2016

The Oldtimers' Grapevine, Volume 26 (December 2016 - December 2017)

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Friends,
He is alive, He is not dead!
He lives within each of us
and He is Lord of every-
thing. As we continue to
celebrate His resurrection,
we reflect on the importance
of Christ in our lives. It is
with deep sincerity that I
say that I hope that you and your family enjoyed this
Easter season.

The Board and editorial staff of the Oldtimers’ Grape-
vine continue to work to make sure that we keep this
ministry alive and well in this time of renewal. We
want the Oldtimers’ Grapevine to continue to be an
important part of your life. We continue to provide
this publication to you year after year, with interesting
news for you, your family and friends and those who
have retired from the local, regional or national church
and others throughout our Disciple family. The rest of
the Board and I want you to “stay connected”. As we
come to the Spring season - a season of renewal, we
are thinking about that same process in terms of the
keeping your connection to the Oldtimers’ Grapevine.

The Oldtimers’ Grapevine Board is committed to con-
tinuing this ministry. To continue our ministry, the
Board has decided that we are beginning two new ini-
tiatives: 1) Subscription Renewal and 2) Re-
gional Reporters and other contributors. First
of all, our publication is mailed in its written form to
approximately 900 subscribers at no cost. The Old-
timers’ Grapevine costs approximately $1,100 per is-
sue to publish. In order to continue our ministry to
you, we would like for you to let us know that you
want to continue to receive the Oldtimers’ Grapevine
by renewing your subscription. We are asking that
you provide us with a preference for a copy being
mailed to you or sent electronically. If you are aware
of those who want to receive the Oldtimers’ Grape-
vine, give them a copy of the subscription form. No
one will be asked pay a subscription fee; however, we
welcome your consideration to provide donations to
the Oldtimers’ Grapevine whether they be periodic or
annually. As an approved nonprofit entity established
by federal guidelines, any donations to the Oldtimers’
Grapevine are tax deductible. We also welcome me-
memorial gifts that are also tax deductible.

Secondly, we know that all of us want to stay connect-
ed with individuals in our Disciple communities. If
you are interested in providing information
on news about retirees in your area, we
would love to have you as a Regional Report-
er. We know that retirees don’t really stop doing in-
teresting things including receiving awards, celebra-
tions of ministries – new and old, travel, church or
community projects and other news. We welcome
your participation in this position, let us know if you
would like to help us “tell the stories”. If you are a
reader and would like to provide an article to the Old-
timers’ Grapevine that you feel would be of interest to
our readers, we welcome you to send it in to us. Our
Publisher/Executive Editor, Dr. John Foulkes, will
continue to ensure the Oldtimers’ Grapevine remains
current and informative to our Disciple family.

Finally, please be sure to renew your subscription over
the next two Oldtimers’ Grapevine issues. Please
remember, if we do not receive your Sub-
scription Renewal, your name will be re-
moved from the mailing list. The Renewal Form
is on the back page of the newsletter. Please complete
and return this form at your earliest convenience.
Don’t forget to help us by “telling the stories”. If you
would like to become a Grapevine Regional Reporter
or write an article, con-
tact our Publisher/
Executive Editor, Dr.
John Foulkes or a mem-
ber of the Board know
of your interest.

Thank you for allowing
us to provide this Old-
timers Grapevine ministry for the past 25 years. We
look forward to your support for our next 25 years.
Dearest Friends in Christ - "Hope is a star that shines in the night, leading us on till the morning is bright."

From the Advent promise of Emmanuel: God with us; to the Epiphany revelation: God-with-us-now, we hope.

And yet, I confess, as 2017 begins, my heart is bruised by the pain and division the United States and Canada have experienced which have filtered into our communities and congregations. Antagonistic elections in the United States have upended civil discourse. Repeated public incidents of both individual and institutional racism have fractured relationships in communities. And beyond our borders, civil wars in places like South Sudan and Syria, as well as natural disasters in long-suffering Haiti, only increase the need for healing of all kinds.

Still, along with "all of creation" in Romans 8:18, we wait expectantly "for the children of God to be revealed." In fact, we hope to be among them. We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. We know God to be a God of abundance who provides enough for all and makes room enough for all.

This is the time for Disciples to shine! We have long found ways to live together in unity for the sake of God's mission. Our ability to respect (and engage!) a diversity of faithful opinions is needed now more than ever. Our emphasis on healing the rifts of racism with pro-reconciling work is foundational to moving forward in our part of the world and globally. Our shared sense of service that came through loud and clear in our Mission Gatherings of 2016 gives us some of the connections we need to start living into the wholeness God so ardently wishes for us.

Our deep hope in God's healing presence leads us to action.

Mission First!

Disciples are on the move toward new ways of being God's hands and feet in the world through our work on Mission First! The Mission Council met late last year to identify common themes arising from the mission gatherings. We found many Disciples are hearing a call to mission with and for children, youth and young adults through efforts at inclusion, speaking up for the vulnerable and addressing racism. The Council affirmed welcome and accompaniment as hallmarks of our participation in God's mission. At some of the gatherings - in the MidAmerica Region, for example - people found others who share their missional passions and formed connections to work together immediately. The Administrative Committee is preparing a proposal on how we might implement what we learned from the governance portion of the Mission First! pilot effort.

Pro-Reconciliation

As called for in General Assembly resolution 1328, the Racist Language Audit Task Force presented their report in 2016. General ministries, regions and the General Board, have already started to address the issues surfaced. Governing documents are being translated, sometimes for the first time, into French, Spanish and Korean. The National Convocation, at the 2016 Biennial Session, committed to renewed support for Reconciliation Ministry and calls upon the rest of the church to do the same.

New starts

In 2017, we look forward to new beginnings with our next General Minister and President to be elected in July at the General Assembly, along with our new moderator team. We anticipate gathering once again at the Lord's Table to be united as ONE, celebrating Jesus' prayer on our behalf that the world may believe.

Called to Live in Hope

After nearly 12 years, serving as your general minister and president, I still believe we are a church whose time has come. We are a gifted people, called for such a time as this. Refining our missional focus across the life of the Church, renewing our commitment to racial justice, catching the Spirit in new ways to further our part in God's work of healing and wholeness - we enter 2017 ready to be and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving, and serving, from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.

With hope in Christ undimmed, I greet you in this New Year. May we all resolve to live right now in "the assurance of things hoped for!" (Hebrews 11:1)

Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins
General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada
MEET THE GMP NOMINEE
REV. TERESA “TERRI” HORD OWENS

Rev. Terri Hord Owens is a native of Terre Haute, IN, and a descendant of one of Indiana’s oldest African-American free settlements. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Government with a minor in Afro-American Studies from Harvard University. Terri began her professional career in the area of information technology, spending 23 years in the area of management consulting, data management and data warehousing. She previously held senior management positions with IBM, Ernst & Young, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and SBC, consistently earning recognition for excellence and leadership. An active lay leader throughout her youth and adult life, Terri has worked with children and youth ministries, taught Sunday School and Bible study in Christian Education departments, and worked to create drama ministries in several congregations. Despite professional success, she felt God had another assignment, and she accepted her call to ministry under the pastorate of Dr. T. Garrott Benjamin, Jr. at Light of the World Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN.

Rev. Owens earned the Master of Divinity degree at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where she was a Disciples Divinity House Scholar, and recipient of the John Gray Rhind Award, given to the top M.Div graduate at the Divinity School. She was ordained at Light of the World Christian Church, wearing the robe of her paternal grandfather, the late Rev. Noel Hord. In August of 2005, she was appointed Dean of Students at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where she is responsible for administration and development of academic policy, student advising on personal matters, students’ academic progress, admissions and financial aid, recruiting, and PhD student professionalization and placement. She is a member of the Divinity School’s Diversity Committee, and the University’s Diversity Leadership Council. She manages the programming of diversity and inclusion events within the Divinity School and is regularly engaged in this work across campus. Because of her previous professional experience, she also serves on the Student Health Insurance Policy Oversight Committee, and the Data Stewardship Committee. She also represents the Divinity School on the boards of both the Hispanic Summer Program and the Hispanic Theological Initiative, programs focused on providing support for Hispanic students in master’s and doctoral theological education.

Alongside her work at the Divinity School, Terri serves as Senior Minister at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Downers Grove, IL. She is the first person of color to serve as pastor of this predominantly white congregation. A small congregation with a large heart to serve and give, FCCDG’s ministry reaches to the homeless in DuPage County, as well as families with children in the surrounding area. Each year, the church hosts a Back-to-School Fair, serving nearly 800 people each year. In addition to school supplies, the church offers a fun afternoon of food, games, hair cuts, health assessments—all at no cost to needy families. The church also supports the Isle of Hope Camp and orphanage in Belarus, which ministers to children affected by the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. FCCDG also supports local service ministries such as LOVE Christian Clearinghouse, Hope’s Front Door, FISH food pantry, and its members are active across the Chicagoland area in a variety of service agencies/ministries. Unity, liberty and love are the core values of this congregation that seeks to be the presence of Christ in the community. Under Rev. Owens’ leadership, FCCDG is now an open and affirming, anti-racism, pro-reconciliation congregation. FCCDG also nests an independent Hispanic congregation, Fe Y Esperanza, with whom they share in a variety of ministries throughout the year.

Rev. Owens is a member of the Board of Trustees at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis and serves as Secretary of the Board. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Higher Education and Leadership Ministries (HELM) of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She is a founding member of the Advisory Board for the Center for the Study of Black Faith and Life at Chicago Theological Seminary in Chicago. She is also active in denominational work at the regional and national level of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Over the years, she has leveraged her executive management experience as an initial screener of applications for several executive searches for general units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and two regional minister searches. She served on the IT Advisory Committee for the Pension Fund during its recent systems upgrade to provide online member access. Rev. Owens was honored to be the preacher for the opening worship service at the 2015 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in July 2015.
Rev. Owens is widely sought after as a preacher, speaker and workshop facilitator. Her ministry and intellectual interests include a theology of reconciliation, cultural intelligence, developing inclusive and multi-cultural congregations, and the mentoring of youth and young adults. She is married to Walter Owens, Jr., with whom she will soon celebrate 30 years of marriage. They are the proud parents of an adult son, W. Mitchell Owens, III.

**CHAIR SHARES QUALITIES OF HORD OWENS**

"We saw in Terri that unique combination of pastoral, leadership, active presence in all expressions of the Church and administrative experience that the search committee believed was most needed," said Search Committee Chair Jackie Bunch. "She has experience as a local pastor, theologian and leader.

"The committee particularly noted her skills in discernment, spiritual discipline and proclamation of the Word, but also as a listener."

The Rev. Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens, nominee for General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), is not only an ordained minister, but she has also spent time in academia as executive and mentor as well as earlier experiences in secular industries.

"The search committee recognized that leading the Church in this day and age requires a certain business acumen as well as a heart for ministry," Bunch said. "We see that Terri brings that special mix of academic, executive and pastoral qualities that are required for leading the Disciples through this time in our North American culture. She has a background of bringing together diverse groups for dialogue that will serve the Church well."

**TERRI’S VISION STATEMENT**

*John 17:23* — “...that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” (NRSV)

*Micah 6:8* — “[God] has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (NRSV)

As we approach the 2017 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the election of a new General Minister and President, I write to share the vision that God has laid on my heart for our church as a candidate for the office of General Minister and President.

The vision of the movement that has become known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has always focused on the unity of believers, even amidst and in spite of differences that may seek to divide the church. We give each other permission to disagree and we offer love in all things. We declare that we are a pro-reconciliation and anti-racism church, and that we welcome all as God has welcomed us. In these ways, we have sought to live justly, in unity, in the midst of many differences. In these times in which we live, an active understanding of unity is even more important to our church, our movement in the U.S. and Canada, and around the world. John 17 has long been one of my favorite New Testament texts because I believe it sets forth the reason why we are to execute the Great Commission, and why we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. Jesus’ prayer for unity is not to establish “kum-ba-yah” moments, “feel good” experiences that evaporate after we release our neighbor’s hand. Jesus’ intent and vision is that we are one “so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” (John 17:23b, NRSV). Our striving for unity is perhaps the most powerful way in which we bear witness that the love of God is real and present in the world. If we can hold one another in community, even in the presence of tensions that result from human differences of various dimensions of identity, socio-economic status, geography, theology and politics, it should be our goal that the world will see in us what is possible through Christian love and unity. We can be an example to the world to say that we believe the gospel of Jesus Christ and his church are so important that we can work together despite those differences to ensure that God’s message of love is shared and lived out in the world, as we work for justice for all. This is, I believe, what Jesus prayed for, and it is what I believe we are called to live out as disciples/Disciples of Christ.

A noted Disciples theologian has often stated that unity “is not a human agreement, it is a gift from God.” Anyone who has worked among and within human organizations understands that despite our loftiest goals, our noblest visions, our most faithful theology, we are yet humans—flawed even as we are sincere. And yet God can use us in our imperfections to be an example of what is possible when we are able to create community in the midst of tensions that may be created by difference in identity, geography, politics and theology. Imagine what it can look like—looking at a community of believers who have placed the love of God and neighbor above all else, who do not demonize differences as deficient but seek to understand one another in light of our uniqueness and diversity; who are willing for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ to stand shoulder to shoulder, working through differences in priorities, opinions, methods and goals—always yielding to the vision of how the world might be able to see real love among us and through us. This is not an easy vision, and it will take not just the best of what is in us, but it will also take the best of what God can do in and through us. It is a beautiful, gritty, necessary vision that we must pursue, empowered by the love of God, led by the example of Jesus Christ, and guided.
by the Holy Spirit. We will need to learn how to have
difficult conversations, to go beyond the standard
training sessions, to sit with one another, be
uncomfortable at times, and learn how to hear one
another fully, to place ourselves in one another’s shoes
and honor each other’s identity and lived experiences.
Imagine what a blessing we can be to creation if we can
face this challenge and model this work before the
world!

