The Oldtimers' Grapevine, Volume 27 (January - December 2018)

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A LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

“I will be the same when you are old and gray, and I will take care of you. I created you. I will carry you and always keep you safe.”
Isaiah 46: 4 (CEV)

While reading the January/February 2004 issue of the Grapevine, I read the above scripture on the masthead. I had read this scripture in the King James and New Internal Version previously, however I had never read it in the Contemporary English Version. What a reaction I had after reading it over and over. What a highly up close and personal blessed assurance of God’s continuing love and care for us throughout our lifetime - yes even as we age - not always a highly valued circumstance in our society.

I was touched by this scripture in many ways. Initially I was touched by how personal and how intimate this assurance is. I had the reaction some of us have when we hear a good sermon - “She is talking to me.” That personal touch affirms our individuality and how each and every one of us is known to and deeply loved by God. When you get that kind of message, it stops you in your tracks. It moves you from a pity party or distressed mentality and makes you stand up tall - relishing in the love of our God. You feel stronger and capable of aging gracefully and with purpose in a challenging world - after all our God “will carry me and always keep me safe.”

This scripture also stripped me of my vanity in a way that you can see - no longer my “Hollywood” photo with black, black hair. In the new photo you can see the gray, gray hair. I hope you also can see my joy in knowing that my gray hair puts me in a category of aging persons who are highly valued by our God.

Please know that as you deal with illness, with diminished capacity, with separation from loved ones, with more questions than answers, with more bills than funds, and with utter frustration relative to the perils and injustice of this world: God is the same as you age, “he will take care of you, he created you, he will carry you and always keep you safe.” To God be the glory!!

Your aging Sister in Christ,
Norma Ellington-Twitty, Ph.D., Board President

CAPITAL AREA HOSTS GMP FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. COMMEMORATION

On Jan. 14, General Minister & President Rev. Teresa “Terri” Hord Owens, was the guest preacher for an annual commemoration event hosted by the Christian Church Capital Area, honoring the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

She called those present to an urgency of action for justice and righteousness. Preaching on Amos 5:21-25, Rev. Owens reminded the worshippers “Why We Can’t Wait,” referencing the title of a book by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She called the church to accountability when it aligns itself too close to worldly power, stating, “that’s when the church goes wrong: when it derives its power from empire!” She also challenged her listeners by saying, “We have to be loud enough for truth and justice so that our children will say, ‘I want that!’”

The Rev. Nathan Hill, senior pastor of University Christian Church, Hyattsville, and one of the core trainers for the Disciples of Christ Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism Training program, was honored with the CCCA “Bridge Builder Award.” This was given to him for his work in promoting peace, justice, and equality and fighting systemic institutional racism. Members of his family and congregation joined him. Oscar Haynes was also granted the 2018 award, posthumously, at the dedication of the Oscar Haynes exhibit of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society at National City Christian Church this past November.
Malachi 4: 6a (NRSV)
In December 2017 Cheryle Dyle-Palmer retired from service as the Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer for the national office of Parents as Teachers (PAT), headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri. “Intelligence, passion and grace” were descriptors used to highlight her accomplishments in the expansion of PAT around the globe and making it a more culturally responsive organization.

Throughout her four decade career, Cheryle Dyle-Palmer demonstrated a passion for and tireless commitment to vulnerable children and their families. As the person who hired her to work for the National Benevolent Association (National Benevolent Association) in 1989 as Director of Specialized Services, I can attest to the breadth and scope of her contribution to making a difference in the lives of thousands of children. She pioneered cutting edge community based family support and early intervention programs. In addition she provided the leadership and management expertise to enhance quality of care for existing NBA residential programs for children and youth around the country.

Cheryle blessed NBA with her service for thirteen and a half years. One of the most impactful programs she helped to establish was the CHANCE program to serve low income residents of Hollybrook Homes Apartments in Jacksonville, Florida. CHANCE is an acronym for Creating Healthy Alternatives to Nurture Children through Education - it was “Oh Happy Day!” when Cheryle came up with this inspired name, after much brainstorming and prayer. The CHANCE program opened in 1991 and modified the original PAT home visitation model of parent educators by; increasing the number of home visits, providing a culturally sensitive and customized curriculum, and ensuring an array of relevant social and health services.

NBA had taken on the management of Hollybrook as a result of the visionary leadership of Richard Lance, CEO of the organization (historically NBA only managed elderly housing). He knew that for management of a family housing unit to be successful; NBA would need to develop educational, social, and health care programs to enable residents to reach their potential. With the help of local Disciples congregations and Karey Gee, a Disciples pastor who took on the manager role; the CHANCE program was the first of many programs to truly transform Hollybrook from a collection of apartments to a wholesome community where hope and upward mobility were a reality. This program truly “turned the hearts of parents to their children, and the hearts of children to their parents.”

Cheryle holds a bachelor’s degree in sociology with a minor in social work and education and a master’s degree in sociology from the University of Missouri - St. Louis. She also holds a certificate in senior management skills and leadership from the Human and Organizational Development Institute (University of Chicago), and the John F. Kennedy School of Government/Harvard Executive Leadership and Management.

Kudos to Cheryle for a wonderful career as an advocate and champion for underserved children and their families!!

LAITY AND CLERGY TO A HIGHER POWER

BDEF (Black Disciples Endowment Fund) announces its upcoming workshop, #LC (Laity and Clergy to a Higher Power: The Making of a Healthy Congregation). The workshop will take place at the 2018 National Convocation on Friday, July 20th, from 2:45 - 4:45PM.

This workshop will bring to life: Shared Ministry (Rev. Denise Bell,), The Letter of Call and Expectations (Rev. Dale Braxton), Evaluation of the Pastor (Rev. Marilyn Fiddmont), and Basic Parliamentary Procedures (Expediting the Board Meeting) (Elder Jackie Compston Bunch).

If you are attending the 2018 National Convocation, you will want to be in attendance for this workshop, #LC (Laity & Clergy to a Higher Power: The Making of a Healthy Congregation).
...a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise...

Proverbs 31: 30b-31

She is responsible for worship with the Literary Club, the Retired Teacher’s Association and the Disciples Women Study Group; she founded the monthly Meditation before breakfast at her retirement community and coordinates the schedule of volunteers; she is a choir member and deacon at United Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) where she has been an active member for over 60 years (she started out life as a baptist); and she is a founding member of the Grapevine board, serving faithfully for over 25 years.

This above description is in no way meant to be an exhaustive listing of the many activities Ruth P. Hobbs is involved in; but rather the short list above gives a “flavoring” of how “in touch”, how “connected”, and how “devoted” she is to her God and to his kingdom building!! What makes Ruth’s life all the more remarkable is that she does all these things and more as a centenarian who celebrated her 103rd birthday on February 15, 2018.

As Grapevine board chair I can say without a doubt, Ruth is an active member of the board when it comes to participating in meetings, providing thoughtful recommendations and supporting the ministry financially. In addition she periodically submits articles for publication. In a recent interview with her, we recalled her article: “Fear In The Autumn Years” in the January/February 2004 issue of the Grapevine. Her antidote for fear at that time works now: “As the clock ticks daily, it pays all of us to be acutely aware of the encouragement from the Psalmist, “Be strong and take heart.” The Lord is still our light in darkness that swirls about us and our salvation from whatever threatens us. Despite this world’s oppression, turmoil of wars, and deprivations, we must trust in the Lord and commit our ways to Him.”

Grapevine readers are not the only beneficiary of Ruth’s wisdom. She described a mysterious set of exchanges with one of the women who serves meals to the residents of her retirement community. For about a week, this server reminded Ruth to come to a meeting on the appointed day. The day of the meeting, the server gave her one last reminder. At the appointed time Ruth proceeded to the meeting hall, having no idea of what she would encounter or why she had been summoned. Upon entering the room, the servers were present, as well as representatives from management. They asked Ruth to share her life story and any “pearls of wisdom”. She gladly complied and answered their many questions. What a tribute for staff of this retirement facility to choose our Ruth, out of so many residents, for such a task as this. I am convinced that it is more than age alone that prompted her selection. Ruth’s persona, her words, her actions say “I am a loving, joyful child of Christ” and the staff wanted to “hear more” - just as we want our readers to “hear more” about Ruth.

In a recent interview with Ruth, I asked her about her longevity and the keys to healthy and happy aging? Without hesitation, she described how she was brought up as a child from an early age. “One thing my mother always taught us was to eat well.” This involves eating a balanced meal, going light on salt and sugar. Secondly, her mother believed in exercise. I wondered aloud what kind of exercise her mother prescribed in 1919? Ruth wistfully described a path in her back yard that went past two gardens (she lived on a farm). The mother would have them walk the path before and after school daily. Ruth also stressed the importance of exercising your mind. She writes puzzles and engages in word games to keep her mind sharp. Finally, Ruth’s mother also ensured that the children got proper rest - eight hours of sleep. Ruth strongly feels that if we do these three things: develop healthy eating habits, exercise regularly, and get proper rest; we can forego certain health challenges of aging or forestall their appearance.

An additional item Ruth added for our good health is the importance of humor. She often submits short pieces for the Grapevine that are designed to make us laugh. Ruth stated: “Laughter is good medicine. It is good to laugh. We must find something to be happy about each day.”
In response to my question about her hopes and dreams for the Grapevine, as she looks forward to her 104th birthday next year, Ruth replied: “The Grapevine is a great publication any Disciple should love. It keeps us in touch with old friends we no longer get to see as often. It’s just enjoyable to read, with so many well written articles. I hope more persons would be interested in receiving the publication and provide needed financial support.”

Ruth P. Hobbs is a treasure and the Grapevine board considers ourselves blessed to have her as a part of this ministry. We look forward to a Ruth update after her 104th birthday in 2019. We know her loving ways and good works will joyfully continue.

**FLORIDA REGION NAMES NEW REGIONAL MINISTER**

At the Jan. 27 meeting of the Leadership Council of the Florida Disciples Regional Church, the Rev. Dr. Betsy Goehrig was extended a call to serve as the Region’s next Regional Minister, beginning Feb. 1, 2018. Search Committee Chair David Walton said of her nomination, “Ours was an exhaustive nationwide search which, in the end, brought us to one closest to home. Dr. Goehrig’s passion for our region and her vision for its future made her a natural choice. We could not be more pleased with her calling to be our next Regional Minister.”

Pastor Betsy brings a great love for the Florida Region and its rich diversity of people. For the past year, she has served as Florida’s Interim Regional Minister. She has previous regional experience, having served as Associate Regional Minister of the Christian Church in Florida. She previously served in a tri-vocational ministry in Tallahassee—as Pastor/Planter of Blessings Church, Preacher for Westminster Retirement Village, and Chaplain for Big Bend Hospice. She has served as Senior Minister of churches in Tampa, Florida; Port St. Lucie, Florida; and Richmond, Kentucky. She was a Director/Chaplain for a community bereavement program in four counties and a volunteer Police Chaplain for 15 years. Pastor Betsy served as a Trustee for 10 years on the Board of Lexington Theological Seminary, from which she received her M. Div. She earned a D. Min. from Columbia Theological Seminary.

Pastor Betsy is a lifelong member of Disciples of Christ. Her calling into Christian ministry came at the age 15 while attending church camp. Her parents, Paul and Geneva Jones faithfully brought her to worship, Sunday school, and youth group at the First Christian Church of Frankfort, Kentucky, where she experienced the love of Christ among the people of God, who were instrumental in her faith development. Her family includes her husband, Kevin, and their four daughters: Christy, Brittany, Jamielee, and Kerri. They have three grandchildren—Elizabeth (8), Charlotte (6), and Joey (3)—with a fourth grandbaby on the way in March.

**WEEK OF COMPASSION GIFTS PROVIDE MORE THAN WE CAN IMAGINE**

John Lennon's now iconic song asks us to "Imagine" - but his call is tinged with sadness and even hopelessness for our truly being able to realize a more just, a more abundant, a more peaceful world for each and every person. But we, who know the Good News of the Gospel, know that such imagining is not simply a wistful dream; we know what the Apostle Paul knew when he wrote those closing lines to the Ephesian church, where he praised God as the one Who, indeed, "by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20-21).

For Paul is right: God's power is at work within us, and that power is the power to imagine and help make a better world a reality for all God's children. The theme of this year's Week of Compassion Special Offering - received in most churches on Feb. 18 or 25 - is "More Than We Can Imagine." And God's power has been - and will continue to be! - at work through your gifts in more ways than you can imagine: through refugees finding safe haven, through those battered by hurricanes and fearsome fires who have been given some of the help they need to begin to put their lives back together, through development projects making clean and safe water available, and so much more. Your gifts work "around the world, around the year" to bring the love and hope of God in more ways than indeed we can imagine.
As a follow-up to the Stewardship Study Document received at the 2017 General Assembly (GA-1732), the Center for Faith and Giving will be providing a six-week group study curriculum for a variety of ages. The program consists of six weekly themes:

- Honoring our Past
- Honoring Creation
- Honoring our Community and Culture
- Honoring the Body of Christ
- Honoring Ourselves
- Honoring the Future

"Overflowing" will be available as a group study program for adults, as well as in three pieces of graded material for youth. This curriculum can be used in Sunday School, Bible study, or retreat settings. An ecumenical camp and conference curriculum is also being developed, and will be available in 2020.

This program will be a focal point of a Church-wide emphasis on stewardship during Eastertide, the weeks between Easter Sunday and Pentecost. The curriculum will be available for free download on March 1 from the Center for Faith and Giving.

For Park Avenue Christian Church (The Park) in New York City, the key to growth wasn't searching outside their building's walls, but instead, listening to the people already inside them.

