

GB-22-1207

Name of ministry: Christian Church in Kentucky

Ministry

Executive/Regional

Minister name:

Rev. Dr. Donald Keith Gillett II

Ministry

Executive/Regional

Minister email:

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In what ways is your region/ministry thriving?

The Christian Church In Kentucky (CCIK) is home to 203 vibrant congregations; one camping program in two locations - Wakon' Da-Ho in Casey County and Kum-Ba-Ya in Marshall County; the Kentucky Christian Missionary Convention (the historical Convention of African-American churches founded in 1872); Green Chalice; Kentucky Council of Churches; Cane Ridge Meeting House Shrine and Museum; two Disciples related institutions - Midway University and Transylvania University; several Disciples affiliated care homes and Lexington Theological Seminary. All of these institutions contribute to the health and well being of our region and to the development of leaders for the church and society in important ways.

We are a thriving region despite the chaos in the world.

The CCIK is thriving in large part due to the generous support of its congregations, moderator team, former regional and associate regional ministers and administrators.

The CCIK concluded its search for a regional minister and I was called in May 2021, began my work on August 1, 2021 and was installed on October 3, 2021. I am indebted to Dean Phelps for his service as interim regional minister

and remain grateful for his friendship. I am grateful to the search committee of Rev. Kory Wilcoxson, Rev. Darryl Hayden, Rev. Syvoskia Bray Pope, regional moderator; Minister Antonio Sherrill, Mr. Paul Jackson and Ms. Laura Barkhauer for recommending me to the Board. I do not take this call lightly and enter it with the prayers of the committee, regional board and many more. It was an honor to have Rev. Terri Hord Owens conduct my installation service; Rev. Larry Jackson deliver the installation message; and Rev. Dr. Gary Kidwell, Rev. Amanda Groves, Rev. Dr. Charisse Gillett, Mr. Jeremy Gillett, the search committee and Rev. Dr. John Mobley participate in the spirit-filled installation gathering.

The CCIK is thriving through the work of its ministries. The Region has certified standing for 361 clergy, 231 of whom continue in active ministry. 159 clergy with standing are engaged in some form of congregational ministry.

The CCIK is thriving as we continue the journey to become an Anti-Racist-Pro-Reconciling region. The Anti-Racism Team has been busy moving toward adaptive change, having conversations during meeting events entitled "Seeing the Face of God in Each Other." "Unity requires reconciliation; reconciliation requires confession, and confession requires accountability." The region has hosted multiple conversations, with 162 persons participating in a welcoming environment where conversation is authentic.

The CCIK is thriving as we continue to ensure training in Clergy Sexual Misconduct Prevention (Boundaries Training). Even with a late start in early September, 86 ministers were trained by certified KY trainer teams.

The CCIK is thriving with our ministry to youth, as both of our camps are seeing upgrades as a result of donations from Individuals. Kum-Ba-Ya, in the West Area, had eight new buildings with air conditioning and heat donated by the Sterett Adventure Foundation. Wakon' Da-Ho recently

began construction on a new bathhouse and will soon begin construction of a new pool, thanks to donations from members of the region.

The CCIK is thriving as the West Area deepens its relationship with the entire region and manages Camp Kum-Ba-Ya.

The CCIK is thriving through its Kentucky Appalachian Scholarship Ministry.

The CCIK is thriving through its New Church Ministry Team and the new churches that are developing new ways to be church.

The CCIK is thriving due to a caring, knowledgeable and compassionate staff.

The CCIK is thriving in part because of the connections and relationships that are being developed and strengthened after we called a new regional minister who is eager to engage the ministries of the church and region.

The CCIK is thriving in large part because there is a deep willingness to examine the past and look to the future for God's blessings.

What are the biggest challenges facing your region/ministry this year?

There are at least two challenges that have been caused by Covid-19 and its variants.

The first challenge is that congregations are facing the reality of reduced in-person attendance, which may impact their financial pictures. Secondly, is the challenge of how to minister to a hybrid membership.

While there are challenges for CCIK congregations, there are also opportunities to imagine who we can become as we try to reach those on the margins of society. A lurking

challenge is confronting the sense of isolation that many feel contributes to known and unknown differences.

What is something you hope to accomplish in the next year?

As I think about this next year, there are at least seven things that I hope to accomplish in 2022:

- 1) Having regional presence in our congregations during worship - 75 visits by staff, of which I plan to visit 45.
- 2) A series of gatherings with regional leaders from across the breath of the region for open dialogue on the next steps of our journey living in the new reality.
- 3) Host an engaging/Spirit led Regional Assembly in November.
- 4) Assist Congregations in Hybrid Worship excellence and technology.
- 5) Contribute to the planning and execution of the 2023 General Assembly.
- 6) Plant 1-2 new churches.
- 7) Hire permanent staff to meet the needs of a growing , thriving and vibrant region.

What is something you would like the General Board to know about your region/ministry?

We are a Region that is moving forward on this journey, highlighting spirituality, openness, relationships and hospitality.

As reported during the General Board Meeting in 2021, the Christian Church in Kentucky is excited to roll out the carpet for the next General Assembly, July 29-August 1, 2023. We invite you to come back to the roots of our movement, reconnect with Disciples history at Cane Ridge, stop in at Midway University, Transylvania University, and Lexington Theological Seminary, visit the Muhammed Ali Center, or just relax and enjoy an ice cold Ale 8-1 with a Kentucky Hot Brown. Whatever your preference, we look forward to seeing you in 2023.

Rev. Linda Jones retired September 1, however a celebration of her nearly 20 years in regional ministry has

been delayed due to concerns related to Covid-19. Linda shall be missed by all ministry partners in the region, most especially the women with whom she bonded and led in new and exciting ways.

The regional office has recently been refreshed and is a place of welcome.

Our Current Regional Leadership includes:

Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett II, Regional Minister
Rev. Molly Smothers, Acting Associate Regional Minister
Rev. Rachel Nance Woehler, West Area Minister
Rev. Tammie Douglas, Acting Director of Women's Ministry
Rev. David Carr, Staff Consultant to Youth/Young Adult and Children Cabinet and Committee on Ministry and Camp Wakon' Da-Ho Executive Director
Rev. Dr. Lon Oliver, Director of Disciples Appalachian Scholarship Ministry
Rev. Carol Devine, Editor, CCK News

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**How can we pray for
your region/ministry?**

We invite you to pray for our Regional Staff, Regional Moderator Team and our Congregations as we move through this period of uncertainty with faith, to understand that we are on the precipice of a great revival.

We invite you to pray for us as we continue living into being an Anti-Racist region.

We invite you to pray for us as we learn how to minister in new ways.

We invite you to pray for us as we continue to "expand the table."