico and Global Ministries, and other private donors, they continue to support and nurture the children.

Colombia

Our partner churches and ecumenical organizations have been accompanying the peace talks in the country through *Intereclessial Dialogue for Peace (DiPaz)*. DiPaz organized and held the International Ecumenical Dialogue for Peace, in Bogotá, from April 8-11, 2015. Their objective was to consult the participants about the ways to build an inter-church agenda to strengthen participation and advocacy around the dialogue process which is taking place in Colombia, and thereby to contribute to a peace which is the fruit of justice.

Venezuela

The Pentecostal Evangelical Union of Venezuela organized a national Christian forum from April 26-30, 2015, called "*Christian churches building peace with justice and dignity: Venezuela is not a threat, there is hope in solidarity*" with grassroots churches and faith based organizations from all over the country, to respond to the United States as it declared Venezuela a national security threat on March 9, 2015 and ordered sanctions against seven officials. A group of more than a hundred participants from Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Catholic, Lutheran and other Christian faith expressions attended the conference and were affirmed by UEPV's General Bishop, Rev. Gamaliel Lugo, to be committed promoters and workers for peace.

Guatemala

The Human Rights Observatory for Migrant People is a new initiative in Guatemala and other countries across Central America to address the crisis of migration and deportation. As part of the organization of the Observatory, Global Ministries' Partner, the *Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala*, had the opportunity to "test" the network with a first case of possible deportation from the U.S. of a Guatemalan pastor who is living in one of the churches that is part of the Sanctuary Movement in the U.S. They were capable of monitoring the possible route of deportation and established a shelter for him in Guatemala and protection for his dignity and wellbeing. Five different points of contact on the network were activated in solidarity with this immigrant brother and the Observatory is still a work in progress.

Cuba

Invited by the *Cuban Council of Churches* and the *Evangelical Theological Seminary*, and celebrating Rev. Dr. Carmelo Alvarez's over forty years of ministry in Latin America and the Caribbean, seventy Cuban church leaders, pastors, lay persons and seminarians gathered at ETS's facilities in Matanzas, Cuba on May 21-25, 2015, to reflect on the "normalizing" relations between Cuba and the United States of America. As part of the reflection, Cubans shared their hopes and challenges and opened the possibilities of further encounters and advocacy campaigns not only to engage into diplomatic protocols but to end the economic blockade against the island and to renew relations between these two nations.

On October 1- 7, 2015, a Global Ministries delegation visited Cuba. The Cuban Council of Churches, the Evangelical Seminary of Theology in Matanzas, the Pentecostal Christian Church and the Memorial Center Martin Luther King, Jr. received this delegation that included the two Global Ministries Co-Executives, two UCC Conference Ministers and two Disciples of Christ Regional Ministers. The visiting delegation held encounters with Cuban organizations where they learned of their work and held an exchange on the Cuban reality, diplomatic relations and the normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States. The U.S. delegation participated in joint services at the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Varadero and the Central Corps from the Salvation Army in La Havana. The delegation was also received by Caridad Diego Bello, Director of the Religious Affairs Office of the Central Committee of Cuba. The delegation affirmed an agreement between our two churches and our Cuban Partners to accompany each other in the process of normalization of the relations between Cuba and the United States, to encourage continued visits from denominations and/or ecumenical organizations from both countries, and to prepare a joint plan of action as the dialogue develops through time.

Dominican Republic

A delegation from Global Ministries, led by Co-Executive Rev. Julia Brown Karimu, visited Global Ministries Partners from October 7-12, 2015. They visited a distant community called Cambita Garabito, where the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has accompanied a congregation affiliated to the Dominican Evangelical Church. *The Christian Center for Family Counseling (CECAF)* spoke about their work with pastors and the Dominico-Haitian community. *Proyecto Caminante* shared about its mission with children who are at risk of being drawn into human trafficking. The *Dominican Evangelical Church* brought their leadership together and reviewed their different church ministries. *Dominican Churches Social Services (SSID)* gave the delegation an overview on their work in agricultural sustainability, Dominico-Haitian rights, gender empowerment and project planning. *Alfalit Dominicano* invited the delegation to visit one of their adult literacy groups and to share with them their process of learning.

Colombia

Global Ministries Co-Executives Julia Brown Karimu and Jim Moos, along with the area executive, signed and sent a letter to Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos regarding the death threats of three Presbyterian ministers and more than 40 social activists there. In the letter, Global Ministries urged the President, as well as all the branches of the Colombian government, to take all necessary measures to effectively protect the life and physical integrity of the church leaders as well as all other human rights defenders under threat.