Our historical structure (since the inception of the
Design) has sought to honor, respect and bridge
difference, to respect the agency of the local
congregation, and to ensure that resources were in place
to support the work of ministry at the local, regional and
national, and even international level. The racial and
ethnic diversity among our congregations has been
instrumental to our vitality, and we must continue to
work to ensure justice and prevail across our church in
all its manifestations, honoring the covenant made before
us. We must continue to build an inclusive church
where all are welcome to God’s table, fellowship and
service. Our goals for mission and ministry should guide
any decisions about structure and organization. With
faithful stewardship of our resources, we can engage
decisions together, focused on the community in which
we all hold equal standing before God and one another.
The gift of God that is the process of unity will give us
grace to do the work of shepherding our human, physical
and organizational resources.

Like politics, ministry is local. The regional and
national expressions of our church must have as their
focus ministry to and support of local congregations.
Vital congregations are the key to our future, and as we
continue to plant new churches, we must not only “fold
the tent” when necessary, but in many cases, “open the
flaps” so that new voices and ideas can come alongside
existing congregations. Whether the congregation is
new or has a 100+ year history, whether the
congregation has less than 50 members or more than
1000, we need members with “the heart of a planter.”
We all need to serve our congregations realizing that we
are building and serving not for ourselves, but for those
who will come after us, seeking God, seeking spiritual
connection, seeking community. There are many
congregations where membership is healthy enough to
invite such transition, and we can work with
congregations to help them prepare to “open the flaps” to
allow others to join them in a new phase of ministry. It
is always true for any generation that we must be open to
different ways of being church, ever ready to try new
ways of engaging God’s people. We must invest time
and energy in our next generation of leaders, listening as
they tell us what is needed to reach these next
generations. Technology can afford us exciting ways in
which to communicate with other and the world. As
technology evolves, we will need to evolve so that we
can communicate and fellowship effectively, sharing
thoughts and ideas, supporting one another, allowing
voices across our church to be heard, reaching a world
that is rapidly changing with the news of God’s love
through Jesus Christ. We must support families as they
seek to build spiritual foundations for their children, and
we must engage, respect, and leverage the wisdom of our
elders on whose shoulders we stand, and whose hands
we must continue to hold as we move forward together.
An intergenerational church allows us all to benefit from
the joy and wisdom of each phase of life.

I often describe ministry as being priestly, pastoral and
prophetic. In our tradition, all believers participate in the
priestly work of leading the people in worship and
community-building. We all share in the pastoral care of
our congregations and communities, and our traditions of
lay leadership among elders and deacons is vital to our
care for one another. We will continue the collaborative
work in ministry to the world with our congregations and
global partners. Perhaps never before in recent times has
the prophetic role of the church been so important. The
prophet Micah reminded the people of Israel that they
knew what God wanted them to do, that God had already
shown them what was good. What does the Lord
require? “... to do justly, love kindness [mercy] and walk
humbly with your God. (Micah 6:6-8, NRSV). Our
prophetic stance as we work for justice must be
grounded in a thoughtful engagement with scripture, in
deep and honest theological reflection, and commitment
to prayer all along the way. As followers of Jesus
Christ, we are instructed by Jesus to follow his example
of time spent with God to prepare for the service we are
called to render. The work of justice requires spiritual
resources that are beyond our own limitations, and the
work of justice requires that we have a clear focus on
collaboration. Having prepared ourselves spiritually, the
work of justice becomes the lived theology and
expression of our love for God and neighbor. It is in our
solidarity and action that we live as witnesses to the call
of God for justice and unity.

As we prayerfully discern together how God is leading
our church, I am committed to my relationship with God,
my discipleship as a follower of Christ, to walk humbly
with God so that I am prepared to do justly and love
kindness. I offer myself in fellowship and covenant to
my fellow believers to do the work of ministry, to be a
faithful leader and co-laborer, a servant within our
movement and a faithful steward of all its resources. I
am committed to the work of justice, and will work
collaboratively as together we I pray that together we
can provide the world with an example of the radical
love and hospitality of God that will allow us to be
witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ in this time,
working in solidarity for justice among us all. May they
look at our fellowship, with all its diversity, with all its
struggles, and marvel at God’s goodness and love. May
it be so.
General Board nominates moderator team for 2017-19

Sue Morris
Moderator
Omaha, NE

Morris has been serving the past two years as moderator-elect. She is a proud fourth generation member whose father was the Rev. Donald Hogan. Morris has been a member of the Mission First taskforce since its inception and is a past board member and chair of the Pension Fund. Morris also served on the board of trustees for Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, as well as a board member for Church Extension. She is a member of First Christian Church, Omaha, NE.

As president of Heritage Services, she has been involved with numerous capital campaigns, including the $107 million capital campaign to build the Holland Performing Arts Center in Omaha and the campaign for the TD Ameritrade Stadium and funds to support Joslyn Art Museum and the Durham Museum.

First Vice Moderator: The Rev. Beau Underwood

Rev. Beau Underwood has served as the senior minister of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Jefferson City, MO since February of 2015. Prior to moving to Missouri’s state capital, he was the senior director of advocacy and communications at Sojourners in Washington, DC and an assistant minister at National City Christian Church. A lifelong Disciple, he is a 2003 graduate of Eureka College and a 2010 graduate of both the Divinity School and the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago, where he was also a Disciples Divinity House Scholar. He is currently taking doctoral classes at the University of Missouri’s Truman School of Public Policy. In addition to his ministry as a local church pastor, Rev. Underwood serves on the board of directors for Higher Education and Leadership Ministries (HELM) and the Mid-America Region.

Moderator-Elect: The Reverend Belva Brown Jordan

Jordan serves as the associate dean for curriculum and assessment and as associate professor of the practice of ministry at Claremont School of Theology as well as dean of Disciples Seminary Foundation (Claremont). Jordan’s ministry and service with the Church and higher education, spans 30+ years. She began her ministerial career as a denominational executive for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with the Division of Homeland Ministry as the director of racial/ethnic ministry. She also served as the denomination’s director of youth ministry focusing on leader development with youth. Jordan served on the faculty of Lancaster Theological Seminary (PA) and after having earned tenure and serving as dean of the faculty for one year, she moved on to Harvard University Divinity School (Cambridge, MA) where she was assistant dean for student life. She then became the associate dean for admissions and student services at Phillips Theological Seminary (Tulsa, OK) and now is at Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA.

Second Vice Moderator: The Rev. Dr. Timothy Lee

Rev. Timothy Lee Timothy S. Lee is an ordained minister and a historian of Christianity. He is associate professor of the history of Christianity and director of Asian (Korean) Church Studies at Brite Divinity School (Texas Christian University). He attended the University of Illinois (Urbana), where he earned a B.A. in history; and the University of Chicago Divinity School, where he earned an A.M. in Religious Studies, a certificate in Ministerial Studies, and a PhD in the History of Christianity. He was ordained in 1996, at Chicago Christian Church (DOC), under the mentorship of the late Rev. Soongook Choi. In 2010, he served as moderator of NAPAD’s inaugural board of directors. He has also been a member of the General Reconciliation Committee, the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Higher Education and Leadership Ministries, the Mission Alignment Coordinating Council, the Council on Christian Unity, and the Association of Disciples for Theological Discussion.
"Mission First!" Disciples have said for over two years. Through the Mission First process, a shared mission priority is emerging calling the church to imagine partnering in mission with all ages - especially the young - in our local and global communities. Could your congregation commit to walk alongside neighborhood schoolchildren as mentors and classroom readers? Could your ministry be more intentional in involving all generations of adults in decisions and designs of new programs? Could you find ways to work against the social structures that make life a struggle for youth? The possibilities are endless, and the partnership potential is immense.

**From the Mission Council**

*From the Mission Gatherings we learned that God is well at work in many ways. We are overwhelmingly called to be a Church that passionately:*

- Responds with compassion to the vulnerable;
- Creates communities of inclusion and care;
- Overcomes ongoing and deeply entrenched injustice resisting racism and other forms of injustice in order to affirm the fullness of life for all God's children;
- Works together in common cause with ecumenical and global ministry partners.

We also heard a call to focus our efforts for a time on areas in which the above actions intersect with the lives of children, youth and young adults; thus, enhancing our presence in ways that illuminate God's mission.

Still in draft form (comments welcome) the shared mission priority discerned through the Mission First process is this: **God calls us to work with and for children, youth and young adults so together we may share and receive the good news of Jesus Christ by creating communities of healing, learning and transformation.**

**What is Mission First?**

Mission First! is a two-part pilot project helping Disciples focus on two goals: showing God's love in the world (a.k.a. mission) and making our church's structures more nimble for this new day.

**Mission focus:** In Mission Gatherings, we have listened to God's call as we hear it through the congregations and ministries of the Church. In the Mission Council, we have identified a shared mission priority, and now will help the church stay on track with that priority.

**Nimble structures:** Through a small, representative Governing Board, we attend to the ministry of administration. (In 2016, the General Board authorized the Administrative Committee to serve as a proto-Governing Board.)

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**CONGRATULATIONS DR. CROWDER**

The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Buckhannon Crowder was inducted on March 30, 2017 into Morehouse College’s Board of Preachers, Sponsor, Collegium of Scholars and College of Pastoral Leadership.

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**CONGRATULATIONS J. O. WILLIAMS**

The Rev. J. O. Williams, retired Associate Regional Minister of North Carolina, received the Life Achievements and Trailblazer Award from the Goldsboro - Raleigh Assembly of Disciples of Christ, Goldsboro NC.
INAUGURAL "BRIDGE BUILDER" AWARD GIVEN TO BELL-HAYNES, HOBGOOD.

The Christian Church Capital Area honored two longtime advocates for justice and racial reconciliation: the Rev Joan Bell-Haynes and the Rev. William Chris Hobgood (Cary Meade Hobgood is standing with Chris). They were awarded the inaugural CCCA Bridge Builders Award as part of our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. commemoration, held this year at National City Christian church.

REV. JOAN BELL-HAYNES
EXECUTIVE REGIONAL MINISTER, CRMR

"This is God's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes". Mark 12:11

On February 4, 2017, the Central Rocky Mountain Region unanimously voted to call the Rev. Joan Bell-Haynes to serve as its Executive Regional Minister. Rev. Bell-Haynes comes to the CRMR from United Christian Parish of Reston, an ecumenical congregation comprised of four denominations, where she has served since 2005 as co-pastor.

Rev. Bell-Haynes is an alumna of the Disciples Divinity House and the University of Chicago Divinity School. She is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). After earning her undergraduate degree in Psychology from Albany State College (Albany, GA) she worked as Assistant Dean of Academics in the College of Health Sciences at Georgia State University in Atlanta, GA.

She was ordained to ministry jointly by Maywood Christian Church, Maywood, IL, and Park Manor Christian Church, Chicago, IL, in August 1999. She served as associate pastor of Community Christian Church, Kansas City, MO, and University Christian Church, Hyattsville, MD. She worked as Associate Regional Minister of the Christian Church Capital Area, Wheaton, MD where she gave leadership to Women, Men and Camp and Conference Ministries. She worked at Spirit House on Capitol Hill with founding director, Ruby Sales, veteran civil rights leader, prior to accepting the call to United Christian Parish in 2005.

Rev. Bell-Haynes is devoted to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and has an extensive record of service in all manifestations of the church. Over the years, she has served in various positions including: First Vice Moderator of General Church, Board member of Christian Church Foundation, Secretary of the National Convocation, and Church Extension Board member.

She brings vital leadership experience in bridge-building as one who loves all God’s people. She is an ecumenist at heart and an interfaith partner with the Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Catholic, and Sikh communities. Rev. Bell-Haynes was the 2017 co-recipient of the Christian Church Capital Area Bridge Builder Award.
BURTON NAMED GREAT RIVER REGIONAL MINISTER

Rev. Dr. Nadine Burton is the newly called Executive Regional Minister for the Great River Region. She accepted the assignment as Interim Regional Minister in September 2015.

Dr. Burton earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Tennessee-Martin and a Master of Divinity degree from Memphis Theological Seminary. She completed her Doctor of Ministry degree in Multicultural Studies at Lexington Theological Seminary, completing her thesis, “Considering the Relevance of a Multicultural Reality within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).”

Her ministry includes eight years of congregational service as Associate Pastor, Christian Education, and Interim Associate Pastor, Christian Education and Strategic Development at Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis, TN; eight years for the Board of Church Extension, serving as the Minister, New Church Leader Development; and eight years with Sharp Electronics, as Personnel Generalist. Her portfolio includes human resources, church administration, strategic planning, coaching, and consultant. She is a gifted preacher, teacher, coach, and facilitator. In May 2016, she earned the Associate Certified Coach Certification through the International Coaching Federation.

Dr. Burton serves in a variety of leadership roles within the Christian Church (DOC), some of which include: Board Member, Christian Board of Publication, workshop leader and facilitator at General and Regional Assemblies, and the National Convocation of African American Churches. She recently led a task force to write a new mission statement for the Black Disciples Clergy Fellowship Group. She is a member of the Mission Council, working to launch a mission priority for the wider denomination. She is a member of “The College” of Regional Ministers, who provide guidance, community and collegiality for impactful regional ministries.

Dr. Burton has traveled extensively with the Division of Overseas Ministries. Missions included Mozambique, Southern Africa, Haiti Global Mission Experience with New Church Ministries, “Lead Me to Calvary” Fact Finding Trip, Israel/Palestine, Israel and Egypt, Post-Apartheid Mission Trip to Southern Africa. She also traveled with the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University “Intersections with African Religions,” and Athens, Greece, Educational Tour of Greek Isles tracing Paul’s missionary journey.

Dr. Burton loves her family – she has six brothers (one deceased) and three sisters, and 60 nieces and nephews, who love God and serve in their communities and churches. After twenty years in Christian Ministry, she still believes in the power of unconditional love and prayer that can change the lives of God’s people!

BARBARA OWENS NAMED DC MOTHER OF THE YEAR

The ideals of American Mothers, Inc.® began in the heart and mind of Anna Reeves Jarvis as she sought to heal the damage done to families caught in the conflict of the Civil War. By organizing a day of love and friendship across battle lines, this simple observance grew into the national holiday known as Mother’s Day for which American Mothers is the official sponsor. This year American Mothers named Barbara Owens as the District of Columbia Mother of the Year.

Barbara Owens is the wife of the pastor of Michigan Park Christian Church and the mother of 3 children whom she home schooled. Barbara has spent a career in the field of education and has a BS in Sociology/Psychology and a M.Ed in Elementary Education. In addition to 21 years of successful teaching experience, Barbara has been involved with “Chance Academy,” an organization that educates parents on home schooling their children. Barbara is also passionate about helping families in need through “Community Health Initiatives.” Through this organization, Barbara provides groceries, access to health care, or even transportation to doctor appointments. She has reached out internationally doing mission work in the Republic of Ghana, West Africa where she was instrumental in providing 4 villages with fresh water wells.
THE HEALING FROM FORGIVENESS
BY REV. DR. WILLIE K. CRUM, JR

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” (Colossians 3:12-13)

One day as I was preparing for a support group session I decided to focus on the word “unforgiveness”. I asked the group, “When you think of the word ‘unforgiveness’, what comes to your mind?” Several group participants voiced statements concerning their feelings and experiences. When it came to the word “unforgiveness,” they thought of stress, illness, animosity, being frightened, dying, death, hurting, loss and pain.

Unforgiveness can have a great effect on your life/body, never mind the daily existences of living and what life brings to us in the way of hardships. We must ask ourselves, “Why add on more problems to our lives?” People are not normally bad; they just act on evil thoughts.

If you know something that is affecting your body or that is going to hurt or upset others, why do it? Use your energy on something good. Focus on combatting conflicts with a caring spirit. How would Jesus handle evildoing toward Him? Perhaps, the answer lies in the words of these scriptures: Ephesians 4:32, “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you,” and James 1:19-20, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”

One person in our group voiced difficulty with forgiving a person that did him wrong, especially when he did not apologize for the wrongdoing. When someone violates us and doesn’t apologize, we must forgive first, even if he/she doesn’t. God wants us to forgive, and He will strengthen us to pray for that person, continue to love and care for that person. Love doesn’t destroy; it is evil that destroys our bodies.

So, we have to find a way to forgive if we want God to forgive us. It is okay if you can’t forget what someone did to you or what happened, but you have to come to some type of resolution that will lessen the problem. When you’ve been hurt by someone or mistrusted by someone, it can be very difficult to allow that person to come back into your life and to affect you again, so we find a way to protect ourselves from getting hurt again.

We need to pray that God will give us the insight to avoid having those types of relationships or situations that would cause frustration and pain. We must look at ourselves to understand why we are unable to forgive others, but in the same breath, why we want God to forgive us. Then, we must look into our hearts and minds to figure out what we need to do in order to forgive others.

In other words, we need the Lord Jesus to remove whatever is blocking us from forgiving. Maybe 1 Peter 4:17 is onto something. If we are Christian and believe in the Bible, then we don’t have any reason not to forgive. Again, if we want a good outcome, “… it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?”

By any means possible, we will find a way to protect ourselves from getting hurt again. One would think that is a healthy mechanism because no one wants to be hurt again. We need to learn how to avoid exposure to whatever relationships or situations we cannot fight against.

The Bible tells us in, Matthew 18:21-35, “Then Peter came up and said to him, ‘Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you
seven times, but seventy times seven. Therefore, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.”

The “Golden Rule” comes into play with these scriptures, to do unto others the way you would rather be treated, with caring and forgiveness. This is a healthy way of living among all of God’s people.

**Behavioral Medicine on Forgiveness**

The meaning of forgiveness is the act of forgiving a person for doing you wrong. The other way of looking at forgiveness is that it is the right thing to do, and the healthy thing to do for your health.

According to the Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley, “Forgiveness is the act of consciously deciding to let go of resentment or vengeance toward another entity who has harmed you in some way; whether or not they’re actually deserving of that forgiveness. (It does not mean having to forget or condone the wrongdoing committed against you.) Fortunately, forgiveness is cultivatable — and can be practiced through different strategies, including developing empathy, looking for the silver linings and properly expressing your feelings.”

Dr. B. Kizer Crum (Greenville Health System, Internal Medicine, Residence Program) adds, “With continual research and stress management strategies offered to patients, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, general counseling, and medication, with the additional spiritual support for those interested, stress levels can be reduced.”

Chronic stress and its link to “un-forgiveness” can have a toll on the physical body and contribute to derailments and disease. Stress causes behavioral changes in appetite, sleep, and may even result in anhedonia, an inability to feel pleasure, if there is no insight or if stress levels are not adequately treated. According to a 2012 issue of the *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, “People who practice conditional forgiveness — in other words, people who can only forgive if others say sorry first or promise not to do the transgression again — may be more likely to die earli-
er, compared with people who are less likely to practice conditional forgiveness.”

The *Huff Post Newsletters* state that, “The Luther College researchers explained that apologies can help to move the forgiveness process along, but if ‘sorry’ is a necessary condition for forgiveness, then there will likely be fewer instances of forthcoming forgiveness for that individual.” Furthermore, there is good in forgiveness, and it is a good way to resolve chronic illnesses. This article reminds us that, according to Johns Hopkins Medicine, “When you’re chronically angry, you’re in a fight-or-flight mode — which can have effects on blood pressure and heart rate. But when you truly forgive, that leads to decreased stress, which can help to tamp down the anger.”

There are more heart-healthy reasons to make peace with others than to cause our blood pressure to go down. Another study published in a 2005 issue of the *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* showed that forgiveness is associated with a whole range of health measures, including medications taken, sleep quality and fatigue. University of Tennessee researchers wrote, “The health benefits of forgiveness seem to come largely from its ability to reduce negative affect feelings of tension, anger, depression and fatigue.”

The article concluded that “with forgiveness, the victim relinquishes ideas of revenge, and feels less hostile, angry, or upset about the experiences.”

**Conclusion**

One must serve God and His people. The scriptures tell us that God sent His Son into the world to save us from our sins and to be able to live spiritual life with Him and others. Forgiveness gives us the power to heal and to serve the Lord with righteousness.

I want to leave you with these scriptures:

Romans 12:19, “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ’Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.”

And, 1 John 4:20, “If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.”
HOW PRECIOUS TO LOOK UPON

Oh how precious to look upon the Lord’s Table and view His Supper prepared and laid before you, and to know it awaits the people of God to partake. And I am awake and I am hungry for this blessed meal. Just to look upon the Loaf and Cup having been set before me invokes a vision of my Savior Jesus sitting there, blessing and breaking the Loaf; saying to the disciples to “Take, eat, this is my body given for you, do this in remembrance of Me.” Then taking the Cup and blessing it He then said to them “This is my blood of the new covenant, shed for many for the remission of sin. As often as ye do this you do proclaim my death and suffering until I come again.”

In that day the Table would have lain bare before them. Bread was not even covered in the market place. Today we appear to be trying to hide these sacred elements. They sit housed, usually in metal containers with lids covered over. Sometimes even left covered as we stand at the Table blessing the bread, blessing the Cup. We often leave this beautiful feast covered as we pray. What a feeling of having been there, feeling as though you are there with the disciples when it is uncovered and left uncovered until the Communion is partaken of so we might look upon its beauty and engulf a sense of understanding and be filled with a sense of affirmation that we must be proclaimers that HE lived, suffered, died, was buried and Is Risen; Is Risen, not has risen, but Is Risen for HE Is and always will be Lord and Savior.

HOW I WONDER

I often wonder about Adam and Eve. Adult size kids there in the garden. They were so childlike that when the stranger/Satan/came into their backyard, like little children, they listened to him. That’s why today, for we know better, we tell our children to run away from the stranger, don’t talk to strangers. I’m not trying to make any excuse for them, Eve had been told not to eat of the Tree of knowledge of good and evil, but I doubt if any one of us, then, would have done differently. Do you reckon you would have called out “FATHER, THERE IS A STRANGER IN OUR GARDEN. COME AND SEND HIM AWAY.” But too often, like Adam and Eve, we listen still today to the stranger’s voice – and why?

Screw tape (Satan) says “we’re always searching for something new, something new to say, be, do. Any-

thing different, anything new. Just to show you how childlike we can be –here is an example: Two young boys about to say their prayers in bed, the one in the top bunk says to the one in the lower “Is there anything special you want? Mine is going to get there first.” Only a young child would think like this. We adults have the responsibility of telling and teaching them correctly in regard to the Almighty. HE hears and receives all prayers. He has the answers for all our prayers. Only HE and HE alone hears and receives each one’s petition. There is no first or second line, just receiving. It then lies within HIM as to how, if, or when.

INTERNATIONAL TOASTMASTERS

Light of the World Christian Church has one of the most dynamic Toastmasters Club for 11 years, Indianapolis, IN., District 11, Division 3, Area 31, Club 920678. Mrs. Juanita Hardiman, presently serving as Vice President of Education is founding organizer of more than 20 years standing and she has done a remarkable job of keeping the Club active. We are a welcoming Club. Toastmasters helps anyone to improve their ability to speak without the ah’s, and’s, um’s, you know’s. It is a club that encourages and gives confidence on your job or any other area where you might be asked to speak.

MADE ME

APRIL 17, 2016

Mom. She:
made me sleep when I wanted to look at her with weary eyes
made me eat yucky vegetables when I wanted animal cookies
made me drink water when I wanted juice, soda pop
made pick up my toys, clean my room, I wanted to watch Superman
made me go to the bathroom when I wanted to play on the computer
made me say “Grace” at the dinner table, I wanted to
eat, too hungry to speak to God
made me go to children’s church, Sunday school, I
wanted to thumb wrestle with Dad next to Mom.
made me be quiet in church, her “No” look could kill
ya’ dead
made me come home at 11pm every night I wanted to
be disrespectful, out of control
made me go to school, keep a job, go to church, I
wanted a girlfriend and a car
made me graduate from high school I wanted to wear
a cap and gown for her.
She was so proud of me.

Though my Mom and Dad have separated to form
new families, uncles, aunts, male role models, minis-
ters, many moms and and dads, neighbors, good
friends, “the village”, made me a Man.

Mom,
I remember the words you taught me as a child,
“Thank you, please, help me, I am sorry, I love you”.
These words are in my prayer:
“Lord thank you for a roof over my head and food on
my table.
Thank you for my wife and children.
Please continue to give me health and strength to be a
good provider for our family.
I am sorry for my sins against you.
Help me to be patient with my wife and children. It is
my desire to do better, work better, and to love
everybody better.
I love you Lord”.
Amen

Thank you Mom.
I love you.

Psalm 23:1-2
The Lord is my Shepherd,
I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
He leads me besides quiet water.

AN EASTER BASKET
April 10, 2017

I asked God for an Easter Basket
with diabetic cookies,
a stuffed animal,
and diabetic candy too.

The angels smiled and hid
a laugh. Quit a divine task!
"She is too old, Lord, for a basket.
We know she is pass sixty-two".

The Lord's ear was deaf to their
misunderstanding of the human heart.
The Lord turns His back toward the angels
as they whisper "What will He do?".

He reached into the heavens for a basket
similar to Moses' vessel of deliverance.
Moses floated into the soft heart of Pharaoh's
daughter. Pulled him from dangerous waters of blue.

The Lord found grasses from the Nile
to place in the basket. He tossed out
the bad snakes and the mean crocodiles. In
King Solomon's toy box he found a cow that said
"MOOOOOO"

Healthy stuff like a bar of goodness and mercy,
goodwill toward men, longsuffering and peace was
put in the basket. The Lord tossed in bags of trust-
worthy, forgiveness of wrongs done against one an-
other and love. The Lord God is full of wisdom for
He put you in my basket. The healthy stuff is inside
of you!

With much attention, my basket is ready for me on
Easter morn. Looking in my basket, the angels are
amazed at its value and weight! I count my blessings
of health, family, friends and you. As I search for
more blessings, my finger touch something sticky like

glue.

My fingers are pricked on your crown of thorns, the
sticky substance is your jellied blood. I touched a
cross with an emboss "King of the Jews". My hands
cradle a stone called "Rolled Ah Way". I opened a
plastic egg. A note inside read "This basket is from
"I Am" No other clue need I pursue.
FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

NAOMI HANNAH

Naomi Hannah, 81, of Lake-wood, NJ, died on March 3, 2017 at home. Born in Savannah, GA. She was the First Lady of Antioch Christian Church, New Brunswick. Formerly served as the Treasurer of the Christian Women for the Disciples of Christ, head of Antioch Women's Department and Advisor to the Antioch Youth Department.

Predeceased by her parents, Robert And Ida Mae Carter, Sr., nine siblings, Robert Carter, Jr., Tommie, Rogers, Joseph, Charles and Ruth Carter, Nathaniel Hines, Robbie Davis and Jeannette Valentine and 1 stepson, Marion. Naomi leaves to cherish her memory, her loving husband, Rev. Marion Hannah, her children, Charles, Martha and Deborah Carter, Barbara Coppage, Susan Harper (Jason) and Lamarr Hannah; stepchildren, Jerome, Tonia, Keith and Delmar, siblings, Phillip Hines, Sarah Hunter (Milton), Myrtis Robinson and Gwen Hines, in-laws, Helen Carter, Laurena Carter, Ophelia Hines and Arthur Davis, aunts, Annie P. Scott and Leola Prestley, a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, godchildren, nieces and nephews.

Hagerstown, as the associate minister in 1962, and stayed until his retirement on May 31, 1989 (27 years).

After his retirement from ordained ministry, he continued to support the church's ministries by actively participating and leading the Global Outreach Commission and championing the cause for the Week of Compassion. He was the greeter for the Mothers of Pre-School program since its inception in 2001. Rev. Bob was an active member of the Christian Heirs Sunday school class, and joined the class each summer for vacation at the Bethany Beach Conference Center, taking his daughter and grandson on this family tradition. He was a regular at the Over the Hill Gang,Seniors in Ministry, and participated in every aspect of the life of First Christian, if not as a participant, as a loyal supporter.

He is survived by his loving daughter, Brenda L. Unger, and grandson, Mitchell R. Unger of Boonsboro, Md.; brother-in-law, S.R. Moss of Texas; and several nephews, Mark Regenold of Kansas; Doug Moss of New York; Brad Moss of Texas; and Mike Moss of Texas.

He was preceeded in death by his wife, Patsy A. Moss; and a brother, Donald Regenold

HAYWOOD VAUGHN JR

The Rev. Robert Louis Regenold, age 89, of Hagerstown, Md., passed away peacefully on June 3, 2016, while vacationing in Williamsburg, Va.,

Born December 20, 1926, in St. Elmo, Illinois, he was the youngest son of Louis and Hazel (METZ) Regenold.

Mr. Haywood Vaughn Jr was born on June 15th, 1934 in Reidsville, NC and departed this life on December 6, 2016. At an early age, he professed and made a commitment to the Disciples of Christ denomination, which led him to unite with Twelfth Street Christian Church in Washington, DC, where he joined in 1973. Haywood had a great love for and dedication to Twelfth Street. He gave freely of himself and his resources in support of his church.

He celebrated the teachings of the Church and mastered the gift of church leadership like no one before him. He understood the nature of church leadership and carried out all his duties with honor and respect. Haywood was a born leader who led the church to safety during turbulent times. He served as an Elder,
President of the Sanctuary Choir, Chair of the Music Department, chair of the Official Board and intermittently for approximately 20 years as Moderator of Twelfth Street Christian Church, earning him the title of "Moderator Emeritus".

Haywood Vaughn served 23 years in the U.S. Air Force, with duty stationed throughout the world. His military bearing and intellect resulted in him being hand-picked for a special assignment with the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon, Washington, DC in 1975. He retired from the Air Force at the rank of Master Sergeant. After retirement he worked as an administrative manager for several law firms. Haywood was a member of the Association of Legal Administrators and the Association of Records Managers. Among his many talents and hobbies was his jazz music. He played for several jazz groups throughout Washington, DC. He found so much joy in "blowing his horn."

Haywood Vaughn Jr. is survived by his beloved wife Ella "Peggy" Vaughn, son Robert Vaughn (Cheryl) and Daughter in Law (Wanda Vaughn), in addition to a host of family and special friends. He will be missed by Twelfth Street Christian Church.

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OLDTIMERS’ GRAPEVINE is a free print and electronic ministry published three times a year through tax exempt donations. The ministry networks Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) seasoned pilgrims by: 1) enhancement of communication and sharing of mutual experiences; 2) conveying a holistic view of aging and health; 3) being an advocate for seniors to become a supportive, loving and caring community; 4) giving honor and dignity to the lives of those included in “For Whom The Bell Tolls”; and 5) highlighting opportunities for the maintenance of a high quality life style and service in retirement. We are enabled by the vision of our founder and publisher/executive editor emeritus; and servants ordered as Board of Directors, administration and editorial staff.

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“Masai warriors in Africa have a greeting that Americans ought to embrace “Eserian Nakera”, they always say when passing one another. It means, “And how are the children?”; their traditional response is: “All the children are well.”

Hugh Price, former National Urban League President

Beloved Grapevine Readers,

As a proud grandmother, I am always eager to mention my grandchildren, Zion and Journee Strickland in my Letter to our readers. Past Letters have given me the opportunity to share good news about them and the joy they bring to our family. A recent incident that six year old Journee experienced is not good news; however by sharing her story, there is the hope we will be moved to act on behalf of our children.

Near the end of Journee’s day at a city children’s museum, where she was enrolled in an Art Camp; a male six year old camper cornered her; made threatening gestures (did not touch her), and told her because of her color, she was not an American. He pointed to the only other African American girl in the camp and stated she was not an American either.

It was a very chilling and distressing encounter that her parents and the museum handled well. “What must Journee have felt to be threatened in such a way? At home she later confirmed with her mother: “I was born in Peoria - right?” When her mother replied in the affirmative, Journee said: “then I am an American.” What experiences did the six year old perpetrator of this exchange have that made him feel comfortable in threatening Journee so openly? What caused him to make threatening gestures, yet take care not to hit or touch her? Where did he learn that African Americans are not Americans?

Surely if we utter Eserian Nakera regarding Journee’s experience - the answer is: “All the children are not well.” Unfortunately there are too many children and families who have no first hand knowledge of persons who are racially or culturally different. Much of what they know about ‘the other’ is based on racial stereotypes.

We are assured in Proverbs 22:6 (NRSV) Train children in the right way, and when they are old, they will not stray.” As Disciples we are called to support the new Mission Priority of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that focuses on children. Let us discern what God is calling us to do to follow God’s command that “we love one another.” For example, we can look at ways to create curricula and bible studies that promote the valuing of diversity and cultural differences, taking a developmental approach that begins with babies. Congregations could dialogue about how to provide interracial, cross-cultural, and inter-generational experiences for children and their parents? Please share your ideas with me and I will share them with our readers in future issues.

Journee is doing well, thanks to the grace of God and her loving parents. Let us move forward asking one another: “And how are the children?” and let us work to make the answer: “All the children are well.”

Your Sister in Christ,
Norma R. Ellington-Twitty, Ph.D., Board President
nretphd@sbcglobal.net
Rev. Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens is the first African-American to hold this post and the second woman to lead the denomination.

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was born out of the Stone-Campbell Movement, part of the Great Awakening on the American frontier in the early 1800s. The denomination is congregationally governed, meaning each congregation appoints its own leadership and determines its own mission and support. There are 32 regional bodies that support congregations as well as relate to the general ministries of the denomination.

The election of Hord Owens follows the 12-year tenure of the Rev. Sharon E. Watkins, who was the first female to lead a mainline denomination in the United States upon her election in 2005. Hord Owens' term is six years with an option for re-election in 2023 for an additional six-year term.

Hord Owens comes to the position in a time of renewed emphasis on the issues of race, particularly in the United States. Her election comes on the 50th anniversary of the Merger Agreement uniting the African-American and largely white branches of the American-born denomination. She is currently pastor of a predominately white congregation in the Chicago area.

"We need to stop demonizing differences as deficiencies," Hord Owens says. "We should seek to understand, to work through our differences in priorities, opinions, methods, and goals. This will not be easy, but imagine what an example this will be for the world if we can bridge the gaps in politics, identity, geography and theology."

Hord Owens' resume includes more than 20 years in corporate America leading diverse teams in data management before she entered seminary. For the last 15 years, she has been the dean of students at the University of Chicago Divinity School, shepherding a varied student body in both background and theology.
Saturday
“We Pray All Unity Will One Day Be Restored”
We join our hearts in this “Lord’s Prayer” acknowledging that our lives, the life of the church, and the world are not as God desires. We pray we may receive the gift of unity God gives. This worship will be celebratory in tone, full of praise and adoration for the God who will make us one.

Speaker: Rev. José Morales Jr.
Rev. José Morales Jr. is the Director of Pastoral Formation at Disciples Seminary Foundation in Claremont, CA and pursuing his PhD in Comparative Theology and Philosophy at Claremont School of Theology.

Monday
“We Will Guard Each One’s Dignity and Save Each One’s Pride”
This lively and active worship will celebrate that our unity is dependent on working for social justice for all God’s people.
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Serene Jones
The Rev. Dr. Serene Jones is the 16th president of the historic Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York and the first woman to head the 174-year-old nondenominational seminary.
Tuesday
“Together we will spread the news that God is in our land.”
Jesus’ prayer implies evangelism and witness. He lifts up those who will believe in him because of our testimony.

Speaker: Rev. Virzola Law
Rev. Virzola Law is the senior pastor at Lindenwood Christian Church in Memphis, TN and a fourth-generation Disciple

Adopted General Assembly Resolutions

GA-1717: RESOLUTION TO CELEBRATE AND REAFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TO THE VISION OF PLANTING 1,000 NEW CONGREGATIONS BY 2020
In this resolution, submitted by Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation, the partners celebrate the initiative that counts 975 plants and affiliates with greater than 60 percent still bearing Christ’s witness 5 years past their inception.

GA-1718: CONCERNING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MERGER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY CONVENTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
As part of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Merger Agreement, the National Convocation brings this resolution to the assembly to request that colleges, seminaries, regions and the General Board of the Christian Church include education about the merger between the National Christian Missionary Convention and the International Convention of the Christian Churches through the book “Journey Toward Wholeness” by Brenda Cardwell and William K. Fox, Jr.

GA-1719: A CALL FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) TO ADVOCATE FOR THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN LIVING UNDER ISRAELI MILITARY OCCUPATION
The Division of Overseas Ministries brings this resolution to the General Assembly to encourage the Church to learn about conditions in Palestine and the State of Israel and advocate for the rights of children, encourage United States governmental bodies to examine the practices of military allies and ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and that the General Minister and President communicate this call to specific governmental leaders.

GA-1720: AFFIRMATION OF OUR COMMITMENT TO RESPONSIBLE INVESTING
The boards of three financial ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) – the Christian Church Foundation, Disciples Church Extension Fund, and the Pension Fund of the Christian Church – affirm their commitment to engage with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility and to bring an educational program to the 2019 General Assembly.

GA-1721: A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION MINISTRY
Six congregations from Missouri, Ohio and Oklahoma bring this resolution to the General Assembly to encourage the Church to renew its commitment to being a pro-reconciling/anti-racist church as laid out in a resolution from the 2007 General Assembly and to support Reconciliation Ministry in its work.

GA-1722: REPUDIATION OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY: A CALL TO EDUCATION AND ACTION AND SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS VOICES IN THE WITNESS OF

Wednesday
“They will know we are Christians by our love.”
The newly elected general minister and president will describe the ways in which they imagine our church demonstrating and enacting our love, sending us
THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

The submitters of this resolution urge the Church to examine the ways the Christian Doctrine of Discovery has shaped our understandings and to find ways to incorporate the indigenous voice into the life of all three expressions of the Church as well as educational institutions affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

GA-1723: ON BECOMING IMMIGRANT WELCOMING CONGREGATIONS

Disciples ministries including the Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries, Refugee and Immigration Ministries of Disciples Home Missions, Disciples Women, Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel, North American Pacific/Asian Disciples, National Benevolent Association, National Convocation and Iglesia Alas de Salvacion (AZ) and Iglesia Christiana Emanuel (TX) are calling on congregations to consider becoming “immigrant welcoming congregations” by engaging in prayer and action around issues of immigration, providing supportive resources and programs to their local immigrant communities and building bridges between congregations that are majority immigrant and majority non-immigrant.

GA-1724: RESOLUTION CONCERNING CARBON NEUTRALITY

In this resolution submitted by Christmount National Camp and Conference Center, Green Chalice of Disciples Home Missions and the Kentucky region, Week of Compassion, Disciples Volunteering and the General Youth Council of Disciples Home Missions and supported by Global Ministries/Division of Overseas Ministries, the Church is asked to consider a program of worship, study, repentance, advocacy and rest aimed at.

GA-1725: RECOGNITION OF THE REGION OF CANADA AS A TRADITIONALLY UNDERREPRESENTED CULTURAL COMMUNITY

The Region of Canada and Sugarbush Christian Church of Guelph, ON, submit a resolution calling on the Church to fully support inclusion of the congregations in Canada in materials, participation and governance and to become more aware of Canadian culture.

GA-1726: PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE DESIGN OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST): CLARITY ON THE ROLE OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINISTRIES IN THE DESIGN

The General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) submits this item from its Governance Committee to the General Assembly. Please see the full text online for details of revised language for Paragraph 69 of The Design.

GA-1727: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE DESIGN OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST): RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE RACIST LANGUAGE AUDIT TASK FORCE

The General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) submits this item from its Governance Committee to the General Assembly. Please see the full text online for details of revised paragraphs 12, 25, 31, 38, 41, 48, 51, 79 and 80 of The Design.

GA-1728: PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE DESIGN OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST): REMOVAL OF CONGREGATIONS FROM THE YEARBOOK AND DIRECTORY FOR CAUSE OR INACTIVITY

The General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) submits this item from its Governance Committee to the General Assembly. Please see the full text online for details of revised Paragraph 9 and Endnote 1 of The Design.

GA-1729: REPORT OF THE TIME AND PLACE COMMITTEE

The General Board forwards the recommendation that the 2019 General Assembly be held in Des Moines, IA on July 20-24, 2019.

GA-1730: REPORT FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL BOARD

The General Assembly Committee of the General Board has a two-fold responsibility. First – it is the General Board committee responsible for recommending the location for future General Assemblies. Secondly, it follows up on approved or referred resolutions which contained actionable items from the previous General Assembly and report back to the current General Assembly.

GA-1731: SOCIAL WITNESS TASK FORCE PROGRESS REPORT

The task force, which has been examining a process for discussion of and education about important religious, ethical and social issues, offers a progress report based on their two
At the 2015 General Assembly, the Center for Faith and Giving was authorized to write a study document on stewardship as a spiritual discipline. The resulting study document is being put forward for issuance to the Church by the 2017 General Assembly. Included are biblical reflections, chapters on care for the earth and ourselves, generosity and transformation. The Church is invited to enter into a season of study and consider recommendations in the document.

First Christian Church in Liberal, KS, and the Southwest and Kansas regions request that First Christian be included in the Kansas region.

The General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) forwards the name of Teresa Hord Owens to be elected as General Minister and President for a term of 6 years.

The Administrative Committee created a task force to examine the future of the General Assembly event. The team reviewed existing survey information and determined several recommended actions for organizers of the event.

Regarding a recent Executive Order by U.S. President Donald Trump having to do with immigration.

This resolution encourages all expressions of the church to support the New Poor People’s Campaign: National Call for a Moral Revival in 2018.

The 2017 General Assembly marks several significant milestones in the history of the denomination’s relationship with the National Convocation, a movement of collaboration for African-American congregations and leaders.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the National Christian Missionary Convention (now the National Convocation), a group of African-American churches, brought together by Preston Taylor, pastor at Lea Avenue Christian Church in Nashville, and others. The group held their first meeting at Taylor's church in 1917. The founders hoped to maintain a unified voice, and foster collaboration across congregations and regions.

The Church is also approaching the 50th anniversary of the merger of the NCMC with International Convocation (now known as the General Assembly), uniting the two groups under one institutional structure. In 1969, the two groups officially confirmed a merger, and decided to hold their biennial meetings together, by holding the General Assembly on the odd-numbered years, while the National Convocation convenes on the even-numbered years.
25th Biennial Session of The National Convocation
The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
July 19-22, 2018 - Birmingham, AL

A Call to Action: Onward Christian Soldier
Be strong, and let us fight bravely for our people and the cities of our God...
2 Samuel 10:12

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground...
Ephesians 6:13

INJUSTICE
HATRED
APOPHY
RACISM
POVERTY
SEXISM
HOPELESSNESS

Registration Information

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Free admission for children 9 and younger

How to Register:
Access the National Convocation website:
http://nationalconvocation.org
Call: Dr. Timothy James at the National Convocation Office
(317) 213-3417
Assistance is available to help with registration.