When executive minister Rev. Stephanie Kendell accepted her call in 2017, The Park already had a very diverse congregation, with a median age of 35. Still, she saw potential for further connection.

After church one Sunday, she asked a few of the young adults if they knew each other, and they said no. Recognizing that New York City can be a difficult place to connect, she organized a meal, expecting around seven people to attend. Twenty people showed up.

Since that first meeting in November 2017, The Park's "YASS" Young Adult Socials program has had 100 percent retention, and 20 percent growth with every event. Several new participants have since become members of the church.

"When they showed up, we weren't what they expected us to be," Kendell says.

"We aren't trying to subvert the norm of church; we're trying to create our own new norm." As an "unabashedly justice-seeking congregation," Kendell says, "our message seems to resonate with young people looking for a place to connect."

Kendell attributes their success to a critical factor: listening.

The Park has been intentional about not making assumptions about anyone or any age group. Instead of researching what researchers say young people want, The Park listens to what their young people are requesting.

Scott Altman, who grew up at First Christian Church in Pekin, IL and attended church camp and youth gatherings in the Illinois/Wisconsin region is one of two astronauts being inducted into the Astronaut Hall of Fame. Congratulations to Scott and his family!
Rev. Dr. William Barber  
Opening Worship  
Thursday, July 19, 2018

Bishop Teresa Snorton  
T-shirts & Jeans Worship  
Friday, July 20, 2018

Rev. Shannon Dycus  
Closing Worship  
Sunday, July 22, 2018

Rev. Dr. John Kinney  
Bible Study Lecturer

Dr. Walter Owens  
Musician

Renard Hirsch  
Comedian & Master of Ceremonies

William Davenport  
Guest Musician

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“25th Biennial Session”

“NATIONAL CONVOCATION  
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)  
July 19-22, 2018  
Birmingham, AL  

A CALL TO ACTION:  
Onward Christian Soldiers  
To fight against  
HATRED, RACISM, ABUSE, POVERTY, INJUSTICE

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

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REV. DR. IRVING HENRY ALLEN

Rev. Dr. Irving Henry Allen Sr. 73 of Dallas passed away Wednesday January 24, 2018 at the V.A. North Texas Hospital in Dallas, TX. Irving was born July 25, 1944 in Austin, TX to Henry Melvin Allen and Zeno-bia Hurdle. Irving received his primary education in Dallas Texas graduating from Lincoln High School. After High School he attended Jarvis married the love of his life, Helen Dase Allen.

After attending Jarvis, Irving joined the United States Air Force and served his country and was very proud to be a United States Air Force Veteran. He received a Master of Religious Education degree from Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, TX in 1971; a Master of Education Degree from the University of Texas at Austin in 1976; and a Ph.D. degree in Education Administration from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas in 1981.

Dr. Allen made contributions to research and development, administration, and teaching at Jarvis Christian College, Texas Southern University, Taladega College, College, and retired from Dallas ISD as an instructor at Spruce High School.

REV. ROBERT L. BROWN

The Rev. Robert L. Brown was born in Little Rock, Arkansas on May 26, 1927 to Verlie Brown Compton and William Brown. He attended public schools in Little Rock, AR. Later, he graduated from Jarvis College in Hawkins, TX.

He joined church at an early age and after accepting his call to ministry pastored congregations in Winston Salem, NC; Oklahoma City, OK; and Little Rock, AR. As his brother, Raymond E. Brown, gave historic leadership in the mergers of both Staff and Services of NCMC with UCMS and NCMC with ICCC, Rev. Brown was the parliamentarian that enabled those decisions.

When a life long friend, K. David Cole who had been elected as President of the National Convocation for 1990 to 1992 was elected moderator of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Rev. Brown was elected President of the National Convocation and presided at the 1992 Biennial Session in Cleveland, Ohio. Rev. Brown’s strict adherence to written policy and procedures became the hallmark of his presidency and contributed greatly to this radical experiment on being church known as the National Convocation. Rev. Brown departed this life on Friday, February 23, 2018.

TIMOTHY RHODES BRATTON

Timothy Rhodes Bratton was born March 15, 1961 in Terre Haute, Indiana to Otha and Ethel Bratton. Educated in the Indianapolis Public Schools he acquired graduate degrees from A&T State University in Greensboro, NC and Butler University. Tim served as a music educator in the Indianapolis Public Schools for 30 years mentoring numbers of young musicians and earning numbers of awards for his teaching. Tim was known as Indianapolis premier piano and organ musician being known for being able to make the organ talk. Tim went to be with the Lord on Monday, March 5, 2018.

REV. DR. SUZANNE DEMOSS BROWN

Rev. Dr. Suzanne DeMoss Brown was born on April 23, 1942 and passed away on Monday, April 16, 2018. Suzanne served the church as Youth Director and later Director of Development in the Division of Homeland Ministries. Shortly after receiving her D. Min. from McCormick Theological Seminary she became the life partner of Rev. Dr. Raymond E. Brown. They served together until God called Raymond home.
Delbert Hutchinson Gray was born on April 30, 1949 to the union of Ruth Juanita (Hutchinson) and Raphael Gray. He was raised in St. Louis, Missouri. After completing Woodward Elementary, Cleveland High School, and post secondary education at Washington University, majoring in electrical engineering; Mr. Gray worked at McDonnell-Douglas, now Boeing, and retired in 2012 from the Defense Mapping Agency.

Mr. Gray accepted Christ at an early age at Centennial Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), following in the footsteps of his grandparents, who were active members. Over the years he was a devoted member of the choir where he sang bass. At one time he also served as church pianist. Whenever there was a program - Mr. Gray was willing to “tickle the ivories” and did so with great skill and artistry. A neighbor of his recalled that when many of the children were outside playing - “Delbert was inside practicing his music.” Indeed, he came to his musical talent with practice, as well as the example of his mother Ruth, an accomplished musician who served at one time as church organist at Second Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), now Light of the World, in Indianapolis, Indiana. Mr Gray would have been quite proud of his nephew Derick P. Cunigan, who played and sang a lovely solo - “Let Go” at his service, another testament to the musical talent in this family.

After his retirement, Mr. Gray transferred his membership to Memorial Boulevard where he tutored students and volunteered in the computer lab. One reflection on the giving nature of this ‘computer guy’: “Many times, you did not even ask for anything and he would show up at your door with whatever was needed in hand.”

George W. Holman entered life on April 20, 1924 in Lawrenceburg, KY as the son of James and Oneita Holman. He departed life on April 4, 2018 in Indianapolis, IN. peacefully in his sleep at the age of 93. He was a WWII Army combat disabled veteran. Upon his discharged from the military, he served at Camp Atterbury, Columbus, IN. in the motor pool. He relocated to Indianapolis, IN. in 1952 to Ft. Harrison Finance Center (Home of the Army Dollar) as a foreman, he was promoted to Supervisor of Maintenance Services at the Finance Center and served in that capacity until his retirement in 1980. He was married to Ruth M. Holman, for over 50 years, she preceded him in death in 1995. They resided in Indianapolis, IN. throughout their marriage.
Ada Knight Melvin, 83, of Goldsboro, NC, peacefully transitioned on Saturday, January 6, 2018 at New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington, NC. She was born on March 7, 1934 in Goldsboro, NC, and attended Wayne County Public Schools. She received her college education and degrees in Religious Education and Sociology from Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins, TX, East Carolina University, and Shaw University. In 1954 she married the late Bishop James Lee Melvin, and together they had 3 children, Valerie, Linda, and Denise. She worked as a teacher and an administrator at O’Berry Center and dedicated herself to helping others and a lifetime of service. She served as vice chairperson of the Board of Directors for the Wayside Fellowship Home. She was a member of the St. Mark Church of Christ, which her family founded, for over 70 years and served as First Lady for 43 years, after the retirement of her husband, she was honored with the title of First Lady Emeritus. She served as a Director of the General Board of Missions for the General Assembly Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, International. She was a member of the State and Goldsboro-Raleigh District Minister’s Wives and Widows Associations. She held numerous positions in national and local ministerial and community organizations, and received many awards for her service. She was an avid musician, and enjoyed singing and playing the piano. She was admired by many, and was a woman who always had a word of wisdom. She will be greatly missed. She is survived by her daughters, and was predeceased by her husband, Bishop James Melvin.

Rev. James W. Smedley, born on June 12, 1951 in Detroit, Michigan, to the late Clara D Smedley and the late James T Smedley, passed away at age 66 on April 2, 2018 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Rev. James W Smedley, born on June 12, 1951 in Detroit, Michigan, to the late Clara D Smedley and the late James T Smedley, passed away at age 66 on April 2, 2018 in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

James graduated from Jarvis Christian College in 1971 and Texas Christian University with his Masters in Divinity in 1976. He was an Ordained Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) until retiring in 2006.

James was married to Lourdes Smedley. He is survived by his sons, James Andrew Smedley and John Philip Smedley; and grandchildren, Elijah James Smedley, Tobias Zachary Smedley, Isaiah Michael Smedley and Baby Smedley. He enjoyed music, praying, "Up North", church fellowship, family holidays, reunions and being a blessing to others. We love you so much Daddy. Special thanks to the hospital staff at U of M Ann Arbor for giving Dad more time with us.

On Thursday, February 15, 2018, God called one of His children, Lizzie Moore Hodge Stockton. She passed peacefully and quietly at her home, 2935 Chatham Road, Martinsville, Virginia. Her earthly journey began October 3, 1918 in Henry County (Camp Branch), Virginia. She attended the Henry County Public Schools and continued her education at the Apex School of Cosmetology. She was employed at Standard Garment (Jobbers), American Furniture and Louise's Beauty Shop.

At an early age she accepted the Lord as her personal Savior and was baptized at Jerusalem Christian Church. As long as her health permitted, she served faithfully and at her death was the oldest surviving member. Her parents were charter members of the early church. Lizzie became the wife of James Edward Stockton on June 5, 1936 in Henry County. They were married for over seventy-one years when he died at the age of ninety-five. They made their home in the Camp Branch Community.

Pearl Louise Wortham Thompson was born on December 12, 1922 in Raleigh, North Carolina to the late Samuel and Maebelle McBride Wortham. Pearl, her mother and brothers attended the First Congregational Church in Raleigh where she accepted Christ and was baptized. Pearl remained active in that church until she moved to Cincinnati. Pearl's love of education began at her beloved Washington School in
It was Pearl's final desire to see Maia graduate from high school on May 21st and she was able to know that it happened. Pearl awakened to each morning with the saying, "What is the miracle going to be today Lord?" On May 26th, 2017, at the age of 94, Pearl Louise Wortham Thompson received God's greatest miracle and entered into heaven's gates.

Memphis civic leader and longtime insurance executive Eldredge M. Williams died Jan. 2, less than three months after the death of his wife of 63 years, Shadyne Carey Williams. Mrs. Williams died Oct. 15, and the family does not believe it is a coincidence his death followed so soon, said their son-in-law, Harold Collins.
EUCHARIST – COMMUNION
THE LORD’S SUPPER

When we gather together
like acorns on a tree,
we come to the TABLE
It’s all prepared as we can see.
No charge, HE has said,
HIS sacrifice renders free,
we who serve
And love HIM
We who’ll never flee.
So, come feast on the LOAF
and drink of the CUP
for its nectar runs sweet,
and together we sup.
Love set the TABLE
Love set it for thee,
LOVE set the TABLE
For both you and me.

Written Tue., January 23, 2018
May Reed

A ‘LIL ‘Non-fictional’ LAUGHTER
In reading “LET IT OUT” in the Indy Star it gave me
a moment of laughter in the following: “If you think
we have an immigration problem in this country – just
remember immigration started in 1620, so you are part
of the problem.”

THREE OF THE CLEANEST FOODS
ONIONS: They have a thick skin; CORN: It has a
covering and stands high off the ground; KIWI: Its
surface is rough and uneatable.

A STORY FROM OCTOGRAPHIC REVIEW
June 11, 1891:p.7
An industrious young shoemaker fell into the habit of
spending much-to-much time in a saloon nearby his
shop. One-by-one his customers began to leave him.
When his wife remonstrated (pleaded) with him for so
neglecting his work “Oh,” he said, “I’m just playing a
little pool.” His little two- year old caught the refrain,
and would often say: “Is you goin’ down to play fool,
Papa?” Smith tried in vain to correct this word. The
child persisted in his own pronunciation, and day-by-
day he would ask “has you been playing’ fool Papa?”
This began to make a deep impression on the shoe-
maker, as he realized that the question was being an-
swered in the falling off of his customers and the
growing wants of his household. He resolved again-
and-again to quit the pool table, but weakly allowed
the passion to play hold him longer and longer at the
pool table. Finally he found himself out of work and
out of money. One noonday, sitting idle and despond-
ent, he exclaimed “what am I to do?” “Why Papa,”
prattled the baby, “can’t you run down and play the
fool some more?” “Oh, hush, you poor child!”
groaned his Papa, shame stricken. “That’s just the
trouble. Papa has played the fool too much already.”
But he never played it again, and today his home is
comfortable and happy once more.

<This little story displays a bit of mirth but it also
shows the close observation of a child that occurs nat-
urally. Most often it is not planned. Many times we
have heard the saying “Out of the mouths of babes....”
and the scripture reference “A little child shall lead
them” Isaiah 11:6d. How utterly true this can be. We
really should listen and pay attention to our children,
for their view, their eyes are at a different level and we
would never notice many things or give a second
thought to them if they didn’t tell or ask us about
them. Pay special attention when they say things
more than once. Others too, sometimes “play fool.”>

READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY?
It’s just plain fun to read and learn. It’s not always the
most recent publication that makes for good reading.
It may be a book that’s been in print a long time that
allows the most excellent read, so why not begin
with THE BIBLE. Do you like to read? Everyone is
free to taste and see the Lord is GOOD.
A diverse body of Christian leaders calls on the churches and Congress to focus on the integral connection.