El Salvador

On August 21, 2015, Global Ministries wrote a letter to the President of El Salvador, Salvador Sánchez Cerén, at the request of Rev. Medardo Gómez, Bishop of the *Salvadorian Lutheran Synod*. In the letter, Global Ministries' Co-Executives expressed their concerns regarding the increase in deaths caused by social violence in El Salvador, caused by the *maras* or youth gangs. Also, they recognized the efforts that

the Churches are doing to propose dialogue as a solution to the problem of existing violence and urged the government to listen to the proposal of the churches and to support peace initiatives as a result of acts of justice and righteousness.

Paraguay

Global Ministries' Partner in Paraguay, *CIPAE (Churches' Committee for Emergency Aid)*, has accompanied this last year the accused for the Marina Kue Massacre, which occurred on June 15, 2012. Global Ministries and other ecumenical and social entities participated in a solidarity campaign in order to allow the accused have a fair trial.

Mexico September 26, 2015 marked the one year commemoration of the attack, perpetrated by government security forces in the city of Iguala, in the State of Guerrero, Mexico, against students from the Ayotzinapa rural teacher's college where 43 students were forcefully disappeared. Global Ministries have accompanied the Mexican Theological Community with different efforts to strengthen the solidarity with their families and friends as well as to pursue justice on the case.

Chile

Chalice Press has published a book of testimonies and stories from the work and witness of Elena Huegel, Global Ministries' missionary serving with the *Pentecostal Church of Chile* for over 20 years. *The Earless Man from Chile* is a compendium of encounters, dialogues and experiences related to her mission experience. It is a journey of faith and a statement of life transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary. All of the earnings of the book will be used to strengthen the work of Global Ministries throughout the world. The book is available through the Chalice Press.

MIDDLE EAST AND EUROPE

Peter Makari, Area Executive

Global Ministries seeks "to receive and share the Good News of Jesus Christ by joining with global and local partners to work for justice, reconciliation, and peace." This expression of our participation in God's mission is implemented based on the core values of presence, mutuality, community, justice, and peace. In 2015, the Middle East and Europe office was most active in nurturing community - living out the accompaniment of our partners in the region and our members throughout the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in witnessing to God's abundant grace. 2015 marked the launch and first third of the Global Ministries Middle East Initiative, an exciting 18-month focus on the region, our partners there, and the contexts in which they work and witness. In the region, the continuation of the Syria war and the ensuing refugee crisis has affected the Middle East and Europe. The convergence of a variety of issues has resulted in a new wave of Islamophobia, prompting the church to speak clearly and to reject a new wave of the vilification of Muslim sisters and brothers.

The Middle East Initiative

Launched at General Assembly in July, the Middle East Initiative highlights aspects of mission and partnership, offering an opportunity for the church to become familiar with

the partners in the region, the issues they face, and the context in which they face them; how each of us as members of North American churches can become active in learning and in advocacy; and identify ways to support the various programs and witness of partners in the region. The principal themes of the Middle East Initiative are Christian Presence and Witness; Justice, Peacemaking, and Human Rights; Education; Health, Wholeness, and the Environment; and Diaspora and Exile: Refugees and Migrants. More information and opportunities are on the Initiative's website www.globalministries.org/meinitiative.

In this first six months, the Initiative has featured monthly webinars, giving partners opportunities to address our audiences directly. Webinars will continue through the Initiative, taking place on the second Monday of each month, lifting up the particular country of focus for that month. The Initiative also provides Bible studies that are country-specific, and an Advent-oriented children's curriculum that is being expanded as a VBS curriculum as well called "*Ahlan wa Sahlan—Welcome.*" Advocacy initiatives and special giving opportunities are also ways to support the presence and witness of partners. Support has been church-wide including the full endorsement of, promotion by, and participation in leadership by Disciples Home Missions President Ron Degges and Council on Christian Unity President and President-elect Robert Welch and Paul Tche.

Two major delegations visited the Middle East in 2015 as part of the Middle East Initiative. From April 26-May 9, a delegation of Disciples and UCC leaders visited partners in the Middle East, including Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel/Palestine. The visit was an opportunity to meet partners first-hand and experience their witness and presence, and express solidarity with them at a critical time in the modern history of the region. The delegation, staffed by Global Ministries, included significant Disciples leadership including: Ron Degges, President, Disciples Home Missions; Pat Donahoo, Executive Director, Disciples Women; Chris Dorsey, President, Higher Education and Leadership Ministries; and Paul Tche, then-Assembly Moderator-Elect.