44th Annual Black Ministers Retreat
March 5-8, 2018
Hilton Alexandria Mark Center
Alexandria, VA

Dream + Vision = Power
Are you prepared to walk arm-in-arm with your fellow ministers and believers in the mission of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)?

Rev. Dr. Rosalyn Nichols
Organized Pastor
Freedom's Chapel Christian Church (DOC)
Memphis, TN

Rev. Marlyn J. Owen Jr.
Senior Pastor
Kichijien Park Christian Church (DOC)
Washington, D.C.

Rev. Dr. Stacy L. Spencer
Senior Pastor
New Direction Christian Church (DOC)
Memphis, TN

Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Halls
Founder & Senior Pastor
Ray of Hope Christian Church (DOC)
Duluth, GA

Rev. Dr. Frank A. Thomas
Nettie Stonewall and Hugh Ty Miller Professor of Homiletics
Christian Theological Seminary
Indianapolis, IN

For more information visit our website: www.nconv.org
On July 6 the board of Disciples Home Missions (DHM) approved the call of Rev. Sotello Long as the next president of DHM. Long was introduced to the full General Assembly on July 11.

Long served as the regional minister of the Christian Church in South Carolina since 2003 and the pastor of First Christian Church in Aiken, SC, since 2014. This will not be his first tour with DHM, however. He was the minister of evangelism from 1995 to 2003.

The search committee was impressed with Long's ministry in South Carolina and with his passion and vision for the ministry of DHM. He will begin his ministry at DHM on August 21, working with current DHM President Rev. Dr. Ron Degges who will retire on August 31.

**BARBER CONSECRATED**

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II became a Bishop in the Fellowship of Affirming Ministries in his continued commitment to love and justice.

Older adults and at-risk children and youth have been a primary part of NBA’s ministry since our founding 130 years ago, and are communities that NBA continues to advocate for and accompany. This summer, the NBA is excited to launch a new Mission and Ministry Grant Program to support Disciples projects working with older adults and at-risk children and youth across the life of our church!

Now through Sept. 8, the NBA is accepting applications from Disciples congregations and health and social service ministries for grants in three categories - Catalyst, Innovation and Impact - ranging from $1,000 to over $20,000.

A Grant Committee of NBA staff and trustees will review all applications and make funding decisions on an annual granting cycle. The online application is available now, and all applications will be due to the Grant Committee by Sept. 8, 2017. Awardees will be notified by mid-November, and funds will be distributed by early December for use in the 2018 calendar year.

"These purpose-restricted funds date back many years and would not be available or possible without the generosity and foresight of NBA's faithful donors," says Mark D. Anderson, NBA President and CEO. "This grant program will ensure that our donors' intentions from decades ago are fulfilled in meaningful, relevant ways in today's context, as we continue the shared work of creating communities of compassion and care."

Find the full press release, FAQs, online application, and more information about the NBA Mission and Ministry Grant Program at nbacares.org/grants. For additional questions, please email grants@nbacares.org.
Drs. Matt and Mary Harris of California received the President's Lifetime Achievement Award on June 11, 2017 for their work for Project IMPACT, a ministry based in Los Angeles.

According to a press release from Project IMPACT, Matt and Mary were nominated independently for this award. After careful review of their community service, they both were selected to receive this prestigious award.

The President's Lifetime Achievement Award is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon a citizen of the United States in his/her lifetime and comes from the office of the President of the United States. The review and award selection was made during the Obama administration and therefore will be signed by President Barack Obama.

"Matt and Mary have been amazing Disciple leaders not only for Project IMPACT, but also for our regional and general Church. Their vision has transformed the lives of so many young people and their families in instilling hope, confidence, and a future. We in the PSWR are very proud of their work and partnership in ministry," says Co-Regional Minister and President of the Pacific Southwest Region Rev. Don Dewey.

While serving as pastors at First Christian Church in Lynwood, California in 1986, the Harrises were inspired to search for a solution to community issues including gangs, drugs, and violence. Their congregation partnered with the city government to create the first Project IMPACT center at their church.

Project IMPACT is a faith-based organization that brings churches of all faith backgrounds together to support their communities and needy youth and families. Over the last 30 years, Project IMPACT has grown to serve over 40,000 youth across the country through counseling, job placement, parent education, mentoring and tutoring.

On Saturday, June 10, 2017, on the occasion of his retirement from active ministry, the Rev. Dr. William Chris Hobgood was designated as "Minister Emeritus" of Bethany Beach Christian Church, Bethany Beach, Delaware.

Hobgood also served as Interim General Minister and President before Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins was elected.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES LAUNCHES CARIBBEAN INITIATIVE

The Caribbean Initiative invites the whole church to witness together with the Caribbean region through education, advocacy, and support of our partners for the next 18 months. Partner churches and organizations in Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Colombia, bring incredible gifts in their strong testimonies, as they receive and share the Good News of Jesus Christ. They provide us with a broader understanding of the many ways in which God is seen at work in the world and challenge us to expand our vision of the Church. Our hope and prayer is that through many and varied experiences, we will better understand the issues, priorities, successes, and struggles of sisters and brothers in the Caribbean and, in turn, be challenged to understand ourselves, our world, and our faith anew.

During this initiative, members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ celebrate relationships with the Caribbean through a variety of resources for your congregation including Bible studies, music, liturgical materials, special giving opportunities, People-to-People Pilgrimages, videos, children’s resources, and more. Additionally, there will be tools to address some of the universal challenges of the region: migration and human trafficking; the quest for peace; sustainable development in the face of climate change; and the churches’ witness for just economic policies that encourage the flourishing of life.

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"I am deeply honored to accept the invitation to be the next Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Lexington Theological Seminary," Dr. Martell said. "I am overjoyed to join President Gillett and become part of a Seminary community that has responded in such innovative ways to the challenges of theological education. I look forward to discerning prayerfully with them the new paths to be forged ahead. Above all, I am excited to be part of a Seminary whose excellent academic programs integrate intellectual scholarship, practical ministry, and spiritual practices."

Dr. Martell is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association. She is also a member of the American Academy of Religion, where she currently serves as President of La Comunidad of Hispanic Scholars of Religion. She was appointed to represent the American Baptist Churches USA on the National Council of Churches Convening Table for Theological Studies and Matters of Faith and Reason. The American Baptist Home Missions Societies awarded her the 2015 Richard Hoiland Christian Education Award, its highest recognition for "faithful and effective leadership in Christian education," for her long-standing work in nurturing culturally and racially diverse classrooms and for exceptional leadership.

Dr. Martell named Vice President and Dean of Lexington Theological Seminary

The Rev. Dr. Loida I. Martell, former professor of constructive theology at Palmer Theological Seminary of Eastern University in Pennsylvania and an ordained minister in the American Baptist Churches USA, has been named the next Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean at Lexington Theological Seminary. She will begin her work and ministry at LTS Aug. 1. "Dr. Martell brings a wealth of experience as a scholar and pastor, and I believe she will be a tremendous asset to our students, the congregations we serve, and our Seminary community," said LTS President Charisse L. Gillett.

Dr. Martell was selected following a nationwide search involving more than 20 highly-qualified candidates. She will follow Dr. Richard D. Weis, who will retire effective July 30.

"We are deeply grateful for Dr. Weis and celebrate his career as a dean at three ATS institutions, including his nearly seven years as the dean of Lexington Theological Seminary," Gillett said.

Dr. Martell also is a licensed doctor in veterinary medicine. She is a bi-coastal Puerto Rican who has taught in various institutions of higher learning in addition to Palmer Theological Seminary of Eastern University, such as New York Theological Seminary, the University of Puerto Rico's College of Allied Health Professionals, and Boston's Center for Urban Ministerial Education. She pastored in New York City for 15 years and served as President of the Board of American Baptist Churches in Metro New York City for two years in the mid-1990s.
LOVE POETICALLY SPEAKING

Love brings poetry like a Happy ray.
Love brings poetry Into one’s life
Each mystery filled day.
Love gives reason to laugh,
To dance, to sing, to pray.
We smile in these things
Love brings;
The voice we hear
When the tele rings.
Don’t let a single day go by
That you don’t
Share a kind word
Or a friendly, sweet sigh.
Ah aaa what a joy to
Make someone’s day better
And just one thing more,
You might write them
A letter.

May Reed

A LITTLE BIT OF LAUGHTER

A small Kentucky town had two churches and a whiskey distillery. The churches held a prayer meeting to ask the Lord to intervene and close the distillery. During the meeting there was a raging storm, lighting struck the distillery and burnt it to the ground. The owner, an atheist, sued the church members, claiming they had conspired with God to destroy his business. The church members denied absolutely that they had done anything to cause the fire! The Judge said the case was perplexing “We have a plaintiff who is an atheist, professing his belief in the power of God and prayer, and the defendants, good church members, denying the Power of God and prayer!”

[By Robert Strand]

ABOUT BEING A PARENT

On Tuesday, April 20, 2004, 9:20 a.m. the Montel Show began – featuring a young mother with a totally out-of-control, unruly child and showing a film excerpt of the child yelling at the top of her voice to her mother; telling her mother "NO" and ranting to the point of striking her while the mother stood pleading to the child not to hit her.

I felt this was the height of parental foolishness. How a parent ever let this type of behavior to ever get started is beyond comprehension. Telling a small child they have two or three minutes to do a thing doesn’t register. They do not have a concept of time, nor does telling them about any measure of time matter to them. Don’t fool yourself. A child isn’t crazy. They can figure out that you’re trying to get them to do what you want them to. They can become masters at manipulating the parent into getting their way.

Many parents do not talk to their children and get to know them the way they should. Don’t talk about them in front of them of how you don’t know what to do with them. You’re defeating your purpose of getting them to do what you want them to. Don’t give-in to their shenanigans -letting them have their way, giving them things they don’t need and often don’t really want but just want you to do what they want. Sending them to their room where there are toys, TV and other devices to entertain and maneuver to their satisfaction won’t work.

Don’t be a ROBOT MOM. Talk to your children. Tell them things about life; why trees grow tall, why it rains, how it snows in winter and when its time for the flowers to bloom, why dogs bark and birds sing.

Sing to them, I did. Explain to them what teardrops are and why we sometimes cry. Tell them about Jesus and how He loves little children. Don’t holler at them unless it is to prevent them from harming themselves in some horrific way, and then hold them close and explain the danger in which they almost encountered had you not called out.

Love is the key that unlocks the door of our hearts/minds.

[Just a few of my heartfelt thoughts about a child.]
Words fail when I attempt to describe the despair that engulfed me upon the learning of the tragedy of violence and murder in Charlottesville, Virginia this weekend. Labels such as domestic terrorism, religious extremism, racism and bigotry, all which are fitting, do not serve to assuage the painful reality that hate’s death-dealing behaviors prevail in our society and nation. To denounce it is an important response but in no way completes the cycle of what is needed to diminish its power. The events of this Saturday call all of us to the sober reality that our words must be accompanied by action. Hate rallies are intended to show the vulnerable that they are powerless against wiles of “white supremacy and white supremacists.” The death of Heather Heyer who was mowed down by a young man drunk on the vile rhetoric and persuasion of white supremacy heightens the fear and anxiety it is intended to impose by the rally planners. Nineteen other people were variously wounded.

My soul hurts. It is painful well beneath the skin. It is the pain described by the prophet Jeremiah, “A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted.” (Jeremiah 31:15 NRSV) Jeremiah is describing the sense of overwhelming sadness associated with the cycle of prolonged captivity and brief moments of release of the Israelites. Rachel’s weeping is metaphoric for a collective grief over the entrenched nature of violence and hatred against the children of Israel. Similarly, in the aftermath of the events of Saturday morning in Charlottesville, the grief is palpable and unable to be consoled. New York Times reporter, Hawes Spencer attending the rally described the violence in this way, “the air was filled with the sounds of fists and sticks against flesh.” That was a visceral reminder that we are all conscripted into a false narrative that to be non-white so as to not re-injure them by inadvertently forcing them to lead the learning process by sharing and baring their pain.

• Act. Do the work. Opinion will not be the vehicle that will last the entire journey to our destination of freedom and justice for all. Our anti-racism training is designed to walk us through the history that has shaped all of us into a racialized identity that is counter to our identity as Christ’s human family. However, it is not always the starting point for a sustained conversation that leads to action. I commend to you our “One Bag of Tea, One Conversation, One Relationship” program for getting to know your congregation and/or community.

• Be different. Because we offer an education and a granting program, we have learned “be the change we want to see in the world,” as coined by Mahatma Ghandi. This means go to the rally, aware of your surroundings but determined to be Christ to someone who needs your advocacy and power.

• Donate to Reconciliation Ministry at http://reconciliationministry.org/give/.

• Funds support grants for institutional programs that address the root causes of racism and leader development for long term change.

Like the Rachel, while listening to the report of the events in Charlottesville, I sat in my car weeping unable to be consoled. Afterward I resolved to trust God’s leading and not the leading of intimidation by keeping silent. As I consulted the scriptures, I was emboldened by God’s promises through the prophet Jeremiah to the Israelites in this, “Thus says the LORD: Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for there is a reward for your work, says the LORD: they shall come back from the land of the enemy; there is hope for your future, says the LORD: your children shall come back to their own country.” (Jeremiah 31:16-17 NRSV)

With the help of God’s children, may it be so . . .

Rev. April Johnson

Minister of Reconciliation
FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

DAISY R. CHAMBERS,

Mrs. Daisy R. Chambers, a lifetime resident of Winston-Salem, transitioned from life to life-everlasting on May 1, 2017 at her home. She was born February 8, 1936 to the late Clarence and Zeola Harris Reed and attended the local public schools.

Daisy matriculated at Winston-Salem Teachers College (Winston-Salem State University), graduating in 1958 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Primary Education. She received a Master of Science Degree from Indiana State University, and an Education Specialist Degree in Administration from Appalachian State University.

Initially teaching for several years in Columbia, SC, Mrs. Chambers returned to her hometown to begin a long career with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools. Until her retirement in 1996 she held various positions with the district including Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, Personnel Director, Director of Elementary Education, and Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Administration.

Mrs. Chambers held memberships with numerous professional, civic and social organizations including the National Education Association of Retired School Personnel, Phi Delta Kappa Honorary Fraternity, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, Democracy NC, and the NAACP. She was actively involved with the Rupert Bell Senior Citizens, the Just Us Neighbors (JUNS) Club, WSSU Brown Alumni Chapter and the Winston Lake YMCA. She received various awards, honors, and recognitions.

A founding member of Messiah Community Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), she served faithfully as an Elder. Additionally, Mrs. Chambers held a number of leadership roles with the Regional, District, and General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Her global service to others included mission trips to China, Zimbabwe, Haiti, and Brazil.

REV. MARION C. HANNAH

Rev. Marion C. Hannah, of Lakewood, NJ, Pastor of the Antioch Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, New Brunswick, died on May 20, 2017. He was predeceased by his wife, Naomi Hannah, on March 3, 2017.

Rev. Hannah served as Pastor of Antioch Christian Church for the last 35 years. He formerly owned and operated Hannah Trucking Co. in Lakewood, NJ for 30 years. He was a former lead singer for the Original Soul Seekers of New Orleans, a well-known gospel group.

REV. GEORGE DAVID SHREEVES

The Rev. George David Shreeves, 90, passed away on December 16, 2016. Born July 25, 1926, he was the son of the late David E. and Mary Nettie Shreeves of Deltaville, Virginia.

David spent his early years on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, where his father was a boat builder and fisherman. It was at this time that he began to develop his deep Christian faith as a member of the Philippine Christian Church. By the time he was a young teenager, he knew he wanted to serve the Lord as a minister.

David received his ministerial training at Lynchburg College and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia and the Lexington Theological Seminary in Kentucky. He was ordained as a minister of the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, on June 3, 1947. This year, he would have observed his 70th year as an ordained minister.

Over the years, "G. David" as he was called by many friends, served a number of student pastorates in Virginia and Kentucky. His first full-time pastorate was at Pershing Drive Christian Church in Arlington, Virginia, followed by 10 years at Diamond Springs Christian Church in Virginia Beach. His last full-time pastorate was for 25 years at Shepherd Park Christian Church in Washington, D.C.

He retired from full-time ministry in 1997. He then served as Minister of Visitation for the First Christian Church of Hagerstown, Maryland, from 1998 to 2007.
Remembering my beloved Oscar, World War II Veteran. He and I wrote this for Twelfth Street Christian Church’s Homecoming Celebration, which was begun to welcome members returning home from the military:

Mr. Oscar Haynes, Second Generation Disciple and life long member of Twelfth Street Christian Church, is one of our young men who was drafted for World War II. He was inducted into the US Army Air Corp on July 2, 1941, at the age of 25 in Fort Meade, MD.

Following basic military training at Fort Meade he was transferred to Fort Belvoir, VA where he was assigned to 823rd Aviation Engineering Battalion. After training at Fort Belvoir and AP Hill, VA, his outfit was shipped to Florida where they built Andrew and McDill Air Bases. In May of 1942, the 823rd was moved to Charleston, SC from where they were shipped to Calcutta, India. Enroute we docked in Durban, South Africa for one day and landed in Calcutta JULY 23rd’ 1942. The reason we spent 52 days on water was because we were traveling in German Submarine infected waters without an escort.

Our assignment in India was to build the Ledo Road, the military supply route out of India into China. We were headquartered in Upper Assam, India. This was a very desolate area which took its havoc on our men. After a few weeks I convinced the company commander we should do something for the morale of our men and suggested a daily newsletter. He approved the idea and gave a command car to pick up news at all hours of the night from the US. He also provided me with two assistants. We named the newsletter THE HAIRY EARS HERALD. The experience I had with our first Twelfth Street Newsletter had given me enough experience that the Hairy Ears Herald made a big hit with the company.

I ended my tour of duty in India January 4, 1945 and arrived back in the United States on February 2, 1945. During my tour in India the Lord blessed me with an opportunity to tour much of the country. A few months after we arrived in India one of our members started an 8-piece orchestra and I was invited to join. Because I had played tenor while in the ROTC Band while at Howard University this provided me with this golden opportunity. We were back-up for Red Cross and United Service Organizations/USO entertainers bringing entertainment to the troops oversea.

Upon my return to the U.S. I was given a month’s rest in Atlantic City and then sent to Kerns Air Force Base, Kerns, Utah, where I was a feature writer with the Kerns Post Review. One exciting experience of my time on the Post Review was covering Nat King Cole and his trio when they visited the base to entertain hospitalized veterans.

I was honorably discharged from the Air Force September 26, 1945. I was drafted when President Franklin Roosevelt pulled my name from the fish bowl drawing requiring young men to serve a six months in the military. Instead of six months my service period was just a couple of months over four years.

After discharge I returned to Washington and Twelfth Street where I was warmly welcomed by church family. We returning veterans were shown such deep love by the congregation when Mrs. Mary Whitfield, wife of pastor Rev. John Flanders Whitfield designated the first Sunday in October Homecoming Day.

My Uncle Bob (Rev. Robert Brown) turned 90 years old on May, 26, 2017!!!!!! I am looking for anyone who may know him or who may be a part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to send Birthday Greetings for his birthday. In addition to having roles in the National Convocation of the Christian Church, he also pastored in Texas, Alabama, Ohio, North Carolina, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Michigan. I'm sure there are Disciples that know/remember my Uncle Bob and it would be awesome for him to receive a lot of cards to let him know he’s not forgotten! All cards should be sent to: Cross Street Christian Church, C/O Rev. Robert Brown, 1223 S Cross Street, Little Rock, AR 72202
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Indianapolis, IN 46244

OLDTIMERS’ GRAPEVINE is a free print and electronic
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and sharing of mutual experiences; 2) conveying a holistic view
of aging and health; 3) being an advocate for seniors to become a
supportive, loving and caring community; 4) giving honor and
dignity to the lives of those included in “For Whom The Bell
Tolls”; and 5) highlighting opportunities for the maintenance of a
high quality life style and service in retirement. We are enabled
by the vision of our founder and publisher/executive editor emer-
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A Letter From
the Board President
September 2017 - December 2017

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18 (NIV)

Dear Beloved Grapevine Readers,

In this season of gratitude, I would like to initially thank God for family. Our family was blessed on November 2, 2017 when my daughter, Jennifer Patrice Strickland, received the Forty Leaders Under 40 Award, in Peoria, Illinois. Attending guests stated that I must be very proud of Jennifer. Indeed I am proud of her. Although the award is special and affirms Jennifer’s accomplishments at this stage in her career; what warmed my heart and bolstered my pride in Jennifer even more is her definition of leadership that appears in InterBusiness Issues (November 2017), the magazine that sponsors the award:

Great leaders adopt the principles of servant leadership. Great leaders are able to create and inspire a vision among their people. Great leaders value diverse opinions, cultivate a culture of trust, develop other leaders, help and encourage their people, and act with humility.

The phrase “principles of servant leadership” in the first sentence and the word “humility” in the last sentence in the above definition are “bookmarks” that tell me Jennifer’s Christian upbringing undergirds her successful functioning in the corporate environment and her work in the community. Indeed this is why I am sharing her story.

When Jennifer was growing up - I often said she was a “village child”, in reference to the African proverb that says: “It takes a village to raise a child.” Many of our Grapevine readers were a part of Jennifer’s village. I just want her village to know - you did a good job with Jennifer. Your love, care, direction, support, and example have helped to shape her character over the years. She knows “who” she is and “whose” she is and many of you, our extended family, helped to shape this result. On her and my behalf I say many thanks to you and I implore you to keep on embracing our children. With God’s help we can do great things!

Moving on to you, our Grapevine family of supporters, I thank God for your faithfulness and support, year in and year out. We look forward to our continuing connectedness in Christ and sharing “news” that enlightens and encourages you.

Our Grapevine family of board and staff members deserve our gratitude. I thank God for their servant leadership, vision and humility, as they work to make each issue of our beloved newsletter, the very best it can be. Special kudos are offered to John R. Foulkes, our Publisher and Executive Editor. His commitment and faithful service are the foundation for a publication for which we all can be proud.

Finally I thank God for Jesus, the head of our family as Christians. As we anticipate and celebrate the birth of our savior, one more time; may the love, hope, and joy of Christmas be with you always.

Your Sister in Christ,
Norma R. Ellington-Twitty, Ph.D., Board President
September 27, 2017
General Minister & President Rev. Terri Word Owens and Minister of Reconciliation Rev. April Johnson met at Centennial Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with St. Louis area clergy, upon the invitation of the St. Louis Racial Justice Group. Led by the National Benevolent Association’s Organizing Specialist, Rev. Dr. Dietra Wise Baker, this group has been involved in protest demonstrations following the September 15, 2017 not guilty verdict of former St. Louis white police officer Jason Stockley of the 2011 murder of Anthony Lamar Smith, an unarmed Black man. The meeting was designed to develop strategies and support systems for continuing protests to highlight injustice, promote awareness, exemplify peace, and engage policy makers.

October 8, 2017
First anniversary of new church start, New Hope Community Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was celebrated with a special worship service and an installation service for the founding pastor, Rev. Rhonda Aldridge. She began her ministry as Associate Minister at Centennial Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), under the leadership of senior minister Derrick L. Perkins. Rev. Aldridge graduated from Eden Theological Seminary with a Masters of Divinity Degree in May 2015. Rev. Aldridge believes her call to ordained ministry extends beyond the doors and walls of God’s Universal Church…offering a glimmer of hope in what often appears to be a hopeless, helpless and heartless world.

A NOTE FROM MS. HELEN GRAY

My dad, Rev. John B. Holmes, was a longtime minister of the Stephens St. Christian Church in Chickasha, OK many years ago.

Chris Hobgood was our family pastor at the Christian Church in Alexandria, VA. My kids grew up with his children and pass e-mails among themselves today. My mom, Era M. Holmes, was given an honorary doctor’s degree from Jarvis Christian College who, at that time, was the “oldest living student” who had attended Jarvis — so goes time. She died at one hundred and two in Oklahoma City years ago!

Recently, the Disciple Women's Retreat was held at the lovely Eagle Ridge Conference Center, Raymond, MS. The theme: "Many Branches, Rooted in Love". The Retreat was held on a Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday until noon. The speaker was; Rev. Dr. Donahoo, her present role is: Executive Director of Disciple Women for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She is also a part of the General Minister's Cabinet, Secretary to the International Disciple Women's Ministry Executive Committee, and Secretary Treasurer of Global Women

Connecting each year, the women from all the local congregations are asked to bring two (2) large size baskets, filled with various foods and articles. Some of the baskets contain all kinds of soap, articles for the kitchen, bathroom, laundry, gardening, small bottles of wine, wine glasses, assorted chocolates, and home canned goods. These baskets are raffled off on Saturday afternoon and the finance received is used for Scholarships, to assist women who really want to attend, but not able financially.

Everyone leaves inspired and more knowledgeable about the role and duties of the Disciple of Christ Church.

Ruth P. Hobbs Reporter
This joyous family event at National City Christian Church opened on Saturday evening with the Disciples of Christ Historical Society Kirkpatrick Lecture, delivered by the Rev. Dr. Delores Carpenter, Pastor Emerita of Michigan Park Christian Church and retired professor of religious education at Howard University. Dr. Carpenter shared an inspiring description of the life and work of the Rev. Carnella Jamison Barnes (1911-1997), an exemplar of early Disciples churchwomen who came from modest economic origins, but through commitment to education and the faith, overcame challenges of official discrimination to serve for over 50 years as a beloved leader in varied missionary programs of the church.

On Sunday morning, during moments of greeting, Dr. Stephen Gentle welcomed and introduced the many representatives of Disciples church organizations who were in attendance, as well as several members of the family of honoree Oscar Haynes.

Following the Scripture reading from Joshua 4:1-7, the sermon Reconstructing Memory: Lest We Forget, was delivered by Disciples General Minister and President the Rev. Teresa “Terri” Hord Owens. Rev. Owens recounted how her purpose and confidence in life arose from stories of her pioneering Indiana forebears, and reminded us that historical memories and artifacts are powerful because they connect us to experiences and emotions of the present. She said that to move forward now, Disciples must emulate Joshua and follow God’s order to set up stones of memory recalling God’s care for the people. The DCHS plays an important role in this.

Rev. Owens recalled how a church of her youth, Light of the World Christian Church in Indianapolis — now a large congregation offering many community services and city leadership — began as a “mission” of the city’s Central Christian Church. Stories of progress like this need to be remembered and shared with young people when they ask, “Why church?” The origins and aspirations of the Disciples denomination and its varied parts must be communicated to the young in ways that have meaning for them.

The service continued with singing of Lift Every Voice and Sing and choir anthem Jesus is a Rock in a Weary Land, and concluded with communion.

Next, the Rev. Dr. Richard “Rick” Lowery was in-
stalled as President of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society (DCHS) in a ceremony led by the Rev. Dr. Timothy James, the Rev. Owens, the Rev. Dr. John Imbler, Archie Jenkins, the Rev. Dr. Peter Morgan, and the Rev. Dr. Tamara Rodenberg. Mr. Jenkins commented that the “things” preserved by the Society are important because they remind us of people whom we have treasured.

Last, the program turned to the dedication of the DCHS exhibit named for Oscar Haynes. This exhibit is a repository of materials describing the development of African American churches within the Disciples denomination and artifacts portraying aspects of Oscar’s life. It will be permanently housed in a prominent space at NCCC, where it can be visited by people from all over the country and the world.

Of course, the name of Oscar Haynes need not be introduced to readers of the *Grapevine*. You all know that Mr. Haynes was the first layman to become president of the National Convocation, and served on the boards of directors of the Historical Society, National City Christian Church Foundation, Disciples Home Missions, Christian Church Foundation, and countless other regional and general ministries. We all loved him as a longtime editor of the *Oldtimers’ Grapevine* newsletter.