As leaders from diverse families of U.S. Christianity, we are called by the Spirit to work together with new urgency against the resurgence of racism and persistence of poverty in America. We see around us an increase of harmful attitudes and policies toward people of color and people in need. That painful reality and the current push for trillions of dollars in cuts to anti-poverty programs are bringing us together in a new way. While we have different positions on other questions, we are uniting on the gospel and biblical teaching on poverty and racism—feeling invited to do so by the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

We believe that racism and poverty are theological issues.

The integral relationship between poverty and racism unifies us against both. They are both issues to which the gospel of Jesus Christ speaks—which also calls us to love our neighbors—without exceptions. Our unity on these issues is because they are theological issues for us, not merely political or partisan ones. These fundamentally biblical concerns challenge all of us and both the major political parties.

Racism is a sin that goes back to the founding of our nation. At its root, racism is in conflict with the opening declaration in Genesis 1, that we are all made in the image and likeness of God. Racism literally throws away the biblical principle of imago dei—the image of God in all of us with no exceptions. Racism is a sin against God and all of God’s children. Therefore, the whole counsel of God calls us to preach against the sin of racism from all of our churches’ pulpits and call for repentance.

The body of Christ is perhaps the most diverse racial community in the world. When people of color in the body of Christ suffer—while many white members of the body of Christ do not acknowledge their pain—we are violating the principle laid down in 1 Corinthians 12: that we are one body with many parts, who suffer with and honor one another. As Galatians instructs us, “there is no more Jew or Greek, bond or free, male or female, because we are all united as one in Christ (3:28).”

The historical sin of racism lingers on in America today, continuing and evolving in our social systems of economics and education, policing and criminal justice, housing and gentrification, voting rights and suppression, in our racial geography and, painfully, in the continued segregation of our churches, which adds to our own complicity. Racism is more than individual behavior, language, and overt hostility towards particular people. Racism is systematic and structural in America and harms people of color in very specific, measurable, and tangible ways.

The failure to defend the lives and dignity of people living in poverty, by individuals or governments, is also a sin against God, with 2,000 verses in the Bible clearly outlining God’s fundamental concern for people who are poor, vulnerable, and oppressed, instructing the people of God to protect and help them, and holding political leaders responsible for them. Jesus says, in Matthew 25, that how we treat the “least of these” is how we treat Christ himself.

The world and our country have made progress against poverty in recent decades. It is possible to make further progress—perhaps virtually end—hunger and extreme poverty in our time. We see the alleviation of material misery as an experience of God’s loving presence in our own time, and believe that God wants us to seize this opportunity.

To our churches: What we are doing and can do.

Most of our churches are active in helping people in need—struggling people within their congregations or in their communities. We need to do more, but many of our churches do directly help millions of people every day. Local church leaders often work to bridge the racial divides in our communities, and many are searching for authentic and specific ways to address the rise of white supremacy.

Since the God of the Bible requires social justice and charity, our churches and many of our members also work to influence public policies. Christians have a wide array of political viewpoints. But a majority of the leaders of national church bodies have spoken out repeatedly against cuts to programs that provide help and opportunity to hungry and poor people in our country and around the world. We have also spoken out against renewed expressions of white racism, ethnic nationalism, and hateful attitudes toward people of color, immigrants, refugees, Jews, and Muslims.
Many of us are active in support of immigration reform, criminal justice reform, and voting rights for all. We are deeply troubled by the budget proposals coming from Congress and the president. They outline more than $2 trillion of cuts in programs for hungry and poor people in our country and around the world. These cuts would hurt struggling people of all races, including millions of low and middle-income people who need safety-net programs at some time in their lives. The hardest hit would be African-American, Latino, and Native American communities, where the poverty rate is already high, and among people in the poorest countries in the world.

The threat of this broad assault on anti-poverty programs that support families struggling to make ends meet over the coming year is unifying us—bringing us together in a more vigorous, multiracial Christian movement to maintain a circle of protection around all people in poverty and God’s children of color in particular, who are disproportionately impacted.

To the Congress and the White House: Our united appeal for healing and reform in our nation’s politics.

We appeal to the President and Congress to work together for the common good. We especially call upon political leaders, who are also people of faith, to protect all the people in our country and worldwide who are struggling with economic deprivation and frustration, hunger and poverty, disability and disadvantage—and the racial bigotry that often contributes to inaction and hard-heartedness.

God’s love for all people moves us to reach out to people and leaders all across the political spectrum. We respect and pray for all those who are in authority—that our nation and world “may lead a quiet and peaceable life” (1 Timothy 2:1–2). Conservative and liberal people, and those with differing political philosophies, may disagree on how to live up to our nation’s ideals, but our loving God calls all of us to work together for liberty and justice for all.

We appeal to all people, especially Christians, to actively work against racism and poverty—in their personal and local engagement and as advocates for public policies that foster racial equity and healing, shared prosperity, and peace in our country and worldwide. The spiritual power of a fresh, energetic, multiracial Christian movement against both racism and poverty is our prayer. So help us God.

SIGNATORIES

- Rev. Eddy M. Aleman, Strategic Director of Leadership Development and Hispanic Ministries, Reformed Church in America
- Rev. Dr. David Anderson, Founder/Senior Pastor, Bridgeway Community Church; President and CEO, BridgeLeader Network
- Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, Diocesan Legate and Ecumenical Director, Armenian Orthodox Church
- Bishop Carroll Baltimore, President and CEO, Global Alliance Interfaith Network
- Dr. Jay Barnes, President, Bethel University
- Bishop George E. Battle, Senior Bishop, AME Zion Church
- Rev. David Beckmann, President, Bread for the World
- Rev. Tracy D. Blackmon, Executive Minister of Justice and Local Church Ministries, The United Church of Christ
- Bishop Charles E. Blake, Presiding Bishop And Chief Apostle, Church of God in Christ
- Rev. Samuel Borbon, Associate Missioner for Latino/Hispanic Ministry and Program Development, Episcopal Church USA
- Rev. Dr. Peter Borgdorff, Executive Director Emeritus, Christian Reformed Church in North America
- Carol Bremer-Bennett, Director, World Renew USA
- Dr. Amos Brown, Chair, Social Justice Commission, National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.
- Bishop Rosetta Bryson, Presiding Prelate, The Reconcile Group
- Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
- Dr. Tony Campolo, Co-Founder, Red Letter Christians
- Rev. Galen Carey, Vice President of Government Relations, National Association of Evangelicals
- Mr. Patrick Carolan, Executive Director, Franciscan Action Network
- Mr. John Carr, Director, Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life, Georgetown University
- Dr. Iva Carruthers, General Secretary, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference
- Dr. Fernando Cascante, Executive Director, AETH & The Justo Center
- Rev. Noel Castellanos, President, CCDA
- Rev. Walter Contreras, Vice President, NaLEC; Pasadena Presbyterian Church
- Dr. Leslie Copeland-Tune, Director, Ecumenical Poverty Initiative
- The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church
- Rev. Joshua Dubois, Founder and CEO, Values Partnerships
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- Mr. Vince Gonzales, Chair, Racial and Social Justice Task Force, Churches Uniting In Christ
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- Dr. Cynthia Hale, Founding Pastor, Ray of Hope Christian Church; Member, Disciples of Christ
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- Dr. Shirley Hoo gcra, President, Council of Christian Colleges & Universities
- Rev. Teresa Hord Owens, General Minister, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Dr. Joel C. Hunter, Faith Community Organizer; Chair, Central Florida Commission on Homelessness; Chair, Community Resource Network
- Hyepin Im, President and CEO, Faith and Community Empowerment
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- Sister Carol Keehan, DC, President and CEO, Catholic Health Association of the United States
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- Rev. Dr. Jo Anne Lyon, General Superintendent Emerita, The Wesleyan Church
- Mr. John Lyon, President, World Hope International Rev. Carlos Malavé, Executive Director, Christian Churches Together
- Sister Donna Markham OP, PhD, President and CEO, Catholic Charities
- Rev. Dr. Walter Arthur McCray, President, National Black Evangelical Association
- Rev. John L. McCullough, President and CEO, Church World Service
- Bishop Vashti McKenzie, 117th Elected and consecrated Bishop, AME Church
IT’S TIME TO TALK ABOUT RACISM

White people need to be able to talk about race. But one of the reasons why we don’t is because it makes us really anxious to talk about it.

Chalice Press’ newest release, Carolyn B. Helsel’s Anxious to Talk about It: Helping White Christians Talk Faithfully about Racism offers tools to engage racial justice concerns prayerfully and join conversations with less fear, more compassion, and more knowledge of self, others, and the important issues at stake.

“Axious is a much-needed resource to demystify the ‘R’ word for White people,” says April Johnson, Minister of Reconciliation, who recommends the book to congregations engaging in pro-reconciling/anti-racist programming. “This book is an inviting and accessible read for individuals and small groups. Helsel adeptly employs the art of storytelling to disarm those plagued by feelings of anger, confusion, and guilt when participating in anti-racism discussions.”

“It wasn’t until I was in seminary in my early 20s that I realized racism was something that wasn’t in the past,” says Helsel, a professor at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Texas. “It surprised me, because I’ve been a faithful Christian attending church and learning about all sorts of ways to be holy and to live a life of Christian devotion, yet there was this whole way that I and others like me were perpetuating harm and pain on whole groups of people simply because of the color of their skin. It made me realize, why as Christians are we not talking more about this?”

Anxious to Talk about It is perfect for small groups or congregational discussions on race and racism. Chalice Press offers discounts on bulk purchases, a free study guide, a video introduction, and a free sample chapter. Also, if you purchase 10 books or more, Dr. Helsel will provide a free 30-minute consultation about the book.
THOUGHTS FROM RUTH
By Ruth P. Hobbs

“A Tid Bits”
A laugh a day keeps the doctor away.
Money talks! Mine keeps saying “Good bye!!!”
Work Really fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours.
I walked into the hearts of friends and found a home.

Recipe for Happiness

1 1/2 cup of kindness
1 1/2 teaspoon of smiles
1/4 teaspoon of the game UNO
3/4 cup of sweetness
2 bouquets of roses
1/2 cup of valentine candy

1 teaspoon of sunshine
1/2 teaspoon of apologies
1 1/2 cups of hugs and kisses
1 1/2 cups of family vacations

Sift together kindness, smiles, and the game UNO.
Add sweetness, roses, valentines, candy, sunshine and apologies.
Blend mixture in hugs, kisses and family vacations.
Turn into a greased 9 by 5 inch loaf pan.
Bake in a pre-heated 350 degree oven about 1 hour.
Cool in pan 10 minutes. Turn out on rack to cool completely.
Makes 1 loaf of Happiness.

Author unknown

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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 lifestyle 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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More than 520 members of the National Convocation were called to action at the 25th Biennial Session in Birmingham, AL, July 19-22. Worship and speakers alike echoed the theme of A Call to Action: Onward Christian Soldiers based on both 2 Samuel 10:12 and Ephesians 6:13. Youth step teams roused worshipers and old favorites like “Lift Every Voice and Sing” brought life and energy to the Biennial Session.

Opening worship led by Minister Walter Owens of Salem Baptist Church (Chicago) featured the preaching of Rev. Dr. Marvin McMickle of Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School. He reminded worshipers not to be satisfied too soon and miss out on the glory of God yet to come. Rev. Dr. Teresa Jefferson-Snorton, a bishop of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, urged using all of our armor even when it is uncomfortable. Rev. Shannon Dykes, co-pastor of First Mennonite Church in Indianapolis issued a call to plant new trees. Bible lectures were provided by Rev. Dr. John W. Kinney of Virginia Union University.

During the banquet Saturday evening, the National Convocation honored Rev. Jesse Jackson, Jr. with the Justice Leadership Award and Rev. Charles Webb, Jr. with the Preston Taylor Living Legacy Award. In addition, the Liberation Award was given to four recipients: Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, Rev. Dr. Irie Session, Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Jr., and Rev. Dr. Sekinah Hamlin.
The 2018 Hispanic and Bilingual Assembly, hosted by the Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries (Obra Hispana), in Tempe, AZ, was full of nuevos comienzos (new beginnings).

General Minister and President Rev. Terri Hord Owens leads the installation service for Rev. Lori Tapia, surrounded by her family and colleagues in ministry.

The event’s theme was most evident in the election of Rev. Lori Tapia as the first female National Hispanic Pastor, the executive leader of Obra Hispana.

Tapia reflected on that theme in the final worship service of the event, saying, “New beginnings does not mean that we forget everything we’ve learned in the processes of the past.”

In her report to the asamblea, Tapia celebrated that 2017 ended with Obra’s best financial standing in eight years. She also shared that Obra planned to continue its identity initiative #laObraNOW; develop its own resources, relevant for Hispanic Disciples and congregations; strengthen connection; and focus on leadership development for young adults.

Tapia served in an interim capacity for this general ministry the last two years. Three search processes were completed without consensus, so the search team proposed overturning an initial requirement that the interim not be permitted to be considered for the permanent position. Both motions passed with overwhelming majorities by the more than 300 attendees.