As part of the Disciples Women program for education and advocacy about the global mission and engagement of the church, the Women to Women pilgrimage for 2015 focused on the Middle East. The delegation, composed of 14 women, was co-led by Ms. Chesla Nicholson, Program Director of Disciples Women, and took place from Sept. 27 until Oct. 9. Partners were especially grateful for both visits and the opportunity to meet such a range of denominational leaders and members.

Refugees

One hundred years ago, the Armenian Genocide and deportations meant more than two million Armenians, Syrian Orthodox, and others were killed or displaced. Congregational missionaries offered sanctuary and relief, advocated with governments to seek to end the tragedy, educated church members and citizenry at home about the reality Armenians and others were facing, and raised funds to support humanitarian assistance. This past summer at General Assembly, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) adopted a resolution marking the centennial since the beginning of the Genocide in 1915.

Just over 30 years later, three-quarters of a million Palestinians were dispossessed of their land and property in the war following the establishment of the State of Israel. The churches of the Middle East and the world joined together in ecumenical cause to provide a response to the refugee crisis. That work continues to this day, responding to the needs of those 1948 refugees and a second wave of Palestinian refugees caused by the 1967 War when another 350,000 Palestinians were displaced, some for the second time. The churches were present after the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq as well, when more than 2 million Iraqis sought refuge in neighboring countries. Again, Middle Eastern churches provided humanitarian response with support from the global church, including Global Ministries.

Now, with the Syrian crisis more than five years old, more than half the Syrian population has been displaced—over 7.5 million internally, and 4.5 million refugees have fled the country. The churches in the Middle East (and Europe) have been providing assistance in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Hungary and Germany. Global Ministries, directly and through Week of Compassion, has been supporting that humanitarian response since the beginning. Resources are available on Global Ministries' "Syria Crisis" page (http://www.globalministries.org/syria_crisis). Of special note, through Week of Compassion, Global Ministries appointed Global Mission Interns to support partners in their response to the needs of refugees and migrants in Jordan, Israel/Palestine, and Morocco in 2015.

Interfaith Relations

A confluence of factors—including violent attacks in Beirut, Paris, and elsewhere; an intensification of the debate over refugees; and a heightened attention on Muslims in the context of the US presidential campaign—has resulted in an increasingly hostile discourse about Islam and Muslims, and an increased attention and desire to learn more. On December 9, Disciples and UCC leadership, including Sharon Watkins, Julia Brown Karimu, and Ron Degges, issued a statement on the vilification of Muslims. In the statement, the churches' leaders expressed *"ongoing solidarity with and support for all those who are increasingly fearful for their safety and well-being as a result of the heightened vitriol. And we commit to continuing to pursue peace, to promote better understanding among our communities, and to pursue justice in all that we do."* The statement concluded, *"In this moment, we own our Christian responsibility to lift up our voice once again to express our love and concern for our Muslim sisters and brothers. We stand in solidarity with communities of faith in our abhorrence of the xenophobic and racist attitudes that motivate such hate speech and actions. We live with the hope that peace and justice will prevail for all of God's children."*

Joining with global and local partners is our mandate. With our Middle Eastern and European partners, many opportunities have been afforded for engagement with issues in the past year. Through such accompaniment in this region, the Disciples have sought to offer ministries of reconciliation, to combat racism and other discrimination, to edify the presence of the global church in partners' ministries of transformation. As the Middle East Initiative continues through 2016, many more opportunities will be available to support Global Ministries' vision, "That all of God's people and creation share in God's abundant life."

SOUTHERN ASIA

Deenabandhu Manchala, Area Executive

Nayanti Sarkar, a 17 year old young woman of Betahar in South Dinajpur district of West Bengal, India went missing from her home on April 17, 2013. Nayanti was lured by a distant relative and then handed over to a man named Rakesh with the promise of marriage and better life. The next day she found herself sold to a brothel. After a few days of search, the staff of the Anti-Human Trafficking project of the Diocese of Durgapur of the Church of North India (a partner of Global Ministries) were able to locate and rescue her with the help of local police. A day later Nayanti identified Rakesh who was then arrested. Rakesh admitted that he has been marrying and then supplying young women to the brothels in nearby cities.