At the beginning of the dedication, the Rev. Dr. Rosetta Robinson presented the posthumously awarded Bridge Builder Award to Mr. Haynes. This award honors leaders who go beyond boundaries to represent the ideals exemplified by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In her remarks, Ms. Robinson cited another pastor’s characterization of Mr. Haynes’s steadfast and insightful leadership: “Oscar was everybody’s friend, but nobody’s fool.” She noted how much he had done to open Disciples leadership positions to other African Americans. The award was accepted by Mr. Haynes’s widow, the Rev. Joan Bell-Haynes.

The dedication continued with a recognition of the centennial of the National Convocation, the assembly of Disciples African American congregations, founded in 1917. Convocation Board President Patricia Pendleton commented that Mr. Haynes indeed was like a bridge, in that his strength and the design of his character were excellent, and he was a true “connector.”

Now the congregation proceeded, singing *Walking in the Light of God*, from the sanctuary to the atrium areas of the church, where the exhibit cases are located. DCHS President Emeritus Dr. Peter Morgan said, “In this exhibit, the future will meet the past.” He envisioned young people fifty years from now seeing pictures of current Disciples leaders and understanding what it means to “walk in the light of God.” They can come to understand how the Disciples strove to fashion a “reasonable” theology; can hear the voices of powerful African American preachers; and can observe how master diplomats managed to resolve difficult problems.

The Rev. Joan Bell-Haynes traced the life of her husband, from childhood to his career in marketing, noting moments when he took a successful stand against blatant race discrimination. “He gave his life to his church, his family, and to every person he met because he loved God, was born of God.” She quoted some tributes from friends and associates: “He made everybody feel like they were his best friend…He made me want to be like him, to be able to make other people feel like he made us feel.”

The day’s program concluded with a ribbon cutting to open the exhibit, and closed with a prayer of dedication and benediction offered by Dr. Lowery. A deli-
More than 30 Disciples students from 16 different seminaries converged on Indianapolis at the invitation of Higher Education and Leadership Ministries (HELM) in October.

“I attended the Seminarians Conference in Indianapolis with trepidation, praying that God would show me whether the Disciples truly are ‘my people,’ and whether I am called to this tradition or not. After three days spent in laughter, prayer, and blessed communion, I came away from the conference feeling deeply affirmed that these are my people, this is my church, and that I am exactly where I am supposed to be,” said Margie Quinn, a student at Duke Divinity School.

Staff from the general ministries of the Church shared information about what their various ministries do, but the students were also able to be resourced for their own ministry through workshops in entrepreneurial ministry, transformation, LGBTQ issues, personal money management, and more. In addition, they were able to spend time with General Minister and President Rev. Terri Hord Owens and hear from Rev. Dr. Frank Thomas, among other Disciples leaders.

Michele Moreland, attending Ashland Theological Seminary, found the connection to the larger Church helpful. She said, “Thank you to all of you compassionate leaders for the insightful sermons, prayers, and informative presentations. I feel ‘trained up in the way I should go!’”

A student at Claremont School of Theology (a partner institution of Disciples Seminary Foundation), Iyana ‘Yani’ Davis said, “The conference proved to be a dynamic experience. I feel so much closer to the heartbeat of the church and I am so excited to continue my work with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).”

Both divinity houses, several Disciples Seminary Foundation partners, Disciples schools (Lexington,
Christian Theological, Phillips, Brite) and other regional seminaries were represented.

Meredyth Johnson from Brite Divinity School said, “This conference was very helpful for me to connect better to the larger church. I first joined a Disciples church in my senior year of high school, and have spent time answering God’s call to ministry and learning more about the church that helped me to hear it. It was wonderful to learn more about the ministers and ministries of the Church, while seeing where I fit into that picture both now and in the future. There is so much happening and so much more coming!”

44th Annual Black Ministers Retreat
March 5-8, 2018
Hilton Alexandria Mark Center
Alexandria, VA

Preachers

Rev. Dr. Rosalyn Nichols
Organizing Pastor
Freedom’s Chapel Christian Church (DOC)
Memphis, TN

Rev. Marvin J. Owens Jr.
Senior Pastor
Michigan Park Christian Church (DOC)
Washington, D.C.

Rev. Dr. Stacy L. Spencer
Senior Pastor
New Direction Christian Church (DOC)
Memphis, TN

Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale
Founder & Senior Pastor
Ray of Hope Christian Church (DOC)
Decatur, GA

Rev. Dr. Frank A. Thomas
Nettie Sweeny and Hugh Th, Miller Professor of Homiletics
Christian Theological Seminary
Indianapolis, IN

For more information visit our site: www.disciples.org

44th Annual Black Minister Power

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions.

Joel 2:28 (KJV)

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

Act 2:17 (KJV)

Rev. Dr. William Lee
Director, Office of Black Ministries
Contact: Marissa Ivey at 317-713-2641
or mivery@dhm.disciples.org

Remember the Past
Pursue the Future
The Christian Church in the Southwest has called Dr. Andy W. Mangum to be the Regional Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest.

Andy Mangum graduated from West Texas with BA ('92) and MA ('94) in Speech Communication. He graduated from Brite Divinity School (MDiv, '98). In 2009, he earned his Doctor of Ministry from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary with a concentration on worship and proclamation.

Andy joined the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) while serving as Youth Minister at First Christian Church in Amarillo, Texas (1992-1995). He joined the staff of Central Christian Church in Weatherford, Texas when he started seminary (1995-1997). He was ordained in February 1999. Andy served First Christian Church, Irving for almost four years—(November 1998-August 2002). In 2002, Andy was called to serve at the Pastor of First Christian Church, Arlington, Texas.

O God, our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home: even as our prayers rise with each morning's sun for those left battered and bruised, we bow our heads in humble thanksgiving for the generous partnership of Disciples everywhere. Fount of every blessing, pour out your streams of mercy on every heartfelt gift and every inundated home, that all might know you as our help in ages past and our hope for years to come. In Jesus' name, Amen.

September 1, 2017

Dear Church,

This past week our hearts and minds have been filled with images of our siblings on the Texas Gulf Coast who have been affected by Hurricane Harvey. Our prayers went out for these communities as we watched homes submerged underwater: elders stranded in waterlogged buildings; churches, usually places of refuge and worship, rapidly flooded. We saw rescue workers, neighbors, and strangers risk their own lives to save the lives of others.

Some of us have feelings of dismay, overwhelm, despair, or anger; we cannot comprehend how so many are hurting. Yet, we are also coming together, in prayer and generosity. That is where hope lies. God is in our coming together, as Church, to respond when our family is in need.

Right now it is still too early to know the full scale impact of Hurricane Harvey, and we will not know for weeks, but this is what we know right now:

- While most of the damage has been in Texas, 13 million people from Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky are estimated to be affected by rain and flooding
- Rescue teams have evacuated than 10,000 people from flooded homes
- As of Friday, Harvey has claimed 47 lives, and FEMA does not know how many people are still missing or awaiting rescue
- More than 32,000 people are currently living in shelters, and 365,000 Texans have registered for FEMA assistance

Among Disciples:
- Three churches have sustained severe damage, and roughly 12 more have had moderate flooding, water intrusion, and roof damage.
- More than 100 families connected to our congregations have had flooding or other damage to their homes.

As we have been reminded by many emergency responders, now is not the time to come to Texas. Affected communities are busy enough without having to coordinate logistics for outside volunteers. Housing is also at a premium for evacuees and emergency personnel. The commitment and compassion of outside volunteers will be critical in the coming months and years, mostly long after the headlines have moved on, as we clean up and begin repairs.

In the meantime, we - Week of Compassion staff, Vy Nguyen, Caroline Hamilton-Arnold, as well as Interim National Hispanic Ministries Pastor, Lori Tapia, and I, your general minister and president - have been reaching out to pastors and congregations to help assess...
need, pray and encourage these shepherds in the midst of this storm. Week of Compassion staff have received phone calls and e-mails from so many of you asking what you can do to help as the disaster has unfolded, and we thank you! Disciples from across the U.S. and Canada have offered to come down and provide relief, because sitting still is difficult for us. It is in our DNA to help.

Please know that through your prayers and gifts to Week of Compassion, you are already present in Texas, where we are supporting the relief efforts led by our congregations. Responses include providing shelter, distributing food and cleaning materials, offering emotional and spiritual care, and helping those who have been able to return to their homes begin the process of mucking them out.

The whole Church is committed to the long-term recovery. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus tells us that the Samaritan not only rescued the man on the Jericho road he suffered attack, but he provided funds to ensure the man was supported in his on-going recovery. (John 10:33-35) In the next few weeks, Week of Compassion will work closely with local churches, area ministries, regional staff, Disciples Volunteering, and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), as well as Disciples Church Extension Fund, National Benevolent Association and Pension Fund, to rebuild these communities in the years to come. It is who we are and how we have done it, together, as a church family, after other disasters -- Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Joplin tornado, smaller flooding events, and now Hurricane Harvey.

Please continue to keep the people affected by the storms in your prayers. And please continue to donate to Week of Compassion as 100% of your gifts will be used in the weeks and months to rebuild. Whenever we serve sisters and brothers in need, we are the presence of Christ. Together, we are there in Christ's name.

Terri Hord Owens, General Minister and President
Vy Nguyen, Executive Director, Week of Compassion

“WHAT’S YOUR RESPONSE?”
By Timothy M. James

The events that have transpired across nations the past few weeks have caused for much concern and the raising of old fears and worries. At Charlottesville, VA, the deaths of Heather Heyer, a 32-year old woman standing for right and righteousness, two state troopers H. Jay Cullen and Berke Bates, along with 19 persons injured is a sad statement for where we are as a nation. The DNA in the American system of social and historical practices came out in full exposure with the protest of the white supremacists. The spirit of division and racialized fear has certainly increased over the past seven months of presidency of Donald Trump. Yes, I called his name. He is who he is, and as our president he needs our prayers.

I could join the throng of those who would disparage, trash, bash and even dispatch his name to the dregs of the deplorable. I could take to the streets to confront hate with hate and violence with violence. But I will remember the examples of President Barack Obama and our former First Lady, Michelle Obama, to “take the high road.” I was on vacation, yet riveted to the TV, away and incommunicative, while so much was taking place on the home front. But I was encouraged and uplifted, by the response of many of our faith leaders and civic leaders. Particularly, those who are not ashamed to speak words of truth, justice, love, and unity. These are the words needed for such a time as this.

Racism, like war, is one of the primary tools of Satan used to divide and destroy the crown of God’s creation, all people made in God’s image and likeness. While humanity leads the world’s civilization and development with advances in science and technology, we seem to come up short when it comes to improving human behavior. Persons of different races, classes and religions are prompted by groups that spew out bigotry and hatred, making it hard to just get along. Again, the call to take the high road is sounded as a response that will produce different and perhaps better results.

We can appreciate the fact that it is not a rumor. White nationalism, the Ku Klux Klan, and white supremacy as an ideology, has been exposed with a resurgence of fear and bigotry. It’s like the sleeping giant of racism, has been awakened by presidential toleration and a deafening silence from our churches. We must need take the high road of prayerful peaceful protest and nonviolent resistance. We must avail our churches to be those places for prayer and serious sacred critical conversation on the race matters in Amer-
ica and the Church. We must take the high road of Jesus Christ, where love is stronger than hatred, where justice is done because it is right, and where faith is mightier than fear. To choose to take the high road of response is to choose Christ. Wintley Phipps sang it so beautifully, "In a world of many choices, Amidst the call of many voices; When they all call out and greet me, I turn my eyes to Thee. Cause I found in Him a loving friend, Who stays with me till the very end; Yes I found in Him a Faithful Guide, He calls me His very own. I choose You again and again; I choose You again and again. You mean so much to me, Dear Lord, I choose You again." (Phipps, "I Choose You Again", 1984)

EVANGELICAL WHITE MALE LOOKS AT WILLIAM BARBER

By Robert P. Kennel

The Rev. Dr. William Barber is the Pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church in Goldsboro, NC, and the current 10 year President of the North Carolina NAACP. He is also the founder of "Repairers of the Breech" and the "Moral Monday" movements.

The author is an 81-year old, Southern, white, male, father, grandfather, veteran, UNC System Alumnus, Christian, minister, and Evangelical who loves God, his family, our nation, and our State of North Carolina.

When I look at William Barber, I see the following characteristics:

- A personal friend and fellow Disciple minister.
- A growing national leader over the past four years through his moral leadership, forward thinking books, and impressive oral messages.
- A person disparaged by some of my friends and the media based on his imposing figure and strong voice called names such as "Buffet" Barber and "Bully" Barber.
- A 25-year pastor at Greenleaf Christian Church who has built in Senior Citizen housing services and community distribution facilities for food and goods for the young and the poor.
- A long-term civil rights witness in teaming with First Christian Goldsboro in sharing pulpits, services, and facilities.
- A pastor rather than a politician, seeking to define legislative decisions as moral issues beyond political issues.

- A well-spoken person who says what he intends to say with no off-the-cuff tangents with my never having heard a word from his mouth not thought out beforehand.
- A family man with an amazing wife and five great children with his two oldest sons finishing at UNC-CH and Barton College with a younger daughter surviving life-threatening surgery.
- A mentor to my Covenant Christian Church Pastor Chris Furr who studied under Barber at Duke Divinity and interned under him at Greenleaf Christian, which "changed my life" says Chris.
- An inspiration for four of us ministers who drove down to Atlanta last year supporting Barber who gave the keynote speech at King's Ebenezer Baptist Church on the MLK Jr. holiday.
- A creative leader in developing the North Carolina Moral Monday movement to expose the devastating effects of suppressed voting rights and inaction on Medicaid expansion which has cost real lives.
- A personal encourager for my three years of Moral Monday Marches (missed only 3) though not yet arrested (several times close).
- My boss as Christian Church Regional Moderator the past two years over my Regional staff position as Director of New Church Development (also helped in training specific new church ministers).
- His courage in surmounting severe arthritic spine problems since the '90's, as well as current physical threats today.
- His sense of humor when seeking to get him on Zach Galifianakis' Comedy Central "Between Two Ferns" (Zach is son of former NC State football teammate Harry Galifianakis) when question arose whether Barber had a sufficient sense of humor; he said, "Bob, if I even tried to pronounce his last name, people would think I was speaking in tongues".
- His foresight in his latest book calling for a third "fusion" of majority and minority national leaders (previous two were post Civil War and 1960's) to indelibly seal civil rights with new legislation.
- His personal commitment beyond state moral movements to a new national Poor Peoples' Campaign through "Repairers of the Breech".
- His insightful comments on the recent "laying on of hands" by evangelical leaders upon President Trump for potential political purposes rather than theological
reasons needed to be said. There's a difference between laying on of hands upon persons of maximum hubris/minimum humility versus persons of maximum humility/minimum hubris as laid upon Barber at his Bishop Ordination this weekend. (I still smile at Trump's campaign comment last year at Liberty University about his favorite book of the Bible being "Two" Corinthians)

In summary, I see William Barber as a modern day prophet in the mold of Martin Luther King Jr. greatly needed in our nation and world today.

God Bless him and all of us!!!!

**PILGRIMAGE’S THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY**

Pilgrimage Christian Church of Suitland, Maryland celebrated her 30th Anniversary November 12, 2017- November 18, 2017. Rev Brenda M. Cardwell serves as the Pastor and Rev. Judith E. Bowles serves as Assistant to the Pastor.

The Celebration Service began on Sunday, November 12, 2017 at 11am and 4pm with Dinner served after the 11am worship. Great Preaching, Singing, and Fellowship continued at Pilgrimage’s Fall Revival November 13-17, 2017. On 11/18/2017, Pilgrimage’s partner congregation First Christian Church of Winchester VA joined Pilgrimage in giving out food. A 30th Anniversary souvenir book was published as part of the celebration.

**HANNAH FAMILY HONORED**

The Hannah family was honored as Spirit Awards Family of the Year for Special Olympics Indiana!!

Daughter in law, Sally, is walking partner; brother, Jim, golf partner; Dad former golf & bowling partner; and Mom - editor of newsletter & keeper of uniforms. A family affair.

Thank you WTSO for all you give us!

**THE POOR PEOPLES CAMPAIGN**

Living the faith

The Poor People’s Campaign led by Rev. Dr. William Barber, III (far right in the image) is gaining traction. With articles in both The Christian Century and The Guardian, as well as other outlets, the call for moral revival is highlighting the reality of many living on the margins. The campaign calls for healing of the deep wounds of racism, militarism, and poverty. The 2017 General Assembly adopted a resolution (GA 1740) in support of this campaign. If you would like to get regular updates or participate, the next listed
event in the current 15-state cross country tour is Nov. 6 in Seattle followed by an event in Birmingham, AL on Nov. 19. Find out more from the Poor People’s Campaign website.

FROM THE PRESIDENT
SOTELLO’S INSPIRATION AND THANKS!

I am grateful for the privilege of connecting with our whole church on this platform of ministry as President of Disciples Home Missions. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Who am I thankful to? First of all to God for the Bible says:

For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. [Psalm 75:6-7 (KJV)]

God is the one who anoints and appoints those who are faithful with sufficient grace to prosper in what they are called to do. God was at work through the DHM search process. The DHM Board and my predecessor, Ron Degges, and the staff consummated the call. I thank God for the greatest job in the world...for me! I am humbled for the privilege to express and expand the gospel through the wide array of ministries that connect us in the US and Canada through DHM and our partners in ministry. By the way, the greatest job in the world for anyone, OK for you, is the job that God has called you to do. Having the job is one thing. Honoring God in and through it is another. It requires a listening heart, a teachable spirit, and exercising the anointing and leadership skills within you with fortitude and a heart of compassion.

I am also grateful for the recent ministry experience and relationships along the way that have prepared me. Thank you for First Christian Church, Aiken, SC; Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in South Carolina; College of Regional Ministers and Lexington Theological Seminary, Lexington, KY! You were and are integral in my growth in ministry. The relationships gained will always be cherished!

Finally, I am grateful to the love of my life. My darling wife and intimate partner in life's journey, Dee! I've got the greatest wife in the world...for me! In certain circles they call me Mr. Dee and I love it!

Ministry is about relationships. I acknowledge God, my colleagues past and present and my family as the three-fold cord that makes ministry to and with others worthwhile! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

But God is the judge: he puts down one, and sets up another. [Psalm 75:6-7 (KJV)]
National Benevolent Association Accompanies Racial Justice Work in St. Louis; Rev. Dr. Dietra Wise Baker Serves as NBA Organizing Specialist

Peaceful protest of the Stockley verdict in St. Louis, by Mark D. Anderson.

September 20, 2017 – As part of the mission of the National Benevolent Association, we seek to “advocate for the well-being of humanity.” The NBA continues to actively support racial justice work across the life of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), particularly through a core group of Disciples clergy activists in St. Louis, where NBA’s ministry began 130 years ago.

On Friday, white former St. Louis police officer Jason Stockley was found not guilty of first-degree murder in the death of Anthony Lamar Smith, a 24-year-old black man whom Stockley shot five times after a police chase. Disciples have been among those in St. Louis organizing and protesting the verdict, in many ways a continuation of activism and advocacy following the 2014 shooting death of Michael Brown by former Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson. In cooperation with other Disciples, the NBA has supported ongoing efforts for justice and racial reconciliation in the St. Louis area by promoting and facilitating conversation, gathering, advocacy, and healing.

Since 2015, the NBA has contracted with Rev. Dr. Dietra Wise Baker as an Organizing Specialist to spearhead this work. In this role, Baker challenges congregations to engage in systemic-level work in racial reconciliation. She has been convening a research and design team of Disciples activists and organizers interested in engaging in conversations around the formation of an affinity group focused on activism and organizing in the work of Disciples across the life of the church. In St. Louis, Baker served as pastor and planter of Liberation Christian Church, and she has been working with Episcopal City Mission, Gamaliel Networks’ Metropolitan Congregations United, and the “Break the Pipeline” campaign focused on dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline. Currently, Baker is representing the St. Louis Racial Justice Group and the NBA, and is in conversation with the larger Disciples community, by sitting on an emerging coalition/organizing table made up of local clergy, community, and protest groups. In the days and weeks to come, Baker will be collecting and sharing stories from Disciples “on the ground” in St. Louis, helping to provide a comprehensive narrative of the issues and activities taking place in these movements while aiming to create models for this work that can be shared across regions. We invite you to follow and share these stories and consider how we as Disciples in and beyond St. Louis can get involved and support this work!

The National Benevolent Association of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is launching a new Mission and Ministry Grant Program to support Disciples projects and ministries working with older adults and at-risk children and youth across the life of the church.

Older adults, at-risk children, and youth communities have been a primary part of NBA’s ministry since our founding 130 years ago, and are communities that NBA continues to support and accompany. The NBA has purpose-restricted funds in these two areas, and after necessary legal steps, the NBA Board of Trustees has approved the distribution of these funds through grants to Disciples congregations and health and social service ministries.

“These purpose-restricted funds date back several decades and would not be available or possible without the generosity and foresight of NBA’s faithful donors,” says Mark D. Anderson, NBA President and CEO. “This grant program will ensure that our donors’ intentions from decades ago are fulfilled in meaningful, relevant ways in today’s context, as we continue the shared work of creating communities of compassion and care.”

For additional questions, please email...
Curtis Asa Brown, 92, Sandusky, passed away Tuesday, November 14, 2017, in Stein Hospice Care Center. He was born on January 5, 1925, in Clearview, Oklahoma, the fourth of five sons born to Bradley and Amanda (Wilson) Brown. He accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior at the age of 17 and united with the Galilee Baptist Church near Clearview.

Pastor Brown enlisted in the United States Army after graduating from Clearview High School in 1942, serving his country from September 11, 1943 through February 22, 1946. He spent 22 months of his enlistment in overseas service in the Pacific Theater of Operations.

With an intent to major in Agriculture, Dr. Brown enrolled in Langston University in 1947. In the second year of college he began to feel the call of God to enter into the gospel ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. In January, 1949, Dr. Brown yielded to the call of the Lord and enrolled in the Oklahoma School of Religion, majoring in Biblical Theology, while simultaneously attending classes at Langston University. During this period of transition and education, Dr. Brown united with the New Hope Baptist Church, Langston Oklahoma.

On April 10, 1951, Dr. Brown became an Ordained Minister. In May, 1951, he earned his Bachelor of Theology Degree from the Oklahoma School of Religion. 1951 was also the year that Dr. Brown became the pastor of Mt. Gilead Baptist Church, Spencer, Oklahoma.

While attending Langston, Dr. Brown met Dolores Boulware, a pretty little girl from Muskogee, Oklahoma; they were united in marriage on December 19, 1954.

Dr. Brown pastored the Lord’s people for 56 years beginning in 1951. He served from 1966 through December, 2007 as Pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Sandusky. Upon his retirement from the pastorate in 2007, the members of Ebenezer unanimously agreed to bestow on him the honor of Pastor Emeritus.

Pastor Brown is survived by his “Baby Sweet”, his wife of 63 years, Dolores; three sons: Dr. Eric H. Brown, D. Min. and his wife, Charlesia, of Columbus, OH; Minister Zachary M. Brown and his wife, Lisa, of Columbus, OH; and Timothy A. Brown and his wife, Tara, of Brush, CO. Four daughters: Suzanne R. Keaton, of Huron, OH; Stephanie E. Mayfield and her husband, John, of Huron, OH; Minister Valerie M. Whittaker, of Huron, OH; and Tamara A. Byrd and her husband, Michael, of Columbus, OH; foster son, Alvin Gerear and his wife, Kim, of Sandusky, OH; 20 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great grandchildren; sisters-in-law, Mary R. Thomas and her husband, Edward, of Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Anita M. Marina and her husband, Booker, of Carrollton, TX; god-daughters, Shahar A. McSalters, of Columbia, MD and Taylor S. Jordan, of Omaha, NE; and loving nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Martha Moore Rogers, 87, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at SOVAH Hospital of Martinsville. She was born March 16, 1930 in Elkhorn, West Virginia to the late John and Ceanie Watkins Moore.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Calvin Rogers; sisters, Mary Lou Tanks, Clara Millner and Lillie Moore; brothers, John D. Moore and James Moore; and grandson Donavon Rogers.

Ms. Rogers is survived by a daughter, Wanona Rogers Redd, Martinsville; sons Jerrold Rogers of Winston Salem, North Carolina and Michael Chambers of Durham, North Carolina; stepsons, Clifford Rogers of Hillsboro, North Carolina and Harold Rogers of Durham, North Carolina; eleven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.
SHADYNE J. WILLIAMS

Shadyne J. Williams, 85 was called home from labor to reward on Sunday October 15, 2017 surrounded by family. Mrs. Williams was retired teacher from the Memphis City Schools system and an active Elder of the Mississippi Blvd. Christian Church.

POET’S CORNER
by May F. Reed

JUST GOVERN WITH LOVE
Not knowing what the morrow will bring,
JUST GOVERN WITH LOVE,
Your surroundings serene.
As each day passes,
Holidays draw near,
Help others bring warmth,
and gladness and cheer;
For the King of Life walks with you
Each day
to fulfill your dreams,
in a joyful way;
The desires of your heart that make
Life surreal,
He tends and sends,
There’s nary a bill.
NO CHARGE, HE says
For all has been paid.
JUST GOVERN WITH LOVE
Be gentle, not too staid.
So on with this journey,
for there is still time,
and we Christians should not,
no, never cease to climb.
JUST GOVERN WITH LOVE
as Christ showed us how
We must GOVERN WITH LOVE,
JUST GOVERN WITH LOVE
In this day — in ‘right now.’

May Reed

A ‘LIL MORE LAUGHTER
A conversation between two little boys. The one who attends Sunday School shares with the other, “My Sunday school teacher said I should follow Jesus, but I’m not allowed to leave the yard.”

A MISINTERPRETATION
A guy driving through a small town observed a nativity scene. One feature seemed wrong, however. The three wise men were wearing firemen’s helmets. He stopped at a “Quik Stop” on the edge of town to inquire about the matter. The lady behind the counter exploded into a rage, “You Yankees never do read the Bible!” The guy assured her that he did, but simply couldn’t recall anything about firemen in the Bible. She jerked open her Bible from behind the counter and ruffled through the pages, and finally jabbed her finger at a particular passage. Sticking it in his face she said, “See, it says right here, ‘The three wise men came from afar.”

ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR OWN BOAT
Row, row your boat, your life; Row your boat, your life, gently down the streams of life. Never attempt to row up-stream. Never row against the currents of life but row your boat lovingly, graciously, harmoniously, caringly. And don’t try rowing someone else’s boat/life, just row your own. Merrily — always merrily. Don’t just drift through life and don’t allow others to row your boat.
Set your course.
Plan and map out your destination.
You must do this yourself. It’s your boat, your life — you row it; just remember to row it gently and you will row it well. Don’t buffet others. Don’t thrash through the streams of life.
Place your oars, your thoughts, firmly in the water; in the stream of life and row forward with a firm but gentle stroke. What you give in life is what you’ll get. If you harbor dislike and discord in your heart you will earn the same and harm you. The song says “Life Is but A Dream.” NO, it’s much more than that, much more. Keep Jesus in your boat, in your life and be rest assured the waters will be safe.
I row with HIM each day.
DISCIPLES MEN

Nearly two years ago, Disciples Men affiliated with the National Convocation participated in the Weekend of Service. As we prepare for the 25th Biennial Session of the National Convocation in 2018, we are encouraging the Disciples Men to participate in a service project this year. It is designated as a Month of Service (November 1-30, 2017) this year instead of a Weekend of Service. This will give more time to plan and execute the service projects.

The Disciples Men groups, Convocation-wide, did a magnificent job last time. Let us duplicate or do a better job in service this year.

Let us remember the Master's teaching:

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me." (Mat. 25:40-NIV). I look forward to hearing from you by September 15, 2017.

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OLDTIMERS’ GRAPEVINE is a free print and electronic ministry published three times a year through tax exempt donations. The ministry networks Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) seasoned pilgrims by: 1) enhancement of communication and sharing of mutual experiences; 2) conveying a holistic view of aging and health; 3) being an advocate for seniors to become a supportive, loving and caring community; 4) giving honor and dignity to the lives of those included in “For Whom The Bell Tolls”; and 5) highlighting opportunities for the maintenance of a high quality life style and service in retirement. We are enabled by the vision of our founder and publisher/executive editor emeritus; and servants ordered as Board of Directors, administration and editorial staff.

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