After the vote was announced, as Tapia and her family entered the room, singing of “Somos Uno” broke out throughout the hotel ballroom. Somos Uno, meaning “We Are One,” has been a long-standing mantra of Obra, which serves Hispanic Disciples across the life of the Church. As the National Hispanic Pastor, Tapia will continue Obra’s work with more than 170 Hispanic churches across the United States and Canada, comprising more than 6,000 members – representing every state in the U. S., every Latin American country, and several countries in the Caribbean and South America. CPOHM also partners with the Iglesia Cristiana (Discipulos de Cristo) in Puerto Rico, which is home to more than 100 Disciples congregations.

Rev. Miguel Morales, general minister for the Disciples in Puerto Rico, was present at the asamblea, and brought a declaration of thanks to the Obra Hispana and Rev. Tapia for their support and prayers after Hurricane Maria devastated the island last year.

Also present was General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S. and Canada Rev. Terri Hord Owens, who preached at the event, and led Tapia’s installation service.

Member of the search committee for this position Hector Valasquez introduced Tapia as “a unique leader for a time such as this.”

Tapia earned her Master of Divinity degree from Claremont School of Theology and was ordained by the Arizona region in 2017.

INVITATION TO THE “POOR PEOPLES CAMPAIGN”

Dear Sisters and Brothers –

I invited you to join me in Washington D.C. on Saturday, June 23. After 40 days of direct action in our respective states, we gathered to hold the nation accountable. We sang. We prayed. We showed where we stand – with those impacted by poverty and systemic injustices. From 10 am and into the afternoon, the Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival was on the National Mall to demand solutions to the issues that compound poverty – economic injustices, ecological devastation, the impact on women and children, systemic racism and classism.

Disciples have a long history of fighting alongside those who have no voice, joining our voices to cry out for justice, and committing ourselves to transform the world according to the gospel of Jesus. Just as Jesus
was on the side of the widows and those society ignored, this was a chance to make it clear whose side we are on. Our nation has enough resources to ensure that all have a living wage, that all have affordable, decent, housing, that we all have healthcare and education. There is ENOUGH! The earliest Christians came together and distributed all the resources they had, from each according to what they had, to each according to the need. They understood that together, they had ENOUGH for all. We are called to love, called to care.

Terri Hord Owens

Peace Church UCC

We Rise Up
Doug S, Living Peace

“It is not too late to restore our position in the world and recapture our sense of who we are as a nation. Widening and deepening inequality is not driven by immutable economic laws, but by laws we have written ourselves.”

– Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Prize winner in Economics and Chair of the 2009 U.N. Commission of Reform of the International Monetary and Financial System

It was my last time to with second grader Jalen at his School at 24th and Prospect in Kansas City. It was my last opportunity to praise an eight year old whose energy and hunger to learn had inspired in me great expectations. The week before, during his spring break, second grader he had visited his five month old brother’s grave. This week, tears streamed down his cheek as he assured me his brother was in heaven. Before I could leave him with some words of encouragement, some troubling questions came to mind.

How often does he find a rat in his bedroom as he searches before sleeping every night? Why has he been so tired recently? Would there be someone to read with him this summer? Would eviction or domestic strife force a move away from the neighborhood before school resumes? Would this second grader reading at a much higher level get the financial help he likely will need to continue his education beyond high school?

If the trend continues of cutting taxes on the wealthy while underfunding our public education system, Jalen may well be one of thousands of American children left behind. More questions come forward. Why has our political discourse now seemingly abandoned progress in bringing about the American ideal of equal opportunity for all children? Why are we as a society more concerned about the effects of tax cuts on our crumbling infrastructure of roads and bridges than we are about the effects on the lives of American children and their parents?

The fact is we haven’t heard much about the poor in recent years. In our latest presidential campaign the major party candidates focused our concern on the shrinking incomes of “the middle class”. How often did you hear a candidate mention the twenty per cent of the population (and some say nearly twenty five per cent of the children) living below the poverty line?

Programs in education, health care, housing, and job training providing more opportunity for the poor have been reduced or eliminated in the drive to cut taxes, shrink government, and privatize services.

In the late 50’s and early 60’s, reports on the living conditions of the poor in the U.S. during an era of unprecedented wealth and economic growth resulted in new political and policy priorities. The book by Michael Harrington The Other America: Poverty in the United States was widely read in the Kennedy Administration and helped to lay the groundwork for the legislation focused on creating “the good society” through a “war on poverty”.

Today we are all suffering the effects of what Rev. William Barber and others have called the shift from a “war on poverty” to “a war on the poor” since the days of Reagan Administration policies. The focus on our individual self interest and a bogus definition of freedom as represented by a deregulated economy in which every person is out for themselves now prevails over the view that my freedom is bound up with your freedom and your liberation is tied to my own.

In choosing to participate in this spring’s revival of Martin Luther King’s Poor People’s Campaign I am not just demonstrating concern for those left behind by the rampant individualism, racism, militarism and economic exploitation of these times. I am marching also with those crying out for sane gun control measures,
humane prison conditions and judicial sentencing reform, immigration policy reform, and curtailment of the misguided war on drugs. Rev. Barber and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis of Union Seminary, the lead organizers of the Poor People’s Campaign wrote recently, “There needs to be a new moral discourse in this nation – one that says being poor is not a sin but systemic poverty is.”

In the disastrous grip of big money’s influence on our American political and economic life, we must make our concerns and values known in between elections. When the top one per cent of the population receives 52% of the country’s growth in income, and use their bloated wealth to rig the political process, the only way we save democratic rule by the people and make our system more fair is public protest.

Fifty years ago in leading the organizing of the first Poor People’s Campaign, Martin Luther King called for a revolution in the nation’s values pointing out that “a civilization can flounder as readily in the face of moral and spiritual bankruptcy as it can through financial bankruptcy”. He would certainly agree with those religious leaders today whose recent joint statement lamented the nation’s “political crisis” and declared “if our gospel is not ‘good news for the poor’ it is not the gospel of Jesus Christ”.

Before leaving Jalen this past week, I told him I had high hopes for his future. I also told him the twin of the baby who died is lucky to have him for his big brother. Jalen will do his best to help care for that baby brother who survived. But he will need my help and yours too.

THE NORTH AMERICAN PACIFIC/ASIAN DISCIPLES (NAPAD) AT 20TH BIENNIAL CONVOCATION

The North American Pacific/Asian Disciples (NAPAD) elected Rev. Chung Seong Kim to a six-year term as executive pastor at their 20th biennial convocation in Portland, OR. Kim has served the past two years in an interim capacity.

The meeting place has historic significance for NAPAD. In 1891, First Christian Church of Portland was the incubator for the first Chinese Christian church sponsored by the Christian Women’s Missionary Society. Rev. Jeu Hawk was a leader in spreading the Stone Campbell movement in the Portland area.

The assembly’s theme, *One in Christ*, was based on Ephesians 4:13. With more than 15 ethnic backgrounds represented among NAPAD’s congregations, the theme of diversity without dividedness resonated throughout messages from General Minister and President Terri Hord Owens, Division of Overseas Ministries President Julia Brown Karimu, newly-ordained

Rev. Tevita Uesi and the Bible lecturer, Rev. Dr. Seong Hyun Park of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

One of the highlights of any NAPAD convocation is the cultural night celebration. Members of the NAPAD community bring music and dance from across the globe, sharing the joy of both folk and formal performances. This year, the Disciples Divinity House at the University of Chicago announced a new scholarship in honor of Rev. Geunhee and Geunsoon Yu. Rev. Yu led NAPAD from 1992 to 2011 with another stint as interim executive pastor in 2016.
May 15, 2018

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ -

I want to thank each of you for your support and dedication through prayer and presence to make the Mission First! pilot a success. We learned much about our yearning for connection. I rejoice that more than 2,600 Disciples took several hours in more than 80 gatherings to talk together about their passion for God's work in the world.

As you will see below, what we learned from the project will inform our future. I praise God every day for you and the excellent and loving way you are present in your communities. Again, thank you for your prayers and I would ask that you continue prayer for the committees of the General Board who will be working on your behalf.

Together in Christ's service -

Terri Hord Owens, General Minister and President

General Board celebrates successes of pilot project

"The Mission First! pilot showed us the power of connection and the analysis gave us clarity about action," said Moderator Sue Morris. "Not only did we learn about the great work being done across the life of the Church, but we also learned that there is a craving for connection."

Beginning with an idea in 2014 and extending through the 2017 General Assembly, the Mission First! pilot project was a broad experiment. One portion was a different way of doing business for the General Board. Another facet included a grass roots listening component known as Mission Gatherings. During the pilot period the Administrative Committee served as a governing board and a Mission Council was called together to hear the data from more than 80 Mission Gatherings that involved more than 2,600 Disciples from across the United States and Canada.

The 2018 meeting of the General Board in Newton, IA, devoted a large amount of time to the evaluation of the pilot project and what can be learned from the effort.

"I think the discussion provided us with a clear way forward for the next biennium," said Moderator Elect Belva Brown Jordan, also chair of the Mission First! executive team. "Mission First! led us back to the existing structures to empower them to do the work they were designed to do."

The Standing Rules of the General Board provide for several committees, three of which will be key in moving forward now that the pilot is concluded. First, the Governance Committee will be taking the recommendations of the General Board and what was learned during the pilot to consider whether adjustments to the rules and/or The Design are needed. Second, the Mission Finance Committee will be meeting regularly to examine how we fund our shared mission across the life of the Church in regions and general ministries. And third, the data from the Mission Gatherings will be shared with the General Minister and President's Vision Advisory Committee for further analysis.

There was general agreement that the Mission Gatherings across the life of the Church were a point of joy in celebrating the mission that is occurring throughout the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The connection among those who were able to spend several hours together in person was extremely valuable according to many on the General Board. Several suggested that gatherings be scheduled every several years to continue that sense of connection. The work was also inspiration for a planned Mission Fest at the 2019 General Assembly in Des Moines.

The General Board voted to conclude the Mission First! pilot project and in its business item specifically tasked the Governance Committee to submit recommendations useful for the development of the life, mission, work and organization of the Church and tasked the Mission Finance Committee of the General Board to live into its work to ensure adequate resources for all the work of the of the Church. Both groups are due to have a report for the Administrative Committee in late October.

MICHIGAN REGION HOSTS ECUMENICAL DAY OF SERVICE

For nearly thirty years, the Michigan region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Michigan conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC) have partnered on a variety of activities and events, from attending anti-racism and boundary training together, to hosting joint regional assemblies for a number of years.
“For Disciples, unity is what we’re all about,” says Rev. Eugene James, Michigan’s regional minister. For that reason, he and his UCC counterparts have continued to forge a strong partnership of regular meetings and activities, as opposed to occasional events.

“We can accomplish far more together,” says Rev. James of his partnership with UCC Conference Minister Rev. Campbell Lovett. The two leaders started in their current positions around the same time, and have committed to intentionally cultivate relationships around shared goals for their statewide communities.

Still, the groups wanted to find new and creative ways to partner in their shared communities. They decided to reimagine their annual Festival of Faith event, a day of workshops and worship that alternated between Disciples and UCC locations every year. Instead of offering one central program, Rev. James and Rev. Lovett decided to try a day of service across the state.

The event was held on April 21, 2018 in three locations across Michigan: Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Benzie County. Participants and congregations signed up for a specific location, and began the day with a shared litany service.

In each city, participants worked together with community organizations to complete a variety of tasks, from painting and cleaning to repairing and constructing homes for families in need.

In Detroit, 22 participants worked with Rippling Hope, a local organization that focuses on home improvement and economic recovery efforts. This event was organized by Rippling Hope’s Executive Director Rev. Carl Zerweck, an ordained Disciples minister who previously served as the director of Disciples Volunteering for Disciples Home Missions.

In Grand Rapids, 24 participants worked with HQ, Family Promise, and Habitat Restore, community organizations that support and house homeless individuals and families. Rev. James joined this group, and worked on cleaning and repairing homes that would be provided to homeless families in the area.

In Benzie County, 4 participants braved the unexpected snow to work with community organizations in the area – one of the poorest counties in the state, and the home of the Michigan region’s Crystal Conference Center.

While the focus of this day of service was the completed work, Rev. James sees the groups’ commitment to partnership as an important success of the day.

“We are grateful that ours is a genuine partnership,” James says, “and we are quite pleased with the outcome. We thank God that we have been able to put the Gospel into action together.”
It is with great joy and thanksgiving that the Moderator of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in NC, the Rev. Dr. William Barber II, acting on behalf of the Regional Board and the Regional Assembly, announces that on Saturday, May 19, 2018 we called the Rev. Valerie J. Melvin as the Regional Minister of North Carolina.

Rev. Melvin who has for several years served as our Associate Regional Minister is a lifelong Disciple of North Carolina.

Rev. Melvin, is an undergraduate of Barton College and holds two degrees from Duke Divinity School, the Masters of Divinity and the Masters of Theology. The Rev. Dr. William L. Lee, Interim Regional Minister, commented to the board that North Carolina in his opinion was already posed to be a model Region. The historic call of Rev. Valerie Melvin as our new Regional Minister can only accelerate Dr. Lee's commendation.

Rev. Melvin was installed on June 30th at the Hillyer Memorial Christian Church of Raleigh, North Carolina.

Moderator, William Barber II

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**REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY**

Do you know:

1) Where this photo was taken? 2) What was the occasion of the gathering? 3) Who were the participants? 4) When did the event happen?

Amelia Webb Walker
“What A Family! What A Love Story!”

“What you will shine among them like stars in the sky…”

Phillipians 2: 15b (NIV)

Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hylton, Jr.’s Home-going Celebration is included in the For Whom the Bell Tolls section of this issue. I would like to share my personal reflections on this service, as Rev. Hylton was my Pastor, my mentor, and my friend.