Gulabsha, a 24 year-old widow lives with her 4 small children in a tin-shack in Kirby Place, a slum right in the heart of New Delhi, India. Married at 14, Gulabsha became a widow by 22 when her husband died of alcohol addiction. Gulabsha's story is one of over two thousand such impoverished families from the famine stricken states of Chattisgarh and Odissa who migrated to Delhi during the past 6 years in search of livelihood. While the adults are away the whole day trying to find work, their children are exposed not only to starvation but also to abuse and traffickers. Gulabsha and many like her are now able to earn their livelihood while their children are cared for by the Indian Samaritans which has been able to start an after-school program with the resources from Global Ministries. Indian Samaritans is able to provide safe space to over two hundred children.

Human Trafficking

Pravaham, a community college in the south Indian town of Vellore has increased its capacity to reach out to and equip more young girls from single parent, poor Dalit families. In the upcountry tea estates in Sri Lanka, and in the remote parts of East Timor too, the Church of the American Ceylon Mission and Protestant Church in East Timor (IPTL) are involved in protecting and also providing opportunities for children who are exposed to child labor, traffickers or early marriages. In Sumba, an island in Indonesia, the Protestant Church of Sumba (GKS) with Week of Compassion funds, is renewing its efforts to use sustainable agriculture in order to help small farmers find livelihood without having to migrate or send their children away to other islands.

Trafficking of young girls and boys has become commonplace in many parts of the world; but it seems even more in Southern Asia. Hundreds and thousands of families and starving children living under bridges and trees are a common sight in many urban centers. These children are constantly exposed to traffickers and end up in brothels, hazardous industries or used as drug peddlers or killed for their organs.

In contexts such as these, our partners are living out their vocation of nurturing community which often calls for nurturing a partnership for justice. A major trend that seems common among some of our partners – in the villages of Sri Lanka and the

slums of Bangkok, Kolkata and Delhi, is a new emphasis on child and youth development. Nurturing a strong sense of self-worth and enabling greater awareness of their own skills and capacities are seen and pursued as necessary first steps towards personal and community development of those who have been systematically despised, discriminated and excluded for centuries. Furthermore, the staff persons in charge of Asia desks of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church in the USA (through Skype) and the Global Ministries are exploring the possibility of working together in Asia on the challenge of human trafficking. We hope that this initiative will make connections with similar efforts in the US.

Strengthening the Church

The efforts to accompany our partner churches in certain challenging contexts continue. IPTL, a partner church of the GM, continues to be vulnerable as it is the only protestant church in a predominantly Catholic country. Monica and Tom Liddle and their children will leave for East Timor in April 2016 to work with the IPTL as missionaries. Tom will help in activating and strengthening their ministries and training pastors and Monica engagement will revive their health ministry.

The Church of the American Ceylon Mission, another important partner of the GM, too has been going through discord and divisions for quite some time. In a spirit of partnership, the Global Ministries has offered to mediate and help to heal the divisions. We were able to bring the two groups together for a four day retreat at Vavuniya, Sri Lanka in early December 2015. Their time together in prayer, fellowship, sharing and carefully facilitated conversation, helped them to admit their mistakes, to forgive and to seek forgiveness, and to resolve to be reconciled to work together for the good of the church. Since then the two groups have been working together on a new draft constitution which is scheduled to be ready by early April and for subsequent ratification at a special assembly at the end of May.

Efforts are being taken to help Dongsavath Child and Youth Development Centre in Laos. The Centre for Promoting Accountability, a New Delhi based consultancy service that works with NGOs in the areas of program development, financial planning and organizational management, has been asked to visit Dongsavath and its centers and to assist them to be innovative and efficient. It is our hope that through this intervention, the staff team of Dongsavath will learn new skills and develop new plans to expand, grow and become effective.

Working for peace with justice

The Southern Asia office has been able to support two initiatives that advocate for the rights of the Dalits, the social outcasts of the Indian subcontinent, in Washington DC in May and at the United Nations, New York in September. The latter event worked closely with the campaign on Black Lives Matter. The Dalits and the African Americans share similar experiences of discrimination and marginalization and hence their movements have been in partnership at various levels for several decades.

MISSION PERSONNEL

Catherine Nichols, Executive
Lorna Hernandez, Coordinator, People-to-People Program

Mission Personnel

As a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world, the Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries participates in a ministry which attempts to break the divide among God's people by partnering with churches and church-related organizations in the sending and receiving of missionaries. The exchange of people and their gifts unites people across geographical, racial, gender, and economic barriers. Other important aspects of this ministry include the presence of missionaries in congregations, allowing congregations to share the vital ministries of the partner churches and our people to people pilgrimages, which offer individuals and congregations opportunities to cross boundaries and share the love of God as they receive the love of God from those they encounter.

Through the Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, missionaries are participating in ministries of critical presence around the world. They are engaged in a variety of ministries including theological education, leadership development, community and development work, human rights, health ministries, children's ministries, and pastoral ministries.

A total of 117 missionaries served in 45 countries in 2015, which included 37 fully-supported missionaries, 15 global mission interns, 23 long-term volunteers, and 42 associates. In addition, 24 individuals served as short-term volunteers.

Twelve persons were appointed to church and/or church-related institutions around the world, including two were reappointed and 18 had terms extended. Terms varied from fully supported to long-term volunteer staff. This distribution by area of total appointments was Africa 3; East Asia and the Pacific 0; Europe 1; Latin America and the Caribbean 2; Middle East 1; Southern Asia 5.

One new fully supported missionary was appointed in 2015 through the personalized funding model: Paul Turner, serving in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Three new global mission interns were supported by Week of Compassion financial resources. They are: Kearstin Bailey, Hungary; Sarah Williams, India; and Kristin Wolf, Thailand.

Six new long-term volunteers (one year and longer) were appointed in 2015: Susan Jepson, Sri Lanka; Lindley Kinerk, Sri Lanka; Jerri Handy, Mexico; Sharla Russell, Democratic Republic of the Congo; Ben Lyvers, India and Jeff Wright, Israel/Palestine.

There were 24 short-term volunteers (two weeks to eleven months) appointed in 2015 who served in or will serve in 2016. A list of names and term dates are available upon request.

The overseas associate category is a recognition normally given to members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ who are serving outside of the United States and Canada with a church, ecumenical institution or project

that involves a ministry that is in accordance with the mission principles of the Common Global Ministries Board. There were four new associate appointments in 2015: Dawn and Jon Barnes, South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho; Adam Royston, Thailand; and Jeffrey VonWald, Jerusalem.

Five individuals completed their service with the Common Global Ministries Board in the category of regular appointees: Carmelo Alvarez, Venezuela; Gary Luallin, Ghana; Daniel Lee, Korea; Alison Stendahl, Turkey; and Kristine Tisinger, Ghana. Five Global Mission Interns completed their service in 2015: Nicole Betteridge, Laos; Joel Cooper, Lebanon; Amy Lester, Hungary; Matthew Fehse, Philippines; and Adam Royston, Thailand.

Ten individuals completed their service as Long-Term Volunteers in 2015: Alexander Bartis, Costa Rica; John and Faye Buttrick, Palestine; Ben Ewert, Thailand; Terry and Diana Hutter, Swaziland; Doug Smith and Kate Moyer, Mexico; Zoltan and Barbara Szucs, Hungary.

Missionary Relationships

From January 1 – December 31, 2015, fifty-two missionary units were involved in a ministry of critical presence through missionary visits and relationship building:

Jeanette Salley, Haiti (3 months), Mark Behle, Lesotho (3 months), Alison Stendahl, Turkey (4 months), Scott Hardin-Nieri, Costa Rica (1 month), Rebecca Hardin-Nieri, Costa Rica (1 month), Bethany Waggoner, Global Mission Intern, Ecuador (1 day), Don Westra, Honduras (1 month), Maryjane Westra, Honduras (1 month), Xuyen Dangers, Laos (3 months), Gary Luallin, Ghana (4 months), Robert Ray, former short-term volunteer to Japan (3 days), Joyce Ray, former short-term volunteer to Japan (3 days), Lauren Kabat, Peru (2 months), Nicole Betteridge, Thailand (2 months), Lindsey Mercer, Mexico (1 month), Joel Cooper, Lebanon (3 months), Carmelo Alvarez, Venezuela (2 weeks), Amy Lester, Hungary (5 days), Adam Royston, Thailand (5 days), Ariel Royer, Lebanon (2 months), and Kristine Tisinger, Ghana (3 months). Three missionaries itinerated for specialized funding: Paul Turner, Congo (4 months), Tom Liddle, East Timor (3 months), and Monica Liddle, East Timor (3 months).

Long-term Volunteers that also itinerated; John Buttrick, Palestine (5 days), Faye Buttrick, Palestine (5 days), Terry Hutter, Swaziland (2 days), Diana Hutter, Swaziland (2 days), and Ben Ewert, Thailand (5 days). Four former missionaries that itinerated; Ken Frank, Turkey (2 days), Betty Frank, Turkey (2 days), Donna Dudley, Angola (1 day), and Tim Rose, Guadeloupe and Martinique (1 day).

Regular appointed Missionaries, Global Mission Interns, Long-term Volunteers, and candidates attending the Missionary Conference in Indianapolis were all assigned to speak in a congregation. Kristine Tisinger, Ghana; Ariel Royer, Lebanon; Joel Cooper, Kenya and Lebanon; Amy Lester, Hungary; Nicole Betteridge, Thailand; Doug Smith, Mexico; Kate Moyer, Mexico; Jeff Wright, Israel/Palestine; William O'Brien, Egypt; Christian Watkins, Turkey; Sarah Williams, India; Becca Owen, Swaziland; Toni Reynolds, Dominican Republic; Kearstin Bailey, Hungary; Olga Yan Pardo, Ecuador;

Ben Lyvers, India; Kristin Wolf, Thailand and Sharla Russell, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Four missionaries in residence itinerated in local churches and camps: Amena Cristovao, East Timor (1 month) Nehemias Ayala, Honduras (3 months), Jean Pierre Djimbonge-Weye, Congo (1 month), and Marta Bernardini, Italy (2 months).

From January 1 – December 31, 2015, 36 UCC Conferences and 21 Disciples Regions received visits. (One point sixty eight Conferences/Regions were visited per missionary unit.) Of those visits, 112 were to UCC Congregations and 84 were to Disciples Congregations. (Five point twenty four congregations were visited per missionary unit.) There were a total of 373 missionary presentations made. (10 presentations were given per missionary unit with an average of 7 presentations per month of interpretation.)

People-to-People Pilgrimages

The People-to-People Pilgrimage Program assists United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ congregations, regions, conferences, and affiliated organizations with life changing mission pilgrimages and cross-cultural immersion trips to embark on a journey of faith and solidarity with our international ecumenical partners. In 2015, the People-to-People office responded to 113 online inquiries and 49 phone inquiries, which resulted in a total of 56 delegations. These delegations traveled to the following countries: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Israel/Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, and Vietnam. The numbers of pilgrimages per area were: 3 to Africa, 50 to Latin America and the Caribbean, 2 to the Middle East and Europe, and one to Southern Asia.

GLOBAL ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION

Derek Duncan, Program Associate

Working for Peace with justice

The Global Advocacy and Education Team provides support for partner advocacy initiatives and advocacy education and mobilization in our churches. The advocacy associate networks and collaborates with denominational, ecumenical and advocacy partners for all five Global Ministries area offices on advocacy priorities of regional partners. Advocacy concerns that affect partners in all global areas include the need for just peace, addressing hunger and food insecurity, protecting vulnerable communities from climate change, and securing the rights of women and children, of the indigenous and other minorities. Many of these major advocacy themes are promoted and resourced by identifying special advocacy dates to highlight the issues and mobilize grassroots response to them. Opportunities to take action are also highlighted in Global Ministries updates, on the website, and using social media. Other priority advocacy issues are addressed through supporting letters, statements and advocacy opportunities by denominational leaders, engaging the Disciples in ecumenical advocacy campaigns and initiatives, and by resourcing board and General Assembly actions.

Africa

The Advocacy Team shaped the advocacy focus for the Congo Initiative, which concluded as 2015 began. Promoting Congo Week was a key part of the initiative that continues annually as a result of the General Assembly's commitment to solidarity with partners in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While our broad focus is to support a more robust and comprehensive U.S. policy toward the Congo, including protections against resource exploitation and violence against women, our advocacy sharpened in 2015 on the upcoming presidential elections in November 2016. In May 2015 the advocacy associate participated in a WCC Conference on Peace and Security in the Congo in Geneva, Switzerland. The conference highlighted concerns that the elections be fair and free of violence. In November 2015 the associate attended a symposium hosted by the WCC that followed-up on the Geneva conference and addressed the Congolese churches' role in both supporting the democratic process by advocating for timely elections, while also doing everything possible to prevent violence and divisions among the people.

East Asia and the Pacific

The office has been engaging in the international ecumenical campaign for peace and reconciliation in Korea, collaborating with global and denominational partners to bring the Resolution "A Call for Peace, Justice and Reunification in the Korean Peninsula" for approval by the 2015 General Assembly. The associate worked with invited guests from the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) to speak to the resolution. The associate participated in an Ecumenical Forum on Peace in Northeast Asia held in September in Seoul, Republic of Korea, and helped draft the outcome document which expressed the goal of the event to revitalize and strengthen the ecumenical commitment for justice, healing, reconciliation and peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula. Among the affirmations of partner churches were pledges to develop peace education and advocacy for peace and reunification; promote participation and leadership of women in justice and peace initiatives; support efforts to seek a final peace treaty that replaces the Armistice Agreement; and support ecumenical endeavors to contain nuclear power and arms. The Council on Christian Unity, and North American Pacific/Asian Disciples (NAPAD) and Global Ministries are working together to implement the resolution, which will require increasing Disciples' engagement in Korea peace and reunification efforts and will support a delegation of our partners to tour the US in 2016 to gather signatures for a Peace Treaty Campaign in advance of the July 27 anniversary of the signing of the Armistice in 1953.

Peace and human rights in the Philippines also remains a priority for Global Ministries' advocacy. As co-chair of the Philippines Working Group of the Asia-Pacific Forum, the associate helped with ecumenical support for an International Peoples Tribunal on Human Rights in the Philippines, held July 2015 in Washington DC. Global Ministries sponsored the participation of Nelson Salvadore as a witness in the tribunal. Mr. Salvadore, a member of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, testified to the government-sponsored abduction, torture, and execution of his wife, an engineer working on public interest projects. Mr. Salvadore also attended and participated in workshops at the Disciples General Assembly in July.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Advocacy highlights included mobilizing grassroots encouragement of U.S. efforts to support a peace process to end the civil war in Colombia, which came to a tenuous agreement in late 2015, and on advocating for U.S. relief of the debt crisis in Puerto Rico, which loomed large in 2015 and remains a priority moving into 2016.

Middle East and Europe

Advocacy concerns include security and humanitarian needs of refugees in Syria and Iraq, and furthering just peace efforts in Palestine and Israel. In October 2015 the associate participated in a Kairos USA Advocacy Summit in Denver, CO. Starting in December 2015 the associate joined an effort convened by Christian Peace Witness for Syria to strengthen ecumenical coordination related to refugees and peacemaking in Syria. Other Middle East advocacy activities include promoting online advocacy, including through the 3rd Thursday advocacy alerts on Israel/Palestine, supporting the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel, and joining in Faith Forum and Churches for Middle East Peace advocacy opportunities.

Southern Asia

Advocacy focused on the rights of the regions' many indigenous groups, of religious and ethnic minorities, and of migrants, all of whom struggle with social, economic or political marginalization in various contexts. In March 2015 the associate participated in a Global Conference on Defending Dalit Rights in Washington, DC, and is helping explore these broader themes by planning a workshop on rights of those on the margins in Southern Asia for the April 2016 Advocacy Days conference. The Global Ministries Southern Asia Area Executive will be a key presenter for the workshop.

MISSION INTERPRETATION AND CONSTITUENCY EDUCATION

Tom Morse, Executive

REACH

REACH is a new 3 part adult curriculum available online through Global Ministries. REACH stands for – Renewing, Engaging, and Advocating Churches. The format allows study leaders to quickly create sessions that speak to the work that the congregation may already be engaged in. Each session includes passages of scripture with study questions, stories from mission personnel and international partners, as well as videos, photos and other resources to begin discussion. REACH is based off of the same format as the widely used READY (Revolutionary, Engaged, and Driven Youth) curriculum that was created in 2014.

Middle East initiative Bible studies, webinars, and Advent resource

As part of the Middle East Initiative, the office of Mission Education and Interpretation has worked closely with colleagues in creating a number of new materials including Bible Studies, webinars, and a children's curriculum for Advent. Each of the Bible Studies, written by international partners, focus on a specific country in the Middle East and highlight unique theological questions that arise from the context. Monthly webinars with partners, former mission personnel and theologians have created an exciting

opportunity for individuals and congregations to connect directly with the issues affecting the countries included in the Initiative. The children's curriculum for Advent, titled Ahlan wa Sahlan: Welcome!, shares the story of Christ's birth through the eyes of children who live in the towns where these events took place. The curriculum introduces 4 towns, 4 children, and 4 supplements related to the current situation in Israel/Palestine.

Global Mission Church

The "Be A Global Mission Church" program is being revitalized to assist congregations to better connect with God's mission in the world. New efforts include a monthly letter tailored to the needs of mission committees, an updated webpage, a study guide, and a new process for evaluating mission efforts in congregations that have previously completed the Global Mission Church process. This program was affirmed by resolution 0916 by the General Assembly in Indianapolis.

Online Communications

Following a successful update of the Global Ministries website in 2014, Global Ministries changed platforms in 2015 in order to better connect congregations with the work of international partners and missionaries. As a result website traffic is more focused on key program areas, and there has been a significant increase in the overall effectiveness of the website. Attention has also been given to the Global Ministries Weekly update format and our regular communications with donors to make them more engaging.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES CHILD SPONSORSHIP

Linda Lawrence, Program Manager

The Global Ministries Child and Elder Sponsorship Program demonstrates the historic commitment to children and elders by local churches, conferences, regions and church members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ. The ministry offers DoC/UCC regions, conferences, local church and church members a sensible and practical way to help provide direct assistance to our international partners' constituents living in crisis or dire situations – meeting people at their point of deepest need spiritually, physically, emotionally and economically. The program serves eighteen mission projects with fifteen Global Ministries partners who work with impoverished children and elders. We are proud to state that 100% of all designated donations go to the children, elders and their sponsorship sites as Global Ministries underwrites all administrative cost for the program.

Over the years we have watched the number of sponsorships decline; yet in 2015 more than \$300,000 was collected for children and elders from sponsors and this continues to be an annual trend for the past several years even with today's tough economy. Churches and their members provide assistance to children and elders around the world and receive the opportunity to learn and be a part of their children/elder's daily lives. More donors travelled to visit sponsored children and had the opportunity to witness the face of Christ in their children. After the visit of one couple to a partner

sponsorship site, they were so impressed with what the program offered to local children and their families, they are now working with Global Ministries to make this partner site a priority in their personal giving.

The following are recognized ministry partners of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) through the Division of Overseas Ministries.

RAMBO COMMITTEE

Steve Minson, President

Rambo Committee, Inc.

1648 River Ridge

Williamsburg, VA 23185-7546

The Rambo Committee, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation that has as its sole purpose the support of the work of Christian Hospital Mungeli, India, including its School of Nursing, the Rambo Memorial English Medium School, and the Springer Community College. During 2015, this support focused on two areas: seeking funds for capital construction to assist the Hospital deliver critically-needed services to the people of Mungeli and facilitating the travel to Mungeli of persons interested in its witness.

We are delighted to report significant success in raising funds. In September 2015, the Rambo Committee was awarded \$720,000 from the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad program of the United States Agency for International Development. This sum, together with \$68,000, from the Rambo Committee, is being used to construct a new hospital wing that that will expand desperately-needed medical services to mothers and children at Mungeli. The new wing will consist of one neo-natal intensive care unit with 25 beds, one maternal ward with 45 beds, two labor rooms that can hold up to six women each, three intensive care units, and six operating rooms, and one classroom for post-delivery education for mothers. This follows on last year's success, when USAID ASHA awarded the Committee \$600,000 for essential healthcare equipment, especially for its maternity ward and NICU.

Also, during 2015, through the efforts of the Rambo Committee's Executive Director, Landa Simmons, we helped coordinate the visits of more than two dozen people to Mungeli, each bringing unique talents and perspectives. Visitors to Mungeli in 2015 included a graduate of the Harris School of Nursing at Texas Christian University who volunteered at Mungeli for six months; four fourth-year medical students from Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine; two Regan Scholars from Eureka College; and five students from Butler University.

DISCIPLES AMATEUR RADIO FELLOWSHIP, INC.

John Park Winkler, Jr, President
8355 Harwood Road Apt #1314
North Richland Hills, TX 76180
660.464.2471

The Disciples Amateur Radio Fellowship (DARF) has provided Radio and communications equipment for overseas mission work since Jim Sugioka convened the organizational meeting at the International Convention in St. Louis in 1958.

In 2015, a fourth generation of HF communications equipment was completed in The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), consisting of 26 solar powered HF Stations. A team from DARF traveled in 2010 to the DRC to conduct a seminar for church leaders on the process of installing the stations.

Over the years, equipment has been provided in Paraguay, the Philippines, Lesotho, DRC, and Guatemala.

DARF as regular daily and weekly communications among its membership using networks on the 20 and 75 meter Amateur radio bands and using Skype.

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Recommended Action

On behalf of the General Board, the Administrative Committee receives the report from the Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries and the recognized ministries who report through DOM/GM.