

Disciples of Christ Historical Society

Digital Commons @ Disciples History

Oldtimers' Grapevine

Stone-Campbell Movement Periodicals

2014

The Oldtimers' Grapevine, Volume 24 (October 2014 - October 2015)

John Richard Foulkes Sr.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.discipleshistory.org/oldtimersgrapevine>

SHIFTING:

The 41st Annual Black Ministers Retreat used this term in it's focus on transitional ministry which becomes a frame for this, and hopefully future editions of OTG. We will introduce in this issue:

- ◆ two reports of exceptional "Oldtimers" who are continuing to fulfill themselves and more importantly, God's purpose in their lives, in a season of life in which most of us have stopped being fulfilled.;
- ◆ A hope for movement from the confines of a

print only format to the instant communication possibilities of a digital format;

- ◆ An understanding of the greatness of America forged in the struggle of conflict to produce a greater America;
- ◆ Issues related to how we are church together which challenges the way we have been church;
- ◆ How we "press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of [us]" (Phil. 3:12c NIV)

Pray with us as we embark on this journey.

Ruth P. Hobbs Hits the Century Mark: "My Cup Runneth Over"!

By Norma Ellington-Twitty, Ph.D

"My aunt Ruth is awesome ... Model of an African American woman... With Grandma, you've got to keep moving and keep growing... She's still feisty and yes she is still opinionated, in a good and helpful way, you know what I mean...

An incredible example of how to live each day fully while you are yet alive."

If you are fortunate enough to know Ruth P. Hobbs, these quotes from attendees at her 100th Birthday Celebration ring true. On February 20, 2015, two days after her birthday, family and friends from around the nation came together in Jackson, Mississippi to wish Ruth P. Hobbs a happy 100th birthday. For the record, Ruth is the third centenarian in her family. Her father, Jackson Powell lived to be 105 and her sister, Hilda Faulkner, is 104 years old and sent her birthday greetings from California, where she lives independently.



I was privileged to join 182 family members and friends to attend the centennial birthday luncheon for Ruth. It was a beautiful and unique luncheon event, held at the Country Club of Jacksonville. Her two daughters, Falvia P. Roberts and Ramona Jackson, were the hosts of this lovely birthday celebration to honor their mother. It was a wonderful, warm, and uplifting fellowship that reminded Ruth and attendees of why so many people love, honor, and "wanna be like" Ruth P. Hobbs.

The program was a wonderful blend of tributes for Ruth and lovely music. Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty lauded her as a visionary servant leader. She met Ruth when she served as the regional representative for Mississippi on the board of Southern Christian Services for Children, a ministry of the National Benevolent Association (NBA). In the late 1980's, NBA was doing a new thing by moving away

from institutional care for children to community based models of service. Ruth caught that vision and inspired local church members to develop a NBA group home program for troubled youth in Jackson, Mississippi. Sue Cherney, the first executive director of the group home program also paid tribute to Ruth for her ongoing support of this ministry over the past 27 years.

Dr. Ellington-Twitty also described Ruth as catching the vision for another ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). As President of the Board for the Oldtimer's Grapevine Newsletter, Dr. Ellington-Twitty expressed appreciation for Ruth's 22 year service as a founding board member of the Grapevine. On behalf of the third Editor and Publisher of the Grapevine, John R. Foulkes, the staff and board of the Grapevine, Dr. Ellington-Twitty expressed our endur-



ing love and high regard for Ruth. She was then presented the *Cobalt Bloom Award* in celebration of her 100th birthday and her 22 years of service on the Grapevine board. Ruth was reminded that achieving the century mark would in no way lessen our expectations for her continuing service and con-

tribution to the Grapevine in terms of those wonderful articles she periodically submits.

Ruth's best friend, Wylma King provided a moving and heart-warming tribute. In the past, she had described Ruth as the "energizer bunny". Now she is more inclined to call her the "golden eagle", quoting Isaiah 40: 31(NRSV): "... *those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*" Her friend also expressed great appreciation for Ruth's wit and sense of humor. During a conversation when she jokingly said: "I'm thinking about having an affair." Ruth quickly retorted: "Are you going to have it catered?"

Ruth has been a member of United Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for 59 years. Her pastor, Rev. Russell Myers described her as a "saint of the church"; whose humility and loving acts of kindness make her a

true servant leader. Her pioneering work in Christian education, has blessed countless generations of United Christian Church youth over the years. He reminded the group that Ruth has served beyond the national church as Vice President of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He disclosed that Ruth loves to fish and he has been a grateful recipient of her tasty cooking. He credited her with teaching him it is possible to be a good Christian and have a good time as well.

The program was sprinkled with beautiful music throughout, including a lovely rendition of *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* by Ruth's granddaughter, Harriet Nzinga Plump, an actress. An instrumental ensemble that Ruth was a founding member of played "To God be the Glory". During musical interludes, guests were encouraged to dialogue with one another and to complete the "Ruth Hobbs Trivia Game" with fellow table mates. As might be expected, the California table with nieces and nephews won the Trivia Game.

Attendees received a copy of "*When I Was Young*", an autobiographical portrait of Ruth's early life. In the introductory excerpt from this piece, one gets a feel for Ruth's love of language: "In a small town of Rocky Springs, Mississippi where cotton blossoms and crepe myrtles blended their fragrance to enhance the area, I, the youngest of five siblings, was born to Annie Blackburn Powell and Jackson Powell." Mother was a career teacher of K-8 grades for fifty-two years and my father "Papa" was a progressive farmer." Ruth's early upbringing was characterized by a close knit family life, with parents who put a high value for education and the church. We know that Ruth is very articulate and this skill was evidenced at her eighth grade graduation, when she was judged as best speaker. Her prize was \$5.00.

Two letter tributes were read to the audience. The first was from Dr. Cedric Gray, the Jackson Superintendent of Schools. He described Ruth's rich legacy as a teacher who was highly regarded and loved by children and colleagues. The second tribute was from Timothy James, Associate General Minister and Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), who stated: "She is a lady of elegance and when she speaks she is

well informed and articulate... We are better people because of her pleasant personality and distinguished demeanor.”

Although the many tributes for Ruth were wonderful to hear and many in the audience shook their heads in agreement, while listening to very accurate descriptions of this amazing woman; the real star of the program was – who else – Ruth P. Hobbs. Toward the end of the program, it was Ruth’s turn and she fully embraced the moment.



At the appointed time, Ruth came up on stage and stood next to an easel that was covered with a cloth. Many people, including this writer, thought a portrait of Ruth was under the cloth. Much to our surprise, when the cloth was removed; we saw a background scene, consisting of sky

and earth, painted on a canvas. Ruth proceeded to reach into a container and pull out drawing materials. She then proceeded to draw a tree in the foreground of the picture, while a soloist sang “Trees”. The audience was electrified to see this 100 year old woman draw with such confidence and steadiness of hand. Everyone was on the edge of their seats as Ruth completed her drawing. It was particularly heart-warming to see her two great grandchildren leaning forward as they followed her every move. What a memory for these young children! No one in the room had seen anything like it. It was truly a unique and special moment that felt like an unexpected and priceless gift to this adoring audience. Once Ruth completed her work, the love and beauty she produced evoked great applause, broad smiles, and clicking cameras, conveying our deep gratitude for such a memorable moment.