A gifted educator and musician plays her arrangement of “Tis So Sweet To Trust In Jesus”, a favorite hymn of Rev. Hylton, during the silent reading of Life Reflections at the service. A simple tune that many of us have sung before was embellished with artful style and played with such virtuosity that listeners thought for a moment they were in a concert hall. Remarkable yes - yet even more remarkable because the arranger/pianist was Mildred McLeod Hylton, Rev. Hylton’s wife of 62 years. In the midst of grieving the loss of her beloved husband, she performed with excellence and grace. One might ask: “How did she do that?”

A gifted singer performs a solo rendition of “Jesus Is All The World To Me”, another one of Rev. Hylton’s favorite hymns. The bell-like clarity and beauty of her voice caress every word, as listeners are comforted by the powerful, yet simple refrain after each verse: “He’s my friend.” Remarkable yes - yet even more remarkable because the lovely soprano soloist was Karen Hylton, the daughter of Rev. Hylton. In the midst of grieving the loss of her beloved father, she performed with excellence and grace. One might ask: “How did she do that?”

Other family members rise to the occasion as they pay tribute to Rev. Hylton: “He had a heart for Christ.” - son, Samuel W. Hylton III; “He was the right man for the right moment.” - grandson, Sedric; “You were the perfect example of how a Godly man should be in the home, community, and church.” - granddaughter Chelsea E. Hylton; “He spoke truth when it was popular and unpopular.” - niece, Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale; and “I admired most his keen intellect.” - nephew, Attorney Keith N. Hylton. In the midst of grieving the loss of their beloved father, grandfather, and uncle - these family members performed with excellence and grace. One might ask: “How did they do that?”

The answer to the question: “How did the family do that?” echoes in Rev. Hylton’s son’s description of his father as having the heart of Christ. Like Rev. Hylton, these family members have the heart of Christ. They were motivated by a generosity of spirit and a love of Christ that enabled them to honor their loved one and perform with excellence and grace as they comforted those of us who were mourning his loss. It was so amazing to see how the heart of Christ enabled each family member to keep loving, giving, believing, and serving - hallmarks of Rev. Hylton’s life. Their heart of Christ enabled them to see gain beyond their loss. They knew that Rev. Hylton has gained his place in heaven and they also realized that they have gained the opportunity to celebrate and carry on his rich legacy.

Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hylton, Jr. did many impressive things on this earth - yet I would suggest his greatest legacy is his role as spouse, father, grandfather, and uncle. The Hylton family is his living legacy. This family’s awesome display of love, grace, style, and excellence, in the face of loss, will be a treasured memory that continues to amaze, uplift, and inspire me to go forth and do likewise. What a family! What a love story! To God Be The Glory!!

LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT
May-August, 2018
BEES – FLEAS and HONEY

A tiny yellow Bumble Bee
Sat and watched a little flea.
Bee wondered, what if he were flea,
And how it’d be if flea were he.
He didn’t like the thought at all,
Being a flea was nary his call
For he loved buzzing and flying,
making honey and sighing.
A flea making honey was just
Too funny.
Most never like to even see a flea,
They flee the flea their presence fear.
Running and waving,
not wanting them near.
So, he opted,
“I’ll flip that silly thought from mind,
Just buzz, make honey
and remain my kind.

A ‘LIL LAUGHTER

An elderly Florida lady upon returning to her car after shopping found four guys about to drive away in it. She dropped her bags and drew her handgun. “I know how to use this” she said. “Get out of my car.” They didn’t hesitate getting out and ran like mad. Shaken, she got into the car but her key did not fit the ignition. She had wondered why there was a Frisbee and two 12-packs of beer on the seat – then realized it was not her car. She found her car parked four spaces over. She drove to the police station to report her mistake. The sergeant she spoke to couldn’t stop laughing. He pointed to four ashen faced young men who had just reported their car being highjacked by a mad elderly woman carrying a large handgun. No charges were filed. Moral of the story? If you’re going to have a senior moment, make it memorable.

INTERESTING TIDBITS ABOUT IRAQ

The “Empire of Man” described in Revelation is called Babylon, which was a city in Iraq. There are many cities today that might be associated with that name. No other nation has more history and prophecy than Iraq. Israel is the nation most often mentioned in the Bible; Iraq is second. The Land of Shinar was the region around Babylon. When King Nebuchadnezzar saw the power of the God of the 3 Hebrew boys he exclaimed “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His angel and delivered His servants” (Daniel 3:28b). But King Nebuchadnezzar continued to walk pridefully. He conquered Egypt, completed many victories and ended his wars about the 34th or 35th year of his reign yet never till after all these things was he brought to recognize and admire GOD’s signs and wonders.

And while at rest in his house one night he saw a dream that made him afraid. He, Daniel interprets his dream; (Dan. 4:20) “The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth, (4:21) whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and on whose branches the birds of the heaven had their habitations- (4:22) it is you, O king, who have grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.” Right now -why not open your Bible and read on. Even though you may have read this before it is always good to read to the conclusion of a chapter. Go ahead and read Chapter 3 through 4. In fact, why not read the whole book?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT DEATH

The Bible speaks of untimely death. It is written (Gal. 6:7) “Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Here are some who mocked God:

Some years before JOHN LENNON died, he said in a magazine interview “Christianity will end, it will disappear. I do not have to argue about that. I am certain. Jesus was ok, but his subjects were too simple. Today we are more famous than Him.” Lennon died having been shot six times.

During Brazil’s presidential campaign some years back, TANCREDI NEVES said “If he got 500,000 votes from his party, not even God would remove him from Presidency.” But he got sick a day before he made president and he died.
Some years ago I purposed in my heart to understand more about the holidays we celebrated, as we began creating traditions for our young children. We had learned that Memorial Day started off as a somber day of remembrance; a day when Americans went to cemeteries and placed flags or flowers on the graves of our war dead. It was a day to remember ancestors, family members, and loved ones who gave the ultimate sacrifice. It was a particular ritual of the elementary school that our boys attended that led me to put in writing the lives of family members that had been deeply touched by the armed services. I noted, in conversation with my children, that each of their family members had a very complex experience with service to our country. Many of those who had served had been dishonored in their day-to-day life experience here in the United States, after taking and honoring a vow to serve. When a few of the boys teachers created a bulletin board recognizing veterans, we decided to send a full listing of family members and assorted pictures to represent their service. I held back the emotions of watching my grandfather fight for benefits that he would never receive, and I remember vividly my favorite uncle telling a then 5 year old Noah, "son this path is not for you." I watched as this extremely distinguished, loyal and highly decorated man of dignity described his treatment and shared stories of the disrespect he endured on behalf of the country he loved. As I see the decline in public discourse in our country, the widening gap in the socio-economic classes and the level of hate that lingers at the surface of basic differences, I’m reminded of this family history. We have deeply invested in serving this country and my ancestors must remain unsettled at how we still manage to treat people who have lived a life of honor, without regard for their basic humanity and individual rights.

As we approach the Memorial Day Holiday, my commitment is for a greater investment in family history documentation, true legacy preservation, and prayer. In my teenage years, into early adulthood, I filed papers and complaints, inquiries and requests, so that my grandfather's legacy with the US Navy would be honored while he was alive. For those who are no longer with us, I can only imagine what their discourse would be about the conditions of our world today. As we repeatedly enter and sustain an orientation to militarism, I lift up all of the families who sacrifice for our country. I want for my children to understand the complex world that we live in, while honoring the many lives that have invested in this country. There are many stories that forever go untold. I read the misrepresentation of what it means to honor the flag or our country often.

I am troubled when I encounter ignorance about the rights that service men and women fight for. I am troubled when there is a lack of civility even as we disagree about how people challenge the country they hold with high regard. I am most troubled when I see those who have worked, served, honored and built this country, treated with reckless disregard for their sacrifice and investment. In a recent conversation about Beloved Community, I recognized that I had allowed myself to release over the past 2 years a little bit of my previous hope for what the country could be. I pray that we teach future generations to honor service, to celebrate legacy and to fully utilize and respect the rights they have been given to fight for a better world that honors ALL.

In memory of ….
Kim Anita (Haynes) Atwater entered eternal life with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on Wednesday, March 14, 2018 in the comfort of her home. A beloved mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, godmother and devoted friend, Kim was never tired of giving to her family, friends and medical community. Through her strength, courage, and unrelenting optimism, she was an example, inspiration and role model to many.

Kim was born on February 27, 1956, in Washington, D.C., and was the third child of her parents Oscar Haynes and Lula Mae Haynes who have preceded her in death.

Kim was baptized at 12th Street Christian Church of Washington, D.C., where she spent her formative years. While at 12th Street, Kim was very active in the church by singing in the choir which led to her getting the starring role in the production of "Pure Victorious" performed by the 12th Street Player's. In 1972, she was first runner up in the District of Columbia Miss. DC Teenager Pageant.

Kim attended Randall Highland Elementary, Suitland Junior High, and was a member of the first graduating class of H.D. Woodson High School in 1973, graduating a year earlier than scheduled. Eager to continue school, she selected Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) for her post-secondary education, but feeling homesick, Kim transferred from VCU to Prince George's Community College Nursing School and participated in an accelerated program and received her degree in nursing.

Jordan Tyrell Houston

On June 4th, Jordan Tyrell Houston, the 20 year old son of Natalie Greene and Clifford Houston, a student at Asbury University and a former basketball player at Henry Clay High School, died in a Tennessee drowning. The tragedy occurred in the Cedar Creek area of Norris Lake, a popular swimming spot for people visiting the area. Jordan was swimming off the back of a boat, went underwater and never came back up.

Former coaches and teammates were shocked and saddened when they learned of Jordan's death. "They're like kids to me," Henry Clay coach Daniel Brown said, "You're hoping to outlive all of my former players."

Players and coaches say Houston was well-liked by his peers. "Everybody that comes across Jordan Houston loves this kid," former coach Lamont Campbell said.

"He was just one of those guys that made you laugh, on the court, off the court," Isaiah Tisdale said.

"Our hearts are deeply saddened as we grieve with Jordan’s family and friends, and we pray that the love and peace of Jesus will surround them during this time.” Asbury University president Dr. Sandra C. Gray said.

Samuel W. Hylton, Jr.

Samuel W. Hylton, Jr. entered this world on a day of love, Monday, February 14, 1927, and on Wednesday, July 4, 2018, at the age of 91, he was freed from this life to receive his heavenly reward.

The Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hylton, Jr., a dedicated and faithful servant of God, was a native of Roanoke, Virginia. He was the eldest son of the late Rev. and Mrs. Samuel W. Hylton, Sr., and grew up in a Christian
home with his siblings Janice Hylton Hale and the late Kenneth Niles Hylton, Sr. He received Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior and was baptized at the age of nine years old. Christian training continued at Loudon Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Roanoke, Virginia.

In 1949, Rev. Hylton received his Bachelor's Degree in History and Political Science from Morehouse College, in Atlanta, Georgia. His tenure at Morehouse overlapped another famous alum and preacher, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1954, he received his Master of Divinity Degree and was given an Honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree, 1973, from Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana. His quest for knowledge continued and in 1978, Rev. Hylton was awarded a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Eden Theological Seminary, in St. Louis, Missouri.

After serving as the assistant pastor at Second Christian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, he became pastor of Cleveland Avenue Christian Church now called Greater Cleveland Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In October 1961, he brought his wife, Mildred McLeod Hylton; son, Samuel W Hylton, III; and his not yet born daughter, Karen Elizabeth, to his senior pastor position at Centennial Christian Church, St. Louis, Missouri. Rev. Hylton faithfully served for almost 36 years. He continued his commitment to God's work by serving as Centennial's Pastor Emeritus and began working with the Christian Church Foundation.

Under Rev. Hylton's leadership, Centennial significantly increased membership, launched a Youth Retreat and Head Start Program, partnered with Delta Sigma Theta Literacy Center, and initiated a social service center that provided food, clothing and counseling for the disadvantaged. Centennial, a registered historic church, was recognized as a charter member with the St. Louis Symphony In Unison Program. Rev. Dr. Hylton's vision for affordable senior living quarters came to fruition when the church partnered with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and The National Benevolent Association of the Christian Church (NBA) to help lead the way in developing three affordable senior housing properties in St. Louis: Centennial Plaza, Hylton Point I and Hylton Point II Apartments. This endeavor was the first African American partnering with NBA and a major step toward affirmative action. Furthermore, having a building named after a living person prominently speaks to his respect throughout the Disciples of Christ.

Active on all levels of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Rev. Hylton served as First Vice Moderator of the Christian Church, President of the National Convocation, and Chair of Affirmative Action. His ability to lead or follow was evident as a member of The NBA, General Board and the Task Force of Renewal and Structural Reform of the Christian Church, Board of Directors of the Christian Board of Publication and Pension Fund.

He was described as humble, strong, and most importantly, a servant. He was known for his quiet demeanor, kindness and the God given talent of never talking negatively about ANYONE! He always saw the good in everyone.

**REV. DR. CLAUDE WALKER**

At an early age, God had a divine plan for Dr. Walker's life. This led to his journey with Christ, where he was committed to studying God's word. With steps ordered by God, he attended Jarvis Christian College and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion in 1956.

In 1955, he was ordained as a minister at Jarvis Christian College. He later received Master's and Doctorate degrees from Lexington Theological Seminary and Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University, respectively. He was the first African-American to
receive a Master's degree from Lexington Theological Seminary and also the first African-American to receive a Doctor of Divinity degree from Brite Divinity School.

In 1959, Dr. Walker began his professional career as Program Director for Mount Beulah Community Center in Edwards, Mississippi, a Community Outreach Program for the Edwards Area. He also served as Area Minister for the Black Disciples churches in Mississippi. He served as Senior Pastor of Disciples of Christ congregations in Nashville, Tennessee; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Kansas City, Missouri; Dallas, Texas; and Longview, Texas. He also served as Executive Director of Goldsboro Christian Institute, a Program of Clergy/Lay Training in North Carolina; and Right Alternatives for People, a juvenile delinquency prevention program in Dallas. He served 60 years as an Ordained Minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Dr. Walker served on various committees and boards in Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) where he resided, including the Southwest Region Committee on Ministry. He was a member of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and its General Assembly Planning Committee, Trustee of the Disciples Historical Society, Lexington Theological Seminary, and the National Convention of the Christian Church, serving as its President from 1972-1974. He was actively involved in the merger of the National Christian Missionary Convention (DOC). He was the 1st Vice President of the National Christian Missionary Convention (NMC) when the merger was approved. Additionally, he was active in ecumenical and social/civic affairs on the local and regional levels, including serving as President of the NAACP Chapter and Vice President of the SCLC Chapter in Nashville, Tennessee. While in Nashville, Dr. Walker participated in the sit-in movement. He was arrested and booked for demonstrating in a local cafeteria, but received no jail time.

In 1968, he began his 20 years of employment at Jarvis Christian College as College Minister, Instructor of Religion, and Chair of the Department of Religion and Philosophy. In 1978, after earning his Doctorate degree, he returned to his former position with the title of Professor of Religion. He later served as Director of Development. He developed and secured funds to establish the Leadership Development School and the Emmett J. Dickson Institute at Jarvis Christian College.

The two programs provide alternative education towards a seminary degree for persons seeking licensing and/or ordination through the Texas Christian Missionary Fellowship and the Southwest Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Dr. Walker was a life member of the JCC/SCI National Alumni Association, the President's Club, the 2004 Pioneer Hall of Fame class, and 2005 Heritage Award recipient. In July 2014, he was presented the E. W. Henry and R. H. Paige Memorial Award during the 133rd Assembly of the Texas Christian Missionary Fellowship of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest Region.

As interim pastor, Dr. Walker provided nourishment to Disciples of Christ congregations in Ohio, Oklahoma, Mississippi, and Texas. He served as Senior Pastor of Bonnie View Christian Church from 1986-1989 and was an Associate Pastor as well as a member in good standing at the time of his transition.

In addition to the numerous awards previously listed, Dr. Walker served 11 years as a Trustee at Brite Divinity School, and was named Honorary Trustee on October 31, 2015. He also served on the Committee on Ministry for the North Texas Area of the Christian Church Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest for several years

"The world is a fine place and worth fighting for and I hate very much to leave it," McCain wrote in his memoir, referencing a line from his favorite book, the Ernest Hemingway war novel “For Whom the Bell Tolls.” “I hate to leave.”
TOO LATE
A poem from “A New Journey in A Teachable Garden” by Cynthia Hibbler, June 24, 2018

It was too late to extend an invitation for a hummingbird couple
to come to the dogwood tree and start a family.
too late to fill the hummingbird feeder with home cooked sugar water,
hanging on the front porch next to the tree with the huge white flowers.
too late to summon the colorful tiny birds with a resort feeder
next to the garden with vegetables, grape vines and tubular flowers.

It is never too late to ask God
to hear the rumble of wings on a quiet Sabbath morn.

Can time delay His will for us? Can it push against God?
too late to say goodbye
to the hummingbird as it disappeared over the neighbor’s fence.

This is the confidence we have approaching God:
that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.
And if we know that he hears us-whatever we ask-
we know that we have what we asked of him.

I John 5:14-15 NIV

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P. O. Box 441695
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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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OSCAR HAYNES (1916-2014)
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LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

No Happy Holidays Here: MERRY CHRISTMAS GRAPEVINE FAMILY

“...I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a savior has been born to you, he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

Luke 2: 10b-11 NIV

As Christmas approaches, it is a joy and a privilege to greet you in the name of Christ. On behalf of the staff and board of the Grapevine we would like to thank you for your loyal support. Some of you have been with us since the first issue in 1991. Others have joined us along the way. We are grateful for all of you and we consider you as part of our beloved Grapevine family.

As your family carries out your favorite Christmas traditions, it is my prayer that you will warmly feel the love, joy, and peace of Christ. Luke’s words remind us that Christmas is all about keeping Jesus in the center of who we are and all we do. If we believe Luke’s words, this little bitty baby boy Jesus, whose birth we celebrate on December 25th is the most powerful, life-changing force the world has ever known. Jesus is our personal savior and redeemer. He is God incarnate. What good news is that?

When we fully grasp the significance of Luke’s announcement of the “reason for the season;” the hustle and bustle of the holidays cannot distract us or distress us. Indeed, national or local politics; the endless cycle of “bad news” on TV; and the myriad personal disappointments and challenges of our lives cannot distract us or deter us. As people of faith, we know Christmas is all about Christ and the power and promise that his birth represents. As people of faith, we love Christmas, no matter what. We celebrate, we generously share with “the least of these”, and we cannot praise our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ enough.

The Grapevine staff and board wish you, our beloved Grapevine family, a faith filled and fun Christmas. As we end this year, please know that the Grapevine ministry is eager to be the best we can be in serving your need to connect with servants of the church around the country. We welcome your comments and we look forward to your continuing support in the new year.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

Your Sister in Christ,

Norma R. Ellington-Twitty, Ph.D., Board President

GRAPEVINE REGIONAL REPORTER SEARCH

By Way of Introduction:

The Oldtimer’s Grapevine is an independent, not for profit ministry grounded in Jesus Christ for the enhancement of His Church. Our purpose is to promote healthy aging, communication and the sharing of mutual experiences by retired servants of the Church through the production of The Oldtimers’ Grapevine Newsletter.

The Oldtimer’s Grapevine Newsletter was founded by William K. Fox in 1991. He described the primary purpose of the Newsletter as a communication tool that enables retired servants of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to stay connected. Circulation is 800 persons, who live across the country. The current Publisher/Executive Editor is John R. Foulkes.

Grapevine Regional Reporter Role: We are looking for an individual who identifies with our mission and would be willing to take on the newly developing role of Grapevine Regional Reporter. The key purpose of this role is to fulfill our founder’s vision: to share local and regional church news and stories that will keep our national readership informed, connected, and spiritually renewed for kingdom building.

Examples of Material for Grapevine Regional Reporter Articles:

Significant congregational celebrations, church and pastoral anniversaries, social justice activities, community outreach projects, mission trips effective programs or...
activities for seniors, including intergenerational programs;
Regional or state celebrations, activities, or programs that would be relevant and of interest to our broad readership;
Updates on retired servants of the church: Where are they? How are they doing? What are they doing? “Secrets of Aging” pearls of wisdom to share? and “Homegoing” celebrations for retired servants of the church and those persons who might be familiar to our readers. These submissions would be a part of the “For Whom the Bell Tolls” section of the Newsletter.

Responsibilities:
Once confirmed, share your role as Grapevine Regional Reporter with your Pastor, regional staff of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and persons in authority for key church organizations at the local, regional, or state levels (as appropriate).
Stay up-to-date with planned events locally and regionally, thus providing you the opportunity to attend these events or secure information from reliable sources.
Contact, interview, and research news and story leads, or tips.
Collect, verify and analyze newsworthy information. Feel free to consult with the Grapevine editor to ensure your proposed article is newsworthy before finalizing your work. (This will ensure that your efforts are not on wasted on an article that does not meet the needs of our readership.)
Assemble findings into a proposed article for publication in The Oldtimers’ Grapevine. Deliver stories with the readers’ perspective in mind.
Maintain notes and audio recordings. Identify sources and how you have authenticated your article.
Secure prior approval from or provide prior notification to the appropriate person before submission to the Grapevine editor. Depending on story content, provide notification and/or secure approval from your Pastor (or designee), regional staff person of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), or other persons in authority or persons who are featured in the article, before submission, as appropriate.
Submit article to the Grapevine editor by identified deadlines in: mid-March, mid July, and early November (specific deadlines are defined annually).

Requirements: There are no formal requirements for the role of Grapevine Regional Reporter. It is likely that the following qualities would be important in carrying out the Responsibilities described above:
Identify with and eager to contribute to the mission and purposes of The Oldtimers’ Grapevine;
Active participant in the life of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and knowledgeable about their programs, events and activities at the local, regional and state levels;
Ability to gather, write, and edit news;
Computer proficiency (word processing, digital editing);
Excellent communication and active listening skills; and
Reputation as one who has integrity and compassion for our church family.

Final Note: We would like to share key aspects of the original vision of our founding editor, William K. Fox to reflect the values that have shaped the publication of the Old Timer’s Grapevine for 27 years:
Independent and not for profit entity, with financial support coming from the readership;
Although the focus and readership of the Newsletter is the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); the Oldtimers’ Grapevine ministry and Newsletter have no formal relationship with and receive no funding or programmatic support from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);
Share ideas about issues relevant to “Golden Agers”, however the Newsletter would take on no “official point of view and/or formalized programs”;
Readership would include persons of all racial and ethnic backgrounds;
Should never be tainted with politics in church or society. Its purpose is grounded in Jesus, the Christ and the enhancement of Christ’s church; and
Wholeness and togetherness in Christ are watch words in focusing on African American members, as well as other racial and ethnic structures and their contribution to the general welfare of the Church.

Application Process: To express an interest in becoming a Grapevine Regional Reporter,
contact John R. Foulkes, Publisher/Executive Editor.
Hello disciples, I'm Terry Hord Owens, your General Minister and President.

For the past 16 months I have been travelling across the church in all of the U.S. and Canada, visiting with your congregations, your regional assemblies, our racial ethnic assemblies — the National Convocation Obra Hispania and NAPAD. I want you to know what I have learned.

I have seen the richness of the diversity of our church. I have seen visible signs of hope and joy and plans for the future. I have seen congregations and regions sharing stories about facing challenges, yes, seeing certain numbers decline, yes, but also seeing life move forward. I've seen our regions and congregations acknowledging the challenges absolutely, both in terms of finances and crises of leadership. But I've also seen them make plans to improve finances, to see them turn the corner, to see new leadership come into place. I've seen them make plans for transitioning and seeing the end of visible ministries all across our church. But I've also seen them rejoicing in the success of new church plants and the new ways of doing and being Church.

I've seen all of you working in your local communities to serve the needs of those communities as you prepare to represent the Gospel of Jesus Christ in mission and witness. I've had the great opportunity to work with all of you on so many issues of social justice across our country and in the U.S. and Canada, and you have joined together as congregations and regions to ensure that our collective witness as disciples has been visible and powerful. I've reminded us, I hope, that part of our great legacy is to be a people of the book, to know and understand the Scriptures, to be people of spiritual development who know how to pray both as intercessory prayer partners, and also as people who know when to be quiet to be still and know that God is God. You have been Church together you have been disciples working together.

I want you to have the opportunity to see the fullness of who we are when we come together. One opportunity that you'll have next July in 2019 is to gather with us at the General Assembly in Des Moines Iowa. I hope that you will ensure that who you are as church locally and regionally will be represented at the General Assembly. We will worship together, we will study together, we will make plans together, and we will conduct our business. But I hope that you'll be able to look around that arena in Des Moines and see the whole church not just a part of the church but the true diverse richness of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

It has given me such confidence that comes only from God to see your passion, your commitment to the work that we do together as followers of Jesus Christ. My very favorite scripture is Philippians 1 and 6 in which Paul expresses to the church at Philippi his confidence in them he says, “I am confident of this that the one who has begun a good work in you will complete it by the day of Jesus Christ.” Church, I have confidence not only in us as disciples, not only in you as disciples, but I have confidence that the God that we are called to serve is not finished with us yet. I have confidence in us as church disciples more importantly, God has confidence in us. God has called us to this work and God has given us all that we need to continue to live out the gospel of Jesus Christ both collectively together in our churches and as witness to the world of what the reign of God can look like. We are followers of Jesus Christ and we have a commitment to live out that collective witness so the world can see what it looks like, when the reign of peace, love and justice is real in our society.
People who come from different backgrounds can share together in a common goal, can be brothers and sisters together, living out the call for peace and justice in a society that is in such need of the love and peace that we know Jesus models for us all church.

We are approaching the season of Advent when hope, joy, peace and love and the presence of Christ are at the center of our gathering together. It’s in this season that we must remind ourselves of this very confidence that God has given us. I hope that as you worship together, and as you remind yourselves of the great gift that God has given in Jesus Christ, that God still has confidence in us and that our work together is not finished. More importantly, God is not finished.

May the peace, joy, love and hope of this advent season be with you now and always, and I look forward to seeing you all at the General Assembly in Des Moines Iowa in July of 2019. God bless you and remember that God loves you and so do I.

Bostick Select Fund

Objective:
Seek a total return from a moderately-aggressive asset allocation that excludes investments defined by the Fund’s strategy statement.

Strategy:
The Bostick Select Fund will continue to uphold the Christian Church Foundation’s commitment to being an active, faith-based investor, while also excluding investments in fossil fuels, weapons manufacturers, and companies targeted for divestment because of their involvement in perpetuating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Fund will actively invest in environmentally sustainable companies as well as those responding to an increasing global population.

Defined Income Rate:
4.0%

Purchases:
Deposits received before the end of the month will purchase shares in the Bostick Select Fund on the first business day of the following month.

Redemptions:
Withdrawal requests require written authorization by the 20th of the month to be effective the first business day of the following month.

The Board of Directors of Christian Church Foundation approved during their Fall Board meeting with a great sense of joy, humility, and yes, pride, the Sara Lue Bostick Select Fund

Rev. Bostick is recorded in the history books as the first African American woman ordained by Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She was noted for her work in the ministry that ultimately became National Convocation. This is a tremendous acknowledgement and celebration of the diversity and contributions of blacks to the life of the church.

Attached is the flyer which notes how the fund is designed and the intentionality of its purpose of not be involved in certain industries, while providing the same returns as the other CCF investment options.

Marilyn S. Fiddmont
Vice President,
Southwest Zone & Northeastern Region
Christian Church Foundation
Announcing Our New Podcast: What's the Tea, with Reconciliation Ministry

On November 30, 2018 Reconciliation Ministry launched “What's the Tea, with Reconciliation Ministry.” The podcast will be published bi-weekly and feature conversations at the intersection of faith and social justice.

Everyone is invited to listen. We’re also looking for Disciples across the Church to be future guests for the show. If you are interested, email the Reconciliation office at “ajohnson@disciples.org.”

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If There is a New Normal; It Must Be Love

In recent weeks, our attention has been forcibly drawn to the painful brokenness in our nation and our world. On last Wednesday, as I listened to the report of another mass shooting, the fourth in as many weeks, I wept. "This is not normal," are the words that kept repeating in my mind and in my spirit. These incidents, once a rare occurrence have become frequent. Our public safety officials encourage us to familiarize ourselves and our congregations with "active shooter" training. I echo the efficacy of this type of preparedness, even in light of my resolve that this cannot become our new normal.

There are not a lot of answers in times like these; feelings of hurt and confusion are understandable. As I sit and think about the violence that has occurred in the last weeks, two questions come to mind. 1) Who benefits from our brokenness and 2) What do we need in times like these? Our anxiety rightfully runs high in the midst of division and violence.

In times like these, it is important that we do not remain silent. As well, we must continue to listen to one another. We do not know the true motive of the recent tragedies. What we do know is that those who perpetrate violence and hate perpetuate a message of fear. No one benefits from our silence. Anxiety and hate come from a place of fear. This fear is rooted in the misunderstanding that there is not enough for all of us on this amazing planet. This fear embraces the myth of scarcity - that even we are not enough for what the world needs now. We are more than enough.

God who created the heavens and the earth, also created us with God's spirit of abundance and we are more than enough . . . together, not divided. Therefore, there is nothing to fear. As Disciples of Christ, we do not lose hope. In fact, we are hope-givers. We are light-bearers. We are peacemakers and we share the love of Christ as witnesses on Christ's behalf.

Scripture reminds us, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; . . ." (1 John 4:17). We are compelled to serve one another, to show compassion, to pray for those who are sick and hurting, and to bless those who do not know love as we do. Disciples put hands, heart and feet to our love. Reconciliation is love in action.

I know the events of the last weeks have been difficult. I encourage you to sit with that feeling for a bit. Think about how you can show love to your family, friends, coworkers and community, and even people who have a different viewpoint. "The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also." 1 John 4:21

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Reconciliation Ministry Grant Proposals
Due January 31, 2019

Reconciliation Ministry is welcoming grant proposals for Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism programs and projects for the 2019 cycle. Proposal will be received until January 31, 2019. Notification of awards will be by April 15th, 2019. Congregations and individuals are strongly encouraged to apply for funding through their Regional Office. The guidelines for grant proposals can be found here.

Key components of successful a project include: adherence to the grant proposals guidelines in succinctness, anti-racism focus, attention to comparable funding, project sustainability, and people served by the project's implementation.

We are excited to receive your proposals.
.e Sound of Silence is the title of a song by the 1960's musical duo Simon and Garfunkel. It referred to the awful silence in America about the problems facing our nation at that time. That song has special meaning today after a week in this country when 14 pipe bombs were mailed to two former US presidents and other political and high profile cultural figures. We saw innocent people being killed at a Kroger grocery store in Kentucky. We saw people killed in a synagogue in Pittsburgh by a gunman shouting anti-Jewish slogans.

In the face of this much violence, one would expect to hear from our political and religious leaders words of condemnation about these actions and words of comfort toward the targets of those attacks.

Instead, whether from the White House or from the pulpits of leading white evangelical Christians we hear only the sound of silence. Those people usually have so much to say about their pet agenda issues. Well. I could not help but to flashback on the nine faithful members of the Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC, just three short years ago. With so many of these tragic events taking place, let us be careful not to become compassion fatigued, but rather be encouraged to not grow weary in well doing and caring much, facing such painful realities.

Rev. Terri Hord Owens, our General Minister and President made a request to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and our colleagues saying, “Join me in praying for those suffering right now and working to end these horrific episodes in our society that are occurring with alarming frequency.” Prayer is a common practice in our faith communities and is appropriate now for the Tree of Life Synagogue, that the God of all comfort, will be with them in this time of pain and sorrow. Then let us share our faith, which has been tried by the fires of trial and tribulation, with one another as to how God is able to abide with us and see us through.

This was an act of terrorism. We as people of faith who believe in the power love over hatred, and good over evil, may pray and serve with courage. “But and if you suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.” (1 Peter 3:14 KJV). We pray this loss and suffering will be redemptive to the ushering in of a better day of peace, love and harmony among people everywhere. Will you pray the Prayer of St. Francis with me?

They are outraged about a so-called “caravan” of people coming from Central America. They remain outspoken about matters of abortion, voting rights, marriage equality, and race relations. However, when it comes to the attempted assassination of political leaders and the actual murders of people targeted because of their race or religion these conservative voices have nothing to say. Where are Mitch McConnell, Paul Ryan, Lindsay Graham, Jerry Falwell, Jr., Franklin Graham, Tony Perkins and other apologists for Donald Trump? Is it a mistake that all of these events are occurring when the President of the United States regularly fires up his base with slogans designed to fuel division between people based upon race, religion, region, and political parties? The conservative media led by Ann Coulter, Rush Limbaugh, Fox News, and others were certain that the pipe bombs were the work of Democrats who were, they suggested sending bombs in an attempt to make it seem that Republicans were responsible. When an obvious Trump supporter was arrested for sending the bombs all those people assumed the sound of silence. It is time for our leaders to do precisely that; lead us through these turbulent times by their clear outrage over these repeated acts of violence. Terrorism is at work in the United States. As Dr. King often said, The problem is not the vitriolic words of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people”.

Marvin A. McMickle, Ph.D.
President and Professor of African American Religious Studies Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School
Dear Friends,

Last Saturday, another gunman opened fire on yet another house of worship. Eleven dead. These eleven will be added to those recently killed at grocery stores, concerts, schools, homes, restaurants, clubs and street corners. October 27 was the 300th day of 2018. It was also the day of the 294th mass shooting of 2018 in the United States. (The FBI defines a mass shooting as one where three or more people are injured or killed.)

Hate-filled speech, dangerously ambiguous rhetoric, and life-harming—and often life-ending—bullets continue to fly.

We are outraged at the slaughter of people at worship and with the fact that the United States leads all advanced countries in homicides per capita—outpacing the next country on the list by four times the number of murders.

We mourn for those who died at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and for all those who have been injured and killed in mass shootings in the United States. We pour out our hearts in prayer for those who survive these shootings and who find themselves reeling in trauma they may never overcome.

And we pray for those who have perpetrated this violence on innocent victims. We are not born as prejudiced, hateful, violent people. The world is filled with those who foster goodness, bridge differences, and love neighbors as themselves. Tragically, however, others carry such deep physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wounds that they seek to destroy goodness, eliminate differences and annihilate neighbors. What is more, there are some in this country whose language and actions fan the flames of division and discontent in ways that only encourage the death-dealing actions we have seen this past week.

At Christian Theological Seminary, our faith is central to our life, work, and study. Every moment is a teaching moment. Every incident calls to us, urging us to learn and to engage.

Drawing deeply on the most ancient strands of our tradition and scripture, we affirm that all people are created in the image of God, and therefore have inherent worth and dignity. This, in fact, is the first statement of our values statement and, of course, comes from the proclamation in Genesis 1 that all humans are made in the image of God. The worth and dignity of all people are absolutes; they do not depend on variables such as race or ethnicity, gender or sexuality, wealth, intelligence, moral virtue, religion, ability, or social standing.

We also affirm in that same values statement that we hear, just as the people of God of every time and place have heard, God's call to promote healing and wholeness in all of God's creation. That is not an optional part of our faith. Scripture highlights our healing, serving, reconciling, peacemaking work in the world as central to our life of faith.

May God bless and strengthen all efforts to end the death-dealing ways that threaten our shared life as people of faith and as Americans. Let us join together in prayer. Let us mobilize together in faithfulness. Let us fulfill God's desire that we all live in life-giving community with one another.

Nov. 15, 2018 – Lexington Theological Seminary President Dr. Charisse L. Gillett has been selected to receive a 2018 Reflective Leadership Grant from Leadership Education at Duke Divinity.

The $15,000 award will support a period of reflection and targeted activities between January 2019 and June 30, 2020, designed to assist President Gillett with thinking carefully and deeply about her work and ministry at LTS and how best to help the organization sustain its progress and momentum.

This is the first year of the Reflective Leadership Grants, and the adjudication process was competitive. Leadership Education at Duke Divinity is funding 20 proposals from a mix of lay and ordained Christian leaders serving in established or emerging institutions.
These proposals clearly articulated why this is a pivotal moment to reflect, learn and discern next steps. Leadership Education aims to create lasting change in U.S. congregations by supporting Christian leaders and the institutions they serve. Leadership Education designs educational services, develops intellectual resources and facilitates networks of institutions that cultivate a coherent vision of Christian institutional leadership and form Christian leaders.

“The Reflective Leadership Grant at Leadership Education at Duke Divinity recognizes and supports the faithful and innovative work of lay and ordained Christian leaders who find themselves at a pivotal moment in their ministry,” said Victoria White, Leadership Education’s managing director of grants. “Using Harvard professor Ron Heifetz’s language, we want to help leaders experience ‘balcony time,’ which allows them to move from the dance floor to the balcony to gain a broader picture of their work, organizations, communities and trends. We want to encourage grantees to continue to develop their leadership capacities in ways specific to their work and context. For some, this might look like attending interdisciplinary conferences, and for others it might look like observing similar work in different settings. We are excited about the interest in this grant program from both traditional and non-traditional Christian leaders and we look forward to learning alongside them and their communities.”

“I am deeply grateful for this honor and the opportunity to reflect upon a period of intense institutional reinvention and creativity at Lexington Theological Seminary,” said Dr. Gillett. “I believe as president of Lexington Theological Seminary, I am called to reflect upon what we have accomplished as a community of faith and the ways in which I must grow – indeed, the ways we must grow together – to encourage movement from crisis to sustainability in our collective work and ministry.”

Leadership Education is a non-degree-granting initiative of Duke Divinity School. It is funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and based in Durham, N.C.

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**EMILY JACKSON HONORED**

The Tennessee region honored Emily Jackson, a pioneer and faithful servant in her congregation, (Mississippi Blvd Christian Church in Memphis), the Tennessee region and the general church. She started her remarks by saying, “I had a mentor...”. My prayer for Disciples of Christ is that we can engage in intentional mentoring across our church. Mentoring developed a leader and gave her a place at the table! I am so honored to meet her

**PATRICIA MAPLES INDUCTED INTO HALL OF FAME**

So honored to be considered a Legend of the Great James Madison High School and participate in the Induction of 16 new TROJANS into the “2018 Wall of Fame.”
I attended the funeral services of a lady who had three children by her first husband. She had remarried and stayed married to her second husband 15 very good years. But when it came time to acknowledge the second husband in her funeral services her children failed her miserably.

The obituary beautifully detailed the first husband and listed the children and grandchildren of the deceased. No mention of the second husband who had been devoted to the deceased. He, though confined in a wheelchair and obviously very weak, attended the service. I watched him slump as he read through the program.

Another service I attended was that of a gentleman whose first marriage ended very acrimoniously; you might say bitterly, with the children taking the moms side. His second marriage lasted 10 years and ended in both their words “mutually”. However, when he took ill his second wife was a welcome visitor and much needed care giver.

His obit was also very detailed but his second wifes name was listed with and under the heading, “lifelong friends“. The second wife attended services and burial, expressing a quiet grief.

At a third funeral, the program created by the second wife and children, failed to list or acknowledge the first wife, and the dead mans “other” children and much loved grandchildren. Again the funeral programs pointedly ignored this large segment of the dead mans life: the first wife and their mutual children attended the service and burial and behaved with grace and dignity: though such restraint is often not the case.

There is little to gain from or by this selective mean-spiritedness. The loved ones of your loved one deserve some acknowledgment and mention. Perhaps in the intensity and blindness of our grief these things happen, but I suspect they are intentional. Your loved one loved others who, in most cases, deserve a quiet mention and in almost all situations grieve the death and the omission; in silence and isolation. A funeral program is often the historical document of a persons life.

Everybody that really knows me knows that I am essentially a social media ghost.

Even in personal communication, I have a bad habit of tending to get back to people whenever I get back to people. However, today I had the honor to hear Ben Ferencz tell his story and I would like to share a bit with you all. If you do not know who he is, I encourage you to google him or go to his website at www.benferencz.org/index.html.

When I got the privilege to go up and take pictures with him, he asked me, “Were you inspired and are you going to do something about [peace]?”. I was incredibly moved to say the least. After a number of recent tragedies, I have been reminded of the preciousness of life and the potential for anyone to have an impact on our collective progress or retrogression. It is with the same resolute spirit as Mr. Ferencz that I challenge whoever reads this to think about the former.

Anybody can turn on the television or check their phones to see some polarized “doom and gloom” story. Instead of feeding into the facades or the negativity most often seen while scrolling through timelines or headlines, I would like to stimulate a hopeful conversation about the future. We have all been empowered by the countless lives sacrificed in dedication to the pursuit of liberty and justice, the fight for a better world, and the hope for a brighter future. I impassionately plea that we ask ourselves, “What will I do with my life to honor them? What skills or resources are at my disposal to build that better world? And what can I contribute to our collective progress so that we may all one day pursue joy and happiness in peace?” If you made it this far, much appreciation and happy Veterans Day.

#NEVERFORGET#LAWNOTWAR

Sincerely,
Damon Watts Jr., Coconut Creek
BETTERMENT
Some thoughts, some things
Can be like clutter, dust, stain.
And those thoughts can disrupt
and hinder the positive thought process
like an ugly, nauseating pain.
Negative thoughts are strong;
That’s why we see so much hurt, destruction,
Hatefulness, evil and wrong.
Positive thoughts come from the
Infinite like a bird tweeting
His sweet lilting song.
In rejecting the negative but projecting
What’s good, you’ll feel better,
See better, look better,
act and react better.
This brings gladness, goodness along.
Be independent in your thinking process
Never allow guile, deceit
To penetrate your mind/soul.
BUT center your thoughts on HIM
Who is loving, HE who is Divine.
Betterment is better.
Betterment is best.
Betterment in Jesus reigns over all
To be blessed.

POET’S CORNER by May F. Reed

REFLECTIONS FROM FALL RETREAT IN 1982
The Annual Fall Retreat took place Sept. 18-19, at Bethany Hills, Kingston, Springs, TN. Saturday we were fed by a crop of words from the lips of a 31 year old school teacher who expressed her feelings and knowledge about nuclear weaponry and war. On Sunday morning Dr. Fred Craddock befittingly expounded a message with many right and bright thoughts. A little mirth here and there brought forth warm chuckles and smiles. He dipped deeply within a vast reservoir of knowledge from within himself. That morning as I had dressed I thought about missing worship at Alameda CC, Nashville. I had also looked forward to the period of worship we were to share here. As Dr. Craddock spoke I eagerly listened not wanting to miss any of the good things he had to say. The glistening sun was a white light and warmed you right through your clothing. An occasional breeze blew, and a cluster of bees swarmed about but they seemed to only want to lazily buzz in the sun’s glow with no intent to harm anyone. Together we partook of a rich blessing in being there. Communion was served. Suzanne Latham was beside me. She had also attended Quadrennial. Our eyes met and we exchanged a warm smile to match the glorious sunshine spilling all about us. As we fed one another communion and embraced, words of blessing for one another were shared. I felt tears of joy rising to fill my eyes. The women began to form a huge circle. I grasped the hand to my right and to my left and gave a gentle squeeze. The peace was passed and the women began dispersing preparing to depart. I thought “If my journey has not ended, I hope to return next fall to this place of peace.” Bethany Hills, Kingston Springs, TN. I was later asked to serve on the Cabinet as Director of Worship. I served 3 years, 1983-1985.

SOME THOUGHTS OF MINE
For the motorist who fails to use his turning signal it is a hazard for the one behind him. And it is a bit hazardous when you wait to blink a second before you turn. Poor driving skills seem to be in great number. If there were no blinkers on cars, most likely, those who fail to use them would be the loudest complainers. If you are one of these just think and BLINK. Prayer is helpful.”

AN NFL FORMER PLAYER’S COMMENTS
On May 12, 2008, I sat pulling bread apart to make dressing, and watching TV. The former NFL player, Mike Minter, came on talking with Pat Roberts about his life. It was moving to hear of how he grew-up without a father for his dad had died when Mike was very young. Mike hurt his knee in college football and
remembered sitting on the bench at a Texas game that night. Upon looking up into the sky he wondered “Is this all there is? Is this the end of my football career?” He went on to play with the Carolina Panthers but when he lost his mother he decided he didn’t think he could go on playing the game and taking the hits. He said to Pat “That’s why they call it NFL – meaning “NOT FOR LONG” and he decided it was time for him to quit the game. [I thought this was very interesting].

WE HAVE A WINNER

Congratulations TO Cynthia Hibbler our regular contributor to The Oldtimers’ Grapevine. The following is a description of her achievement.

NEW VOICES 2018 VOLUME SIXTEEN

A Literary Journal from the Students of Ivy Tech Community college - central Indiana

New Voices is a publication of the school of Arts, sciences and Dr. Rod Brown, Dean of SASE

Editors
B. Duerson, Editor
D. Chandler, Assistant Editor

Faculty Advisors
Ashley Mack-Jackson
Catherine Shulde

CoverArt: Victoria Rivera, "Celestial"

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New Voices publishes poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, drama, I original artwork

Winners of the Ivy Tech-Central Indiana Library Poetry Contest

The Only God
Cynthia Hibbler

Shuffling Shores
Kehinde Omotosho

Silence Rabia Haider

First Place Poetry Contest Winner
Cynthia Hibbler
The Only God

My Mom had dementia.
what if Mom was speaking in a heavenly language spoken to and understood by Only God?
Was she walking around a spiritual fortress declaring a victory Only Go
The cleaning cloth. Was it used to wipe away bad demons known to her and Only God?
Her moaning tunes. Were they Praise songs meant to glorify Only God?
Avoiding eye contact. She had a firm focus over my shoulder. Did she see an angel or Only God?
Her clothes were in dishevel, unkept.
Was she pushing off her earthly clothes trying on her heavenly robe made by Only God?
All things are possible with an Only God.
in her last hours on earth, Did she dance with joy before Only God?
By Paige Lavender and Don Frederick

Former President George Herbert Walker Bush, who navigated U.S. foreign policy as the Soviet Union collapsed, led an international coalition that quickly ousted the Iraqi military from Kuwait, but then lost his re-election bid amid a struggling economy, died Friday at the age of 94.

Bush served as the 41st president from 1989 to 1993, following two terms as vice president under Ronald Reagan. His extensive public service record also included stints as director of the CIA, chairman of the Republican National Committee, ambassador to the United Nations and envoy to China, as well as a two-term member of the House of Representatives for a Houston-area district. He was a decorated World War II veteran.

His wife, former first lady Barbara Bush, died in April at the age of 92. Days later, he was hospitalized in Houston, his home for decades, with a blood infection. Bush was released two weeks later, but after traveling to his family compound in Kennebunkport, Maine, he was hospitalized again in May for low blood pressure and fatigue.

Bush was born on June 12, 1924, in Milton, Massachusetts, and raised in Greenwich, Connecticut. His father, Prescott Bush, was an investment banker and a Republican senator from Connecticut.

George H.W. Bush enlisted in the Navy in 1942 at age 18 and flew 58 combat missions, getting shot down once over the Pacific.

**President Bush’s letter to President Clinton**

Dear Bill,

When I walked into this office just now I felt the same sense of wonder and respect that I felt four years ago. I know you will feel that, too.

I wish you great happiness here. I never felt the loneliness some Presidents have described.

There will be very tough times, made even more difficult by criticism you may not think is fair. I’m not a very good one to give advice; but just don’t let the critics discourage you or push you off course.

You will be our President when you read this note. I wish you well. I wish your family well.

Your success now is our country’s success. I am rooting hard for you.

Good luck—

A. Garnett Day Jr.


With amazing grace, Garnett shared sixty-four of those years with his wife and life-partner, Carolyn E. (Wood) Day and eventually their children, Mark, Stephen, Laura, and David, god-children Marisa and David Schwartz and twelve grandchildren.

Garnett was born in Sweet Springs, Missouri to A. Garnett (Sr.) and Faith (Coffelt) Day on August 21, 1930 during the rise of the Great Depression. His early years of having to make do with very little informed Garnett's life-long approach to material things and manifested itself in Garnett's genuine care and concern for the environment. Garnett's comfort with the out-of-doors and recognition of the teaching and learning opportunities that came with spending time there meant camping was an early mode of seeing the country with his family.
Garnett was a preacher’s kid who as an adult acted on all that he had absorbed and learned from growing up in the church. Throughout his life, he sided with justice for the underdog, compassion for those in need and a commitment to peace.

After graduating from Lynchburg College (Virginia), and Lexington Theological Seminary (Kentucky), Garnett followed in his father’s footsteps and became a minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Garnett’s deep appreciation of the teachings in the Bible and the opportunity to live his life in that church community brought him a lifetime of focus and purpose.

Though classically trained in the Seminary, Garnett later reveled in studying the latest theological analysis and ideas within Progressive Christianity. Locally he helped found a Jesus Seminar Book Club, which has met locally for the last twenty years.

Garnett and Carolyn moved their family from Florida to Indianapolis in 1963 when Garnett took a position at the Church’s national office in the Division of Homeland Ministries. In this role, Garnett could pursue his commitment to participate in the civil rights movement, anti-war and anti-poverty movements. In the civil rights endeavor over years, Garnett became the Director of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Moral and Civil Rights Campaign. He served as the denominational liaison to the work of Dr. Martin Luther King’s Southern Christian Leadership Council, spending the summer of 1964 doing voter registration in Mississippi and Alabama, marching across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma and temporarily living in Washington D.C., helping to coordinate Dr. King’s Poor People’s Campaign in 1968. Garnett worked on peace and justice issues for thirty-two years in the national office of Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Strenuously opposing the Vietnam War, Garnett’s first arrest for civil disobedience came in July 1965 when President Johnson came to Indianapolis to deliver a speech on Monument Circle; the local police made a sweep of all those protesting the war. One of the founders of the Free Church in Indianapolis in 1970, he involved his family in providing a resource for all young men leaving home to avoid the draft. In 1972, he along with two other local ministers were arrested as they protested in the Draft Board Office in Indianapolis, putting roses on desks and reading names of those from Indianapolis killed in Vietnam. That arrest resulted in three months of work release detention. Garnett always encouraged people to speak out and take risks in their own way on great moral challenges; for him this activism frequently included non-violent civil disobedience, in the manner taught by Dr. King.

Garnett’s efforts to work on peace and justice issues included numerous trips with Pastors for Peace to take supplies to Cuba in the 1970s and 1980s, serving as an observer in Nicaraguan and Cambodian elections, and peace-seeking efforts between North and South Vietnam in the 1980s.

Locally, Garnett served on the Broadway Center Board, a term on the Indiana Civil Liberties Union Board, was a founding member of Indianapolis Peace and Justice Center, and Christians for Peace and Justice in the Middle East. Nationally, he served on the National Council of Churches Farmworkers Ministry Board from its founding until his retirement. During the summer of 1973 he took his family with him to California to work with Caesar Chavez in organizing farm workers. He was the Director of Disciples Peace Fellowship for ten years and in retirement was honored as the recipient of its biannual Peace Award.

Over the course of his life with family and friends, Garnett traveled to all fifty states and every continent except Antarctica. He particularly enjoyed a month-long tour of Yemen and Syria with his wife and son, Stephen, in the mid-1990s which focused his attention on the struggle to find peace and justice in the Middle East. He has always encouraged his friends and family to travel and experience our beautiful and diverse world, to embrace all that it encompasses, and to always grasp opportunities to contribute to justice and peace for all people.

Garnett is survived by his wife, Carolyn and their four children (and their spouses, significant others and their children): Mark Day (of Indianapolis, Indiana) (Felicia Ferguson) and Lauren, Christine and Aaron Day; Stephen Day (of Sanford, Florida) (Akpedje Day) and Kekeli Day; Laura (Day) Moore (of Washington D.C.) (Paul Hatch) and Mikaela and Maralina Moore; David Day (of Red Bank, New Jersey) (Regine Day) and Ryan, Myles, Dylan and Gabriel Day; David Schwartz (of Jamestown, New York); Marisa (Schwartz) Rogers (of Charlotte, North Carolina) (Scott Rogers) and Ellie and Riley Rogers; and his sister June Kreger (of Florida) and her three children.

As Garnett’s parting effort to contribute to the betterment of society, he donated his body to medical research at the IU School of Medicine and encourages others to consider similar acts of generosity.

Survivors: Sons, Brian Thomas Holloway of Durham, NC, Ervin T. Mitchell, III of Boston, MA, and Ervin T. Mitchell of Chicago, IL; Parents, Mary Ann Mitchell and Ervin Thomas Mitchell, Sr, both of Raleigh, NC; Sisters, Deedee Long (Sotello) of IN and Dianne Watkins (Derrick) of Raleigh, NC; Brother, Antonio Mitchell of Raleigh, NC; 5 Grandchildren

The Rev. Dr. Constance Nealey went to be with the Lord on October 11th. Dr. Nealey was not only an active member of the Christian Church in her local congregation but served the region and the general church. She served as Vice-President of the National Convocation and was active in the search committee that called The Rev. Dr. Timothy James.

This extremely competent educator who served the state of Alabama in many executive positions. Dr. Nealey was able to enable attenders of the Biennial Session assemblies in Birmingham of how a responsible thinking African American experienced the Civil Rights revolution.

I call you friends because this is what Jesus calls us. John 15:15 in the Message translation reads: “I’ve named you friends because I’ve let you in on everything I’ve heard from the Father.” While I am not Jesus, I do care enough about you sight unseen to let you know and at the very least make you aware and more informed about issues that affect you and our involvement in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.” Amen.

Timothy James
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