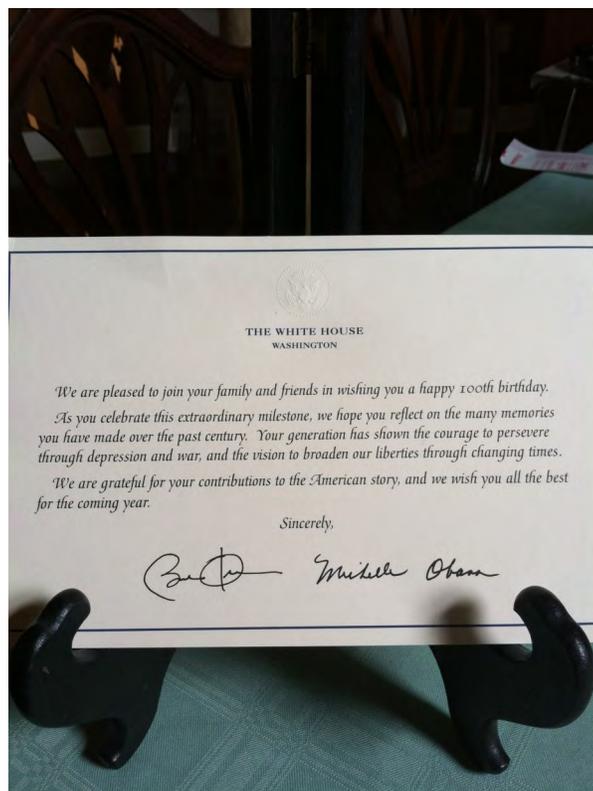
Well – how do you follow such a dramatic and special moment? You have Ruth P. Hobbs express herself, as a fitting conclusion to a lovely celebration. As one might expect, Ruth communicated in her own poetic,

personable, and “down to earth” style. She noted that she did not have material wealth or riches, yet: “I am drinking from my saucer, because my cup runneth over.” She expressed her thanks to family and friends, some of whom had come from as far as California, Iowa, Georgia, and Missouri. As this newly minted centenarian spoke from her heart, her demeanor and discourse affirmed the words of tributes we heard earlier: “golden eagle... saint of the church... fun friend and church member... living legend... visionary leader... faithful and humble servant of the church.

As if this birthday celebration were not enough, Falvia P. Roberts revealed that she and her sister Ramona were gifting their mother with a Mediterranean cruise in May 2015. Ruth will travel with Ramona and her church group. They will visit Florence, Naples, Barcelona, Mallorca, Rome, Pisa, and Versailles. Because it is a cruise, Ruth will be able to pick and choose how much and what she will do each day, with no pressure to “see everything”.

What a gift – not just the Birthday celebration and the cruise – but the gift of two loving daughters who will continue to have Ruth’s health and welfare as their major focus. Ruth at 100 is truly blessed by God and her shining presence is truly a blessing to others. She is beautiful inside and out. We can see why she states, with

gratitude to God: “*My cup runneth over.*” To God be the glory!



Rev. Minnie Lee Smith is Ordained: *Serving God & Serving People*

By Norma Ellington-Twitty, Ph.D

The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me.

Psalm 138: 8 (NRSV)

On March 7, 2015 Rev. Minnie Lee Smith was ordained at Willow Street Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in Hannibal, Missouri. An adoring audience of over 100 family members and church friends from near and far, were there to honor a woman who became an ordained minister during a period in life many call retirement.

To fully appreciate the depth of meaning of this ordination service for the Candidate and her audience, it is important to recap the journey that led to this momentous day.

In 2000, upon retirement from a career with the Social Security Administration, Minnie Lee Smith began a path toward higher education and ministry to fulfill God's call on her life. She received a BS degree in Religion and Philosophy from Culver Stockton College in 2002. In 2004 she received a MA degree in School Counseling from Missouri Baptist University in St. Louis, Missouri. She served as school counselor at Eugene Field School from 2003 through 2008, when she retired a second time. She achieved the first step in her third career and responded to God's call on her life in 2004 when she became a licensed minister and the Associate Pastor of Willow Street. She achieved the next step in "her calling" when she became Pastor of Willow Street in 2008.

In 2012, seeking to fully equip herself for ministry, Rev. Minnie, as her parishioners call her, embarked on a path to ordination, while continuing as pastor of her congregation. The Commission on Ministry confirmed her ordination on January 5, 2015. Thus, fifteen years

after retiring from a lay position with the federal government, God worked in Minnie P. Smith "to fulfill his purpose for her" - to become an ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on March 7, 2015.

One noteworthy and visual aspect of the audience at the Ordination service was the diversity of people from throughout the Christian Church of Mid-America Region (CCMA) who came together to celebrate her

ministry. Their presence and their praiseworthy testimonies of Minnie are a true reflection of her ability to relate to all God's people and to serve from her doorsteps and throughout the CCMA region.



Rev. Lucretia Facen delivered a powerful and energized sermon: "Just As It Should Be". She described her connection to the candidate: she is the daughter of Rev. Ann Facen, former minister of Willow Street who retired in 2000 and died in December 2013. It was Rev. Ann who saw ministry gifts in Minnie and encouraged her to pursue a career in ministry. Rev. Lucretia described herself as standing in her mother's place. What an emotional moment for the candidate to see her mentor's daughter serve as preacher for her ordination service; thus fulfilling her mother's vision for Rev. Minnie's life in ministry. This is why Rev. Lucretia concluded that it is so fitting that Rev. Minnie would nurture the church who nurtured her: it is "Just As It Should Be." Keep in mind, Rev. Minnie has spent all but five years of her life at Willow Street; prior to 1974 known as Second Christian Church.

The Candidate was presented to the audience by representatives of the CCMA region, the Director of the Mid America Center of Ministry and the Commission

On Ministry. A heartwarming tribute was given by Phil Smith, the Candidate's husband, who was accompanied by their two sons, Marcus Phillip and John Anson. He spoke of his long standing relationship with the Candidate. Phil and Rev. Minnie were next door neighbors in Hannibal and were high school sweethearts. At an early age he described her as having gifts for ministry and having a thirst for knowledge that led her to pursue so many degrees in "retirement". He and the family are fully supportive of her and are quite proud of her.

Rev. Joe Jimerson applauded the candidate's leadership role in promoting racial/ethnic understanding through the regional Reconciliation ministry. The success of their work is reflected in community groups requesting Reconciliation anti-racism training, in addition to our Disciples' congregations (although not enough according to Rev. Minnie).

Minnie's home church would not be outdone in praising their beloved pastor and showing their appreciation for her. Elder Vyrle Brown, with the members beaming as they stood, presented the Candidate on behalf of the congregation. Tina Haley sang a favorite song of the Candidate, "I look To You". The Willow Street Angels performed a liturgical dance: "*This is the Way We Praise Him*". Their director, Antornette Allison encouraged the audience to clap along and they did so enthusiastically. The Angels often have a larger troupe; Rev. Minnie said up to 40 usually participate, yet the ensemble of eight "rocked the house". Throughout the Angels' dance, a young toddler girl stood very close to the dancers, watching their every move. Her dad was coaxing her to stand back and come to him; yet Elder Joe Miller said: "Let her be". After all – this is a part of Rev. Minnie's way of reaching the young children. A solo dancer, Doris Williams, provided a spell bounding performance of "*I'm Not Ashamed of the Gospel*". She is an adult who was mentored by Rev. Minnie. These performances provided a glimpse of how Rev. Minnie's children's ministry has borne good fruit! As a final show of their love, the congregation presented her with a robe. Elder Miller confirmed it was new and showed everyone the tag.

The Nurture Team that guided Rev. Minnie on her path to ordination was interracial; consisting of mem-

bers from her home church; Elder Vyrle Brown and Elder Joe Miller and members of First Christian (Disciples of Christ) of Hannibal; Senior Pastor Steve Parker was the Team leader, along with Elder Al Kennett and Elder Teresa Gentry. Pastor Barker could not praise Rev. Minnie enough for her accomplishments. First Christian's respect and love for Rev. Minnie were reflected in their members' smiling presence and the outpouring of gifts for her: a stole from the Disciples Women's Ministry and from the entire church, a chalice and paten, as well as a prayer shawl.

After the Candidate completed the Ordination Covenant, she signed the Ministerial Code of Ethics. Rev. Dr. Kris Tenny-Brittian, Northeast Area Minister and member of the CCMA Regional Ministry Team, then presented her with the Certificate of Ordination. With joy and reverence, members of the clergy were invited to surround the Candidate for "The Laying On Of Hands" as Steve Barker prayed. This was a moment that truly touched the Candidate as her fellow clergy provided her with this special touch of affirmation and collegiality.

Rev. M. Faye Vaughn, pastor of Second Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of New London, Missouri was unable to attend the service, due to a death in the family. This longtime friend and mentor of the Candidate was sorely missed. In her place, Elder Paula Holiday presented the Candidate with a Bible on behalf of their congregation.

Rev. Minnie's remarks were short and reflected her humility. "I have reason for rejoicing as I look at each and every one of you." She asked the audience for continued prayers for her, Willow Street, and the church universal. She ended with these words: "To God Be The Glory!"

Attendees at the ordination service truly received a blessing: a warm, uplifting celebration; as well as the inspiration of Minnie P. Smith's example: a woman who displayed courage, determination, and faithfulness to pursue God's call on her life in her "golden years". We know God is not through with her and we look forward to all she will do in His name. Surely "*God will continue to work in her to fulfill his purpose.*" Amen.

Will a Digital Format work for you?

The Oldtimers' Grapevine is committed to providing you the best source of news and information about the church we love and the journeys of your brothers and sisters. We have been collecting mailing addresses from our community in order to make this free resource available to you. We presently have a mailing list of 921 persons.

The OTG Board of Directors have raised an interesting prospect that we need your best judgment on. The prospect is that of offering the OTG in a digital color format. We presently type set the publication in a digital format and send it to our printer who provides us with the publication that we have loved all these years. If you provided us with your email addresses, we could not only forward OTG to you as soon as it is

type set, but we may be able to share critical information with you as soon as it is available.

Pray about this prospect and if it seems a good idea to you please forward your email address or the email address of a friend to the Publishing Office and we will begin your electronic version as soon as possible.

SEND YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES TO:

**JOHN R. FOULKES, 5314 MOONLIGHT DR.,
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46226**

OR

OLDTIMERS.GRAPEVINE@GMAIL.COM.

We are looking forward to your response.

SHIFTING

The 41st annual Black Ministers Retreat, sponsored by Disciples Home Mission, propelled the participants through the portal of history with a theme calling forth tomorrow. The program was intense with presentations by the cutting edge leaders of our church and sermons on the Deut. 31:1-6 text by six different gifted preachers with commentary by the resource scholar. Moses, having been the steward of God's promise to Abraham, was now passing on that stewardship to Joshua.

On the second day of the retreat participants bored buses to retrace the

50 mile march from Selma to Montgomery that became the catalyst for the 1965 voters rights legislation. The visit to the Lowndes county

museum, the walk across the bridge and the tour of Birmingham will be remembered by all those who participated.

Three days after the retreat ended the nation came to Selma led by her first citizen, President Barack Obama. Jamelle Bouie wrote a column following President Barack Obama's speech on the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday that refines President Obama's "Imperfect Union." Bouie notes, "Like his predecessors, Obama holds the United

States as a place of exceptional ideals and aspirations, but he tempers his vision with civic humility and an awareness of American injustice. For those unaccustomed to this approach, it *sounds* like an attack on American greatness. But Obama isn't critiquing America as much as he's trying—in fits and starts—to construct a *usable* history, an inclusive account that illuminates and inspires . . . Obama's America isn't a perfect place. But it is a place where collective action can make radical change and push us toward a more authentic version of our national self. »



The Old-timer's Grapevine has done a great job of celebrating the accomplishments and lives of servants whose shoulders we stand on to

enable a perfect church as the backbone of the perfect union. This issue and future issues will challenge the present through the continuing gifts of servants like Ruth Hobbs and Minnie Smith who amaze us long after we expect amazement.

The following page contains the retreats logo, the original march, the retreat's march and the anniversary march.



Time for a Shift:

Transforming a *New Generation* of Disciples



“There is a River”

Reflections of the Journey, Marilyn S. Fiddmont

“Shall we gather at the river
The beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints at the river,
That flows by the throne of God”

Robert Lowery 1864

There were certain aspects of the tour to Selma that I had anticipated and they were not a disappointment. I was particularly moved by the tour of the

Lowndes County Civil Rights Museum which was about mid-way on the road between Montgomery and Selma. There was a short documentary of the march and featured some of the participants. We were all spell-bound by it. As we continued the drive, at the edge of the bridge, I wasn't surprised to

be greeted by an enormous billboard featuring a charging Confederate soldier on horseback, with sword drawn defending the honor of the land. The inscription was to “visit Selma and the historic sites of the War Between the States”. Then we were there; driving across the bridge. I took photos of the sign as we drove across that place that had captured the attention of the country and much of the world 50 years ago.

My husband, Norman and I found a place to park our car and begin to walk towards the bridge. We were joining others participants of the Black Minister's Retreat and I wasn't prepared and was surprised that I was hesitant, almost reluctant to step on the bridge. It was a somber and emotional moment for us

as we approached. At the foot of the bridge, I removed my shoes, not entirely certain why but very aware that it was a sacred space. I began to gather rocks of remembrance along the sidewalk and path of the bridge before we began to walk across. A small group of us gathered in prayer before we began our own crossing. It is fair to say that the pavement was watered with the tears of this modern group of so-journers. Once we had reach the apex of the bridge, we peered over the side and said with wide-eyed wonder,

“there's a river”. It would seem obvious in light of the fact that there is the famed bridge, but somehow, in our collective wisdom, we had forgotten that there could have been, SHOULD have been a river. More amusing was that no one in the group knew the name of the river but we were all

acutely aware of the name of the bridge.

We returned to our car and the buses departed back to Montgomery. Norman and I asked some of the folks who were preparing for the weekend activities, including a visit of President Barack Obama, where the church, Brown Chapel A.M.E. was located. They gave us precise directions and we drove there to see it and take photos. Shocked may be the best way to describe that part of the journey when we realized how far the unarmed walkers had been beaten, brutalized, driven, attacked, and under siege by a group of conveniently deputized “lawmen”. We had never known that distance and the extent of the horror that continued once they retreated to the church.



Crossing the Edmond Pettus Bridge, walking on it, driving through the community and back to Montgomery had a profound impact on me. I



am a child of the 60's and the Civil Rights Movement was the evening education in my home. It took some time before I could process what had been revealed to me in that historical moment. The Edmond Pettus Bridge, known historically as the site of "Blood Sunday" became the Throne of God. The Bridge had been washed with the tears, the blood, and teargas of that day, God made it a statement for the days to come.



Gilead in that place that soothes the wounds of the violent onslaught of words, and hands, and weapons.

The throne of God comes to us when the sharecropper, the preacher, the teacher, the powerful, and the powerless, the educated and the illiterate, the old and the young, the disenfranchised and marginalized find a common voice and raise it to heaven. There is the place where heaven kisses the feet of

Only God has the unique ability to absorb the horror of the moment and turn it into a victory for the ages. That is what happened on that bridge. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said that as we walk the "God of the universe walks with us". God did just that; laced up the boots of righteousness and justice and walked us into a new era. The Throne of God is present when humanity, broken, bent, and oppressed reaches for the hem of heaven and pulls itself upright to stand with dignity. It occurs when lives and hearts are bound together in a single purpose and intent to bring forth the best for all people. It is a place of fearless unity, unwavering hope, and unapologetic belief that there is a more excellent way. It is the place in which peace pierces the heart of hatred and declares we are better than this. There is a Balm in

the lowly and cast out and cast away and says; "walk and we do walk with you". We are reminded that the "moral arc of the universe is long but it points towards justice" and I say if you follow that arc, it leads to the Throne of God.

As one on the journey, I became aware of how sacred the Edmond Pettus Bridge is; not for the blood that flowed but the power of God that prevailed. There the saints had walked for and with those of us yet to come and there is a river that flows. There is a river that flows by the Throne of God.

Rev. Marilyn S. Fiddmont is Vice President of the Christian Church Foundation, Southwest Zone. She and her husband, Rev. Norman S. Fiddmont, live in Houston, TX.

A Letter From The Board President

January - March 2015

I have not stopped giving thanks for you...

Ephesians 1: 16a (NIV)

Beloved Grapevine Readers,

I have continually thanked God for your loyalty, patience, and understanding in our absence. We have missed being with you and I trust you have missed having us come into your homes to enrich your minds and uplift your hearts. This is the impact of reading the Grapevine for me and my hope is that it impacts you in a positive way as well.

I have also continually thanked God for our Editor and Publisher, John R. Foulkes. He is of course, the dependable, servant, pastor who is always there for others who need him. Toward the end of last year, he was forced to take some time off to take care of himself. We are so thankful that God has blessed his recovery process. We solicit your continued prayers as John moves toward full restoration of his health.

You will see with this issue, “the Grapevine is back in a big way”. This is due in great measure to John’s expertise and dedication to provide you – our valued readers with the best newsletter possible. We look forward to a great year of sharing information with you, as well as hearing from you about happenings in your part of the world that you would like to share with others. The Grapevine ministry is a two-way street and we need and want to hear from you.

Let us continually “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God.” (1 Thessalonians 5: 18 – NRSV).

Your Sister in Christ,

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



We celebrate the legacy of the rich memories, ministry and mission of the Quadrennial Assembly experience.

After an additional time of prayerful discernment the Executive Committee of International Disciples Women's Ministries has deter-

mined, with sadness, that the Quadrennial Assembly of 2014 was our last.

We grieve this loss.

We are Disciples Women; let us reach out to each other in this time.

God has shown us what is good and has required of us to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly

with our God. (*Micah 6:8*) While we grieve, we move forward in discernment as Disciples Women continues to be a conduit for diverse connections.

In the words of one of those wise women in our history, Claudia Grant:

"The legacy left by our foremothers is not the structure we celebrate. It is the commitment to the mission that always calls for the transformation and a willingness to risk doing what needs to be done in our times to do the mission."

Together we will continue to answer God's call and celebrate our joint ministry to empower each woman to find her voice and live out her call.

Peace and Blessings,

Executive Committee 2014-2018

Thank you for your participation in and support of Disciples Women's Ministries.

POET'S CORNER

PRAYERFULLY SHARED THOUGHTS

Thanksgiving was thankful, Christmas was grand. New Year's Day celebrative;
What today is life's plan? We pray – more abundance for all whom we meet.
Abundance of joy with laughter so sweet. Abundance in smiles, Kisses and love.
Abundance in joys, kindness, goodness and hugs.
So don't let nobody/nothing hinder your peace,
for Jesus sends angels where **HOPE** is released.
Jesus faithfully walks right by your side;
so just let His presence forever abide;
For in loving hearts
He'll remain and reside.



May Reed

MORE LAUGHTER

A mother was having a friend over for lunch one afternoon. Her little girl wanted much to help her prepare the meal and her mother asked if she would strain and pour the tea. The little one answered "Oh yes, mother, I will. The child poured the strained tea into glasses and lovingly placed them on the table. The strainer had been misplaced earlier and the mother asked "Did you find the lost strainer, dear?" "Oh no mother," replied the little girl. "I used the fly swatter."

AN EXAMPLE OF UNCLEAR WRITING

In accordance with your insurance request, I have given birth to twins in the enclosed envelope. -Anon.-

The answer to the riddle posed in the last issue is - A SIFTER- We don't use sifters much anymore but they are still very useful. The little girl mentioned above might have done well to use one instead of a fly swatter.

AND FINALLY – PICKLE JOKES

What's every pickle's favorite game show? Let's Make A Dill. And why doesn't a pickle like to travel? Because it's a jarring experience.

AND WHO ARE THEY?

THEY are sometimes the hinderers in life. **THEY** said this, and **THEY** said that. **THEY** are gonna do this, and **THEY** are gonna do that. And the beat goes on. And there are some interesting **THEYS**, like:

THEY say "Look before you leap." I say "Sometimes you have to take a leap of faith and see what the Lord will do."

THEY say "Count to ten before you speak." I say "It takes only a second to think before speaking."

THEY say "The apple usually doesn't fall far from the tree." I say "Sometimes the apple is thrown away." [How often do we hear of babies being abandoned?]

THEY say "A penny for your thoughts." I say "Most thoughts are bigger and worth more than a penny."

THEY say "The squeaky wheel gets the most grease." I say "Grease your wheels before they start to squeak."

THEY say "A bird in the hand beats two in the bush." I say "throw a net over the bush." That's what my daddy did.

THEY say "You have to let a child make up their own mind." I say "Our mistake is not helping them to mind."

THEY say "Don't count your chickens before they hatch." I say "Have plan B in place while you're counting and waiting."

SOME RULES CONCERNING A GUIDE DOG

They should never be petted or disturbed while in harness. Even when not working/harnessed, do not pet them without asking permission.

Ask permission first if you wish to assist a person with a guide dog. "May I help you?" If your offer is accepted, then offer your **left** elbow. Do not grab the guide dog's leash or harness or the person's arm. Doing so may place them in danger, and maybe yourself as well.

Do not attempt to feed a guide dog as they are given a prepared diet at home. Additional feeding may disturb their work schedule.

For More Information: Guiding Eyes for the Blind; 611 Granite Springs Road, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598; (800) 942-0149

Disciples of Christ Historical Society Board meets, charts next steps

The Disciples of Christ Historical Society (DCHS) Board met in Nashville, TN, March 6-7, 2015. The Board of Directors, chaired by Archie Jenkins, took several actions to ensure the future of the Church's archives and the Society's role as one of several Stone-Campbell archives.

One of the primary objectives of the board meeting was to address the future home of the Society. Jenkins reminded the board that our purpose "is to set the path for the future that connects to but is not trapped by our past." To that end President Emeritus Dr. Peter Morgan began his motion, "I would be honored to be on record as making this motion to relocate the Disciples of Christ Historical Society and the archives to Bethany College." The board unanimously approved the motion authorizing Interim President Todd Adams to negotiate the details with Bethany and report the outcome to the DCHS board for final approval.

Bethany is proposing that DCHS construct a new facility on land adjacent to the Campbell Mansion and the Renner Visitor's Center at Bethany Village. Relocation to Bethany will include opportunities for student-workers, the use of Historic Bethany, classroom-laboratory partnerships in church history and library science, as well as engagement with the Buffalo Seminary. Buffalo Seminary is the commissioned ministry and continuing education partnership of Bethany College and the West Virginia Region.

The Fastest Man in the Midwest

September 11 - 18, 2014 DAYTON WEEKLY
NEWS By: Don G. Black Editor

Speed is something most people equate with men and women in their prime of life. For instance between the ages of 17 through years of age. But when you look at men like 72 year old former Dayton r J. Thomas Johnson who is billed as the fastest man in the Midwest, the notion of youth goes right out the window. Mr. Johnson, a, recently retired pastor of the Summit Christian Church in Trotwood, on Sunday June 29, was inducted into the Ohio Senior Olympics Hall of fame in Canton, Ohio the home of the NFL Football Hall of Fame.

For the past 15 years he has participated in competitive running which has taken him to relay races all over the country. Pastor Johnson doesn't just run, he competes and wins. From 2006-2014 he has competed and won an average of two to four gold medals in the 50, 100, 200 and 400 meter races in 16 different states across the country. As a gold medalist, he is called a "Master

Sprinter" in the field of track and field.

As the fastest Man in the Midwest, representing states of OH, IN, IL, MI, KY, WVA, and WS. In order to be the best you have to continue running against competitors who are also good at what they do according to Johnson. Two of Johnson's running pals were former Roosevelt High School 60's track and field stars, Allen Huff and Lloyd Hathcock. Both were standout athletes during Roosevelt's hey days of track and field.

Johnson has ran several times in the Penn State Senior relays, the same as super star Bill Cosby, who he knows quite well.

According to Johnson he has participated in 3 of the 4 national senior games. The National Senior Games is a biannual event which took place in 2007 2009, etc. In the world rankings, he is ranked 14th in the 100 and 200 meters and 6th in the 400 meter.

J. Thomas Johnson, has no plans to hang up his track shoes. He feels he has plenty more races to win and more medals to win. "Keep up the good work, a good example for all of us.

Oklahoma calls Regional Minister

Rev. Dr. Pamela G. Holt will begin her term as Oklahoma's regional minister in January 2015. She is a lifelong Disciple and Texas native. She graduated from Texas Christian University. A Brite Divinity graduate, she has served congregations in Dallas, Weatherford and most recently, Mineral Wells, TX. She completed her doctorate program at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She is an avid horsewoman who instituted an equine camp in her region to build leadership skills among youth. She is married to Randy Holt and they have three adult children: Anna Carole, Blake and Brook.



Kentucky Legislature Recognizes Seminary's 150th



Lexington Theological Seminary was honored by both chambers of the Kentucky legislature as “a pioneer institution (that) has forged new paths for preparing people for ministry in communities across the Commonwealth of Kentucky, throughout the nation, and worldwide.”

The Kentucky Senate and Kentucky House of Representatives recognized LTS President Charisse L. Gillett, Board of Trustees Chairman Richard Griffith, and Trustee Leslie Geoghegan, who were present for the reading of the resolutions honoring the Seminary.

“Lexington Theological Seminary is part of the rich educational fabric of Kentucky, and our graduates serve important roles as clergy and community leaders throughout the state,” President Gillett said. “It means

a great deal to have the Seminary recognized in this way.”

Kentucky Senator Tom Buford was the sponsor for the resolution in the Senate (SR 188) while State Representative Rick Rand sponsored the resolution in the House (HR 204). Both had multiple co-sponsors in their respective chambers.



Housing Allowance Case Dismissed

The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed a constitutional challenge to the income tax exemption of clergy parsonage allowance, citing plaintiffs did not have standing.

Nearly a year ago on Nov. 21, 2013, U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb for the Western District of Wisconsin issued a strong, 43-page decision declaring 26 U.S.C. § 107(2), passed by Congress in 1954, as unconstitutional. The Church Alliance, a coalition of chief executive officers of 38 denominational benefit programs, filed an amicus brief to support dismissal of the case, Freedom From Religion Foundation, Inc., et al. v. Jacob Lew, et al. (FFRF v. Lew). Those who signed included James Hamlett, President and CEO of Pension Fund of the Christian Church, and Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President of the Christian Church.

Code §107(2), commonly called "clergy housing exclusion" or "clergy housing allowance," excludes from income taxation the cash compensation provided to "ministers of the gospel" (clergy) toward the cost of their housing. This section of the Code essentially excludes the value of clergy-owned housing from income taxation. It is related to Code §107(1), which

excludes from a minister's taxable income the value of church-provided housing (commonly called a parsonage, vicarage or manse). The FFRF v. Lew appeal did not involve a challenge to Code §107(1).

While the suit may surface again, for now this case is resolved.



At its Feb. 26-27 meeting, the Pension Fund Board of Directors approved a **3.5% Special Apportionment** for all U.S. and Puerto Rico Pension Plan participants (active, inactive and retired*), effective July 1, 2015, as well as Good Experience Credits, effective March 31, 2015:

- Tax-Deferred Retirement Account (TDRA): **3.5%**
- Benefit Accumulation Account: **4%**
- Roth IRA Account: **2%**
- Legacy IRA Account: **2.5%**

The board also approved a Special Apportionment for Additional Benefit Annuities of 3.5%, to be applied July 1, 2015.

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Disciples mourn passing of Craddock



He was the favorite story-telling uncle for generations of Disciples. The Rev. Dr. Fred B. Craddock passed to new life in Christ on Friday, March 6 at the age of 86. He made himself the brunt of jokes about his physical size, but his stature as a preacher was unparalleled.

Whenever Craddock was scheduled to speak at an event, the halls would fill to bursting. Most recently at the 2011 General Assembly in Nashville, the lines at Woodmont Christian Church stretched out the doors more than an hour before the service was to begin. General Minister and President Sharon Watkins said, "To hear him was to be moved - before we quite knew it was happening - moved to sudden laughter or unbidden tears, about Bible passages we thought we knew by heart. Experiencing his preaching is cause enough to celebrate sharing this life with Fred for awhile."

But Craddock was not just a beloved Disciples' treasure. In CNN's story aired this past weekend, he was hailed as a "preaching genius." Newsweek had named him as one of the 12 best preachers in the United States in the 1990s and more recently in 2010, the magazine *Preaching* named his books as one of the 25 most influential preaching books of the past 25 years. He pioneered an approach to preaching where the listener is converted from a passive recipient to a more inductive approach in which the hearer participates in the study process. His Southern gentlemanly style and folksy, humorous stories endeared him to many.

(CNN) The Rev. Fred Craddock, the pulpit giant who was "like no other preacher you have ever heard," has died, his church announced.

"Fred Craddock was a national treasure and a devoted servant of the church and Jesus Christ. His impact on preaching -- in terms both of scholarship and practice -- is incalculable," said the Rev. Thomas Long, a

friend and a pastor at Emory University's Candler School of Theology.

His sermons unfolded like a short story -- there was foreshadowing, plot twists, dialogue; language of startling beauty and surprise endings.

The way he ended his sermons was as memorable as what he said. He would abruptly stop, turn from the pulpit, and quietly sit as the audience sat in silence. People didn't applaud or shout hallelujah after his sermons. They were too busy absorbing what he had just said.

It's not uncommon to meet great people who, to borrow a phrase that Craddock used, have "domestic wreckage" at home. But the Craddock family was among his biggest fans. He was married to his high school sweetheart, Nettie, for more than 50 years, and they had two children, Laura and John.

The Rev. Dr. William L. Land

The Rev. Dr. William L. Land, the 2014 recipient of the National Convocation's Liberation Award, went to be with the Lord Oct. 14, 2014. Dr. Land's life was celebrated at the Peel and Sons Funeral home of Austin Texas on Sunday October 26th and at the Franklin Center at Bricks in Whitaker, North Carolina on Nov. 20th.



The following are but a few of the many comments that were received following Bill's transition.

Bill was a "tell it like it is" ambassador of Christ's vision of justice for the church, society, and the world. He was also a pastor who freely shared and lived Christ's transformative good news. Given the current conditions of church and society, I cannot even begin to articulate how much we all will miss him.

I met the Rev. Dr. William Land in October of 2002. A small group of African American Disciples and UCC clergy (mostly) traveled to Palestine and Israel. It didn't take me long to learn that Dr. Bill had invariably seen it all, done it all and met practically everyone that was someone. Community organizing and prophetic ministry were his call and passion. He had a prophetic fearlessness that compelled him to say what needed to be said to whomever needed to hear it. In Ramallah, in the office of Palestinian President Yassar Arafat, Dr. Bill challenged President Arafat for what he perceived was mistreatment of people in his community in Cincinnati by Palestinian merchants. Quite honestly we were all sitting in stunned silence as this went on, but before we left Palestinian soil, Bill had a letter, on Palestinian stationery, signed by President Arafat addressing his concerns.

In my experience Rev. Dr. William "Bishop" Land (Bill) was a life entity firmly rooted and entrenched in both the priestly and prophetic paths of the church. He was a "front line" soldier who was unparalleled – in my experience – as a political strategist and activist. As close to a fearless person as I have ever known and driven by his love of God, Bill understood structural, systemic and spiritual forms of dehumanizing power, looked them in the face and was willing to speak truth to it. While he, like each of us, fell (falls) short of the glory of God, he recognized the anti-Christ amongst us and did not back down. I knew no one quite like him in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Elder Robert L. Moseley, Jr



Elder Robert L. Moseley, Jr. was born on February 27, 1932 in Athens, Alabama, to the late Robert and Mary McDade Moseley. He entered into eternal rest on October 23, 2014. Robert professed Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior and was baptized at the early age of 13 in Athens at Oak

Grove CME Church. He later joined Gay-Lea Christian Church (New Covenant Christian Church) in Nashville in 1961. Over the course of his dedication

and service, Robert was ordained as an Elder and served the church in numerous capacities, including Deacon, President of the Christian Men's Fellowship and Chairman of the Church General Board. He also served on the National General Board and Administrative Committee of the National Christian Church. Robert served in the United States Army, spending the majority of his time in Germany. He earned the rank of Corporal before being honorably discharged in 1954.

Robert was a graduate of Tennessee A&I (TSU), earning his Bachelor's degree in Industrial Arts Education. He was employed by Universal Life Insurance Company, before joining Golden Circle Life Insurance Company. He retired from the Tennessee Department of Corrections and went on to manage the Historic Greenwood Cemetery in 1984. Robert devoted much of his time to various civic organizations such as Big Brothers of Nashville, the Northwest YMCA and Explorer Scouts.

Robert was preceded in death by his wife, Selekia Dillard Moseley and their sons, Norman (Mary) and Stephen (Valerie) Moseley. He is survived by his son, Carlton L. (Tammy) Moseley, Sr. of Nashville and daughter, Beverly Joyce (Bernard) Young of Cincinnati, OH; Brother, Roy W. Moseley (Louise) of Louisville, KY; Sisters, Blondell Pryor (AD-deceased) of Cincinnati, OH; Jimmie Dorris Randle (Willie) of Las Vegas, NV and Brother-in-Law Thomas Shute (Mildred-deceased) of Murfreesboro, TN; grandchildren, Carlton Jr. (Ebonie), Telisia, Jessica Moseley, Robert (Angela), Ronald (Charasma) Moseley, Jasmine (Thomas) Mead, Jewel Moseley, Kia, Stephanie, Stephen Moseley, Jr., Stephen Hicks, LaShonda (Eric) Kendrick, Andrew Davis, Terri Lynn Moseley; and a host of great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins and very special friends.

Patricia Tucker Sanborn

Patricia Tucker Sanborn was 61 when she died on October 10, 2014. She was born in Hanover, New Hampshire in 1952 and was a graduate of Mascoma Valley Regional High School in Canaan NH. She graduated from Adelphi



University (Garden City, NY) with a degree in French Language in 1974. There she was a member of the French Honor Society and on the Dean's List. Upon graduation, Pat moved to Indianapolis, IN and went to work with the Africa Office of the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) where she spent 39 years. This ministry was near and dear to her heart helping with the work of the people in Africa. The staff of DOM are a family that meant so much to her and the Africa Partners and projects there were loved by Pat. Besides work, Pat loved to spend the time outdoors whether going for walks or spending it sitting in the sun. She spent many summers wandering the state parks of Indiana on weekend camping trips and in recent years devoted her energies to her family from her trip to China in 2006 to adopt her daughter. That was a whole new world of adventures for her. Her summers were also spent traveling to New England to visit all of her family and friends there as well as she managed to stretch her summer trip there so she could not only enjoy longer and longer visits but to make lots of stops coming and going including her latest to Niagara Falls. Pat really enjoyed the beauty of the National Parks of the USA. Another joy Pat had was to sing in the choir of Broad Ripple United Methodist Church. There she found

another family to love and cherish and even though the choir ended a few years ago, Pat still loved the activities and people there as it seemed that there was always something going on at Church. Survivors are her husband and traveling companion of 38 years, Robert C. Sanborn Jr., and their daughter, Anna who has also become quite the traveler. Pat & Robert have traveled from Africa to Europe to Central America to China and the Pacific and Russia. She is also survived by her mother, Ruth Callanan Tucker of Canaan NH; her sister, Martha Menton of Billerica MA, whom she loved to visit as an excuse to go to a Red Sox game; her two nephews, Keith & Curtis Menton and many cousins. She is also survived by Robert's parents, Robert & Nancy Sanborn of Inman SC and his sisters, Kimberly and Paige. Her father, Harry Tucker, of Canaan NH passed away in 1994. Please make memorial gifts to the Division of Overseas Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) P.O. Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206; and to Broad Ripple United Methodist Church, 6185 N. Guilford Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46220. The funeral was held at Broad Ripple United Methodist Church on Saturday, October 18, 2014 at 11 a.m. with calling one hour prior. Arrangements handled by Flanner & Buchannan-Broad Ripple.

In Memoriam

Following are member deaths that were reported to Pension Fund between October 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014.

Deaths in active service

Rev. Christopher Francois, Miami, FL November 7, 2014; Mrs. Patricia Sanborn Indianapolis, IN October 10, 2014

Deaths in retirement

Mr. Gary Adams Jacksonville, IL October 12, 2014; Mrs. Rosemary Alland Fort Worth, TX November 24, 2014; Mr. Donald Anderson Mars Hill, NC November 6, 2014; Rev. David Andrews Leesburg, GA November 26, 2014; Rev. Clarence Bangs Kankakee, IL October 14, 2014; Mr. Ronald Bargas Capitola, CA December 11, 2014; Rev. Edward Barnes Indianapolis, IN December 27, 2014; Mrs. Elizabeth Beasley, Lewisville, TX October 3, 2014; Dr. Robert Bell Fort Worth, TX December 28, 2014; Mrs. Gladys Bever Norman, OK November 6, 2014; Mr. Thomas Blackiston, Conroe, TX October 7, 2014; Rev. Effie Blair Maywood, IL November 24, 2014, Mrs. Zoe Boulton Indianapolis, IN December 22, 2014; Mr. Wesley Bourdette, Cheektowaga, NY October 26, 2014; Dr. William Boyle Wichita, KS November 21, 2014; Mrs. D. Emily Brown Berkeley, CA October 6, 2014; Dr. Delno Brown Johnson City, TN December 9, 2014; Dr. Marcus Bryant Fort Worth, TX December 6, 2014; Rev. Cheryl Campbell Fairborn, OH, October 1,

2014; Mr. John Canedy Indianapolis, IN December 30, 2014; Mrs. Hazel Coatsworth, Tucson, AZ November 28, 2014; Dr. Austin Coe Ventura, CA October 12, 2014; Mrs. Betsy Collins Lagro, IN November 30, 2014; Mrs. Carol Cook Raleigh, NC December 30, 2014; Dr. R. Dale Copsy Mesa, AZ October 8, 2014; Mrs. Clarissa Crissman, Avon, IN December 23, 2014; Mr. Harlie Dunham Ellwood City, PA October 15, 2014; Mrs. Nova Evans Prattville, AL December 15, 2014; Mrs. Hu-Ellen Farrar Fort Worth, TX November 29, 2014; Rev. Clarice Friedline Duarte, CA, October 5, 2014; Mr. R. Vernon Fuller Haines City, FL October 17, 2014; Mr. Norman Gerhart Saint Charles, MO November 5, 2014; Dr. William Gerrard Stone Mountain, GA December 5, 2014; Dr. Adele Gorjanc Saratoga, CA November 15, 2014; Mrs. Gwen Graham Surrey Hills Victoria, Australia November 17, 2014; Dr. Joseph Hafele Laramie, WY November 15, 2014; Dr. Don Hazell Durant, OK October 26, 2014; Dr. Henry Hill Darlington, MD October 8, 2014; Dr. Ben Hobgood Penney Farms, FL December 13, 2014; Mrs. Ann Howland Austin, TX December 22, 2014; Rev. David Howlett St. Thomas, ON October 18, 2014; Mr. Val Johnson Norwalk, IA November 10, 2014; Mr. Jerry Jones Abilene, TX November 14, 2014; Dr. Paul Kitley Lafayette, IN October 29, 2014; Mrs. Lorraine Kraeger Chesterfield, MO December 10, 2014; [Cont. On Page 18 &19]

PERSPECTIVES OF THE CHURCH, CANCER, DEATH AND PEACE!

By Rev. Dr. Willie Kizer Crum, Jr



Let us talk about the perspectives of the church and how they relate to the changeable phenomena of cancer, death and peace. We are pilgrims in this perplexing world that makes us vulnerable to mortality.

This article deals with the number one disease

that affects men age 60 and above in the hope that there is a conscious awareness to all who have a father, brother or husband in their lives.

CHURCH

At the age of 12 years old, I was told that the church is a holy place, where we go to tell it all to God, and He will take care of all of our needs (spiritual). Also, it was my belief that the church is where you pray and ask the church members to pray too for God's divine grace.

I remember that my father went to work in Washington, D.C. One month later we received a letter and his last paycheck from the Department of Defense stating that he had left the job site, and that if there were any problems; they would be glad to hear from him and make it right. His job requested that he return back to work. At this point, we felt that something serious happened with our father. We didn't hear from him as months passed. After a year, we gave up hope that our father was still alive. We knew he must be lost somewhere or that he was dead. I remember going to church to pray for my father. I prayed to God to bring my father home. I didn't care what kind of condition he was in. At bedtime, I prayed to God for the safety of my father, for him to come home. After praying each night for months, one day I went to the mailbox and saw this man walking down the road at a distance. I could not recognize this person that was walking to-

ward me. My inner spirit told me, "This is your father. Go meet him." I was so happy I leaped on him, and he fell. He looked unhealthy, confused, lost, and he did not know where or how he got there or who he was. Furthermore, he did not know his family.

As I looked at this situation with my father, I strongly feel that God brought him home as I had prayed for his return. It was the grace of God. There is no other way I can understand this situation but that God placed him back home. My father got better and lived many years until he later died from cancer. Through the years, I have had many thoughts about this situation with my father. Perhaps he was already dead, and God returned him home once more. This has been my inner thought.

Although I prayed at the church as well as at home, I feel that God will answer your prayers no matter where you pray if it is His will. The church is a divine and a special place (Colossians 1:24). One may say that the Church is God Himself in the Spirit.

CANCER

When we hear the word "cancer," we think that it is a death notice. Many people have outlived the cancer, and many people have died from the disease. A new report by the British Medical Journal (BMJ) states, "The findings also suggest that at least half the men who are now screened after age 60 can strongly predict their lifetime risk of dying of prostate cancer." The presenters at several medical workshops that I have attended have all reported that any man who lives past 60 years will have some type of prostate disease.

Cancer is a nightmare that takes away our physical strength, but not our soul and our spirit strength.

As a military chaplain at Fort Jackson Army hospital, I had the opportunity to work on the cancer ward. It was

not an easy assignment to see people suffer and to minister to some with the prognosis of death. Working in an area like this brings you to an awareness of and reflection on your life. This disease can attack anyone. It affects all people no matter who you are.

I did not know at that time that my father was diagnosed with prostate cancer. A year later he died. Now I understand from medical workshops how these diseases affect one's life. This information calls you to think and become aware of an illness that you may face one day, too. When one is exposed to a lot of information, that can be a blessing by hiking awareness.

We are not affected by what we don't know; we are affected by what we know. We know that God loves us, and God promises that He will not give us more than we can bear.

DEATH

There are inevitable outcomes as we enter into our golden years. God promises that a man will live three scores and ten.

Dr. Otis W. Brawley, MD, FACP states that "Prostate cancer is a major public health problem. The American Cancer Society estimates that 240,890 American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2011 and 33,720 will die of it. It is the second leading cause of cancer death among men, only surpassed by lung cancer. Prostate cancer screening became common in the U.S. in the early 1990s and dramatically changed the demographic of cancer in the U.S. Prostate cancer quickly became the most commonly diagnosed non-skin cancer. Today an American male has a lifetime risk of prostate cancer diagnosis of about 1 in 6 and a lifetime risk of dying from it of 1 in 36."

PEACE

Peace -- is it that we find peace in death or that we feel free to accept life for what it is? The point is, who gives us peace? Is it that God helps us to reach a point in our lives where we understand that we are not in control of our lives but that He is?

Henri J. M. Nouwen stated that "Jesus was a revolutionary who did not become an extremist, since he did not offer an ideology, but himself. He was also a mystic, who did not use his intimate relationship with God to avoid the social evils of his time, but shocked his

milieu to the point of being executed as a rebel. In this sense he also remains for modern humanity the way to liberation and freedom. We discovered the mystical as well as the revolutionary way by which we try to reach beyond ourselves. It is this new world that fills our dreams, guides our actions, and makes us go on, at great risk, with the increasing conviction that one day we will finally be free -- free to love!"

We seek knowledge and direction from God for a renewed purpose for our lives. God's power also can be a source of strength to live. We will daily seek freedom from old burdens or new problems through prayer, meditation, and a daily surrender to God.

CONCLUSION

The writer challenges the church to get involved by having education and spiritual support workshops. These workshops could help individuals to become aware of these illnesses that affect our fathers and brothers in our lives. Love is the key to surviving; it frees us from fearing life's situations. According to God's word in 1John 4: 18, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."

Love brings peace to our surroundings, which is the circle of friends and fellowship with one another. God will be there for us to bear our pain, unknowing, and to direct our path. Cancer may kill the body, but God saves the soul. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4).

God's mercy will help us to find life as a privilege rather than a burden. May God's healing grace and divine love be with all individuals that may be afflicted with cancer.

Rev. Sadie Lowrey Phoenix, AZ December 11, 2014; Mrs. Ruth Mann Brandon, FL October 28, 2014; Mrs. Charlene Martin Independence, MO October 26, 2014; Mrs. Mary McCaffery Westlake, OH October 16, 2014; Mrs. Marguerite McClain Fulton, MO December 14, 2014; Mrs. Cleo McDonald Grimes, IA October 12, 2014;

Mrs. Billie Joann Miller Norman, OK October 23, 2014; Mrs. Colleen Moore Valdosta, GA December 31, 2014; Mrs. Elizabeth Mooty Lynchburg, VA December 28, 2014; Mr. Sidney Morgan Burleson, TX November 13, 2014; Mr. Robert Moseley Madison, TN October 23, 2014; Mr. Allen Moulton Fairmount, IN November 29, 2014; Rev. Charles Mull Silver Spring, MD December 24, 2014; Mr. Frank Mullican Eugene, OR October 11, 2014; Ms. Jahala Myers Salem, OR November 6, 2014; Mrs. Ruth Newton Arlington, TX November 22, 2014; Mrs. Grace Nichols Ashland, MO November 17, 2014; Mrs. Jessie Ogan Glendale, AZ November 13, 2014; Mr. Kenneth Owens Sylvania, WA December 20, 2014; Rev. Terry Peck Brandenton, FL November 15, 2014; Mrs. Nedde Pegg Springfield, MO October 23, 2014; Mr. David Phillips Florham Park, NJ October 6, 2014; Mrs. Dorothy Pike Dallas, TX December 8, 2014; Mr. Donald Reese Mercersburg, PA October 16, 2014; Rev. Jay Reese Branson, MO December 26, 2014; Ms. Karin Reynolds Jacksonville, FL December 12, 2014; Rev. Donald Rice Valley, AL November 1, 2014; Rev. George Sanders Rochester, NY October 1, 2014; Ms. Lillian Standifer Arlington, TX December 6, 2014; Dr. Roy Stuckey Sabina, OH November

16, 2014; Mrs. Ruby Syverson York, ME October 22, 2014; Mr. Archie Taylor Norman, OK December 30, 2014; Mr. John Frederick Thomas Georgetown, TX October 16, 2014; Mrs. Mary Unoura Spring Valley, CA October 31, 2014; Mrs. Sylvia Van Heyningen Beulah, MI November 13, 2014; Dr. Owen West Eureka, IL December 15, 2014; Rev. Joseph Wilcox Waukegan, IL October 18, 2014; Ms. O. Charlene Wiles Overland Park, KS October 6, 2014; Mrs. Mary Wittenmyer Ft Worth, TX October 19, 2014; Mr. Robbins Wolke Jacksonville, IL October 30, 2014; Rev. Earl Wright Russellville, KY October 15, 2014; Mr. Khalid Ya-Ghani Chattanooga, TN November 9, 2014

Other Deaths

Mr. Victor Barnes Wilson, NC November 23, 2014; Mrs. Nancy Bradds Kissimmee, FL November 2, 2014; Ms. Beth Howard Jacksonville, FL November 15, 2014; Rev. William Land Austin, TX October 14, 2014; Rev. J. Rodney McClung Moore Haven, FL October 10, 2014; Mr. Russell Prior Peoria, AZ October 3, 2014; Pastor Taulau Tupua Modesto, CA December 1, 2014; Mrs. Cheryl Woodard St Augustine, FL December 30, 2014; Mrs. Mary Woods Jacksonville, FL December 5, 2014

THANK YOU

Thank You for your “Good Faith Donations” that enable this ministry.

Doris Baker Barrett, Marjoroe Bennett, Mary Helen Blackwell, Dr. Louis & Carolyn Brown, Jackie Compton Bunch, Daisy R. Chambers, Louada B. Chisholm, Ellen Crowder, Rev. Eugene & Bonnie Frazier, Ruth French, Helen Fry-Gray, Rev. Lari Grubbs, Dick & Mindy Hamm, Michelle Hardy, Kathy Helme, Ruth P. Hobbs, Dr. Orval & Margaret Holt, Kitty Huff, William & Mary Jackson, Jacqueline Kordalewski, Maurice Lee, Ms Margaret M. Liggett, Percy & Yvonne Malone, Claude O. & Patricia B. Maples, Ovara Miller, Mary Mitchell, Jimmy & Ken Mohler, Ernest & Janice Newborn, Ray & Anne Nixon, Leola P. Norman, Loraine A. Pitman, Norman & May Reed, Gwendolyn B. Robinson, Deloris L. Ruddick, Bess Terry, Norma Ellington Twitty, M. Faye Vaughn, Karen S. Vroman, Camella R. Walker, Joy Walker, Charles Webb, Jr., Rex Wiant & Laura Whitener, Suanne Yarbrough.

***The Oldtimers’ GRAPEVINE* Good Faith**

Donation Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Enclosed is my/our donation of: \$10 ___ \$15 ___ \$20 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ Other \$ _____

Please send your gifts - check or money order to:

The Oldtimers’ GRAPEVINE, Attn: Doris Daugherty, 3611 Bangor St., SE
Washington, DC 20020-1245

OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE is a free print and electronic ministry published four 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.

THE REV. DR. WILLIAM K. FOX (1917-2004)
Founder

OSCAR HAYNES (1916-2014)
Publisher/Executive Editor Emeritus

Board of Directors:

Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty, President, St. Louis, MO
President

Sandra Bryant, Los Angeles, CA
Patricia Clark, St. Louis, MO

Rev. Dr. Paul Crowe, Jr., Indianapolis, IN
Dr. D. Duane Cummins, Swanton, MD

Katherine Fox-Cunningham, Indianapolis, IN
Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale, Decatur, GA

Ruth Hobbs, Clinton, MS
Rev. Claude Maples, Dallas, TX
Rev. Patricia Maples, Dallas, TX
Karen Vroman, Des Moines, IA

Administration:

John Richard Foulkes, Sr., Indianapolis, IN
Publisher/Executive Editor
Kelsey Danielle Berry, Springfield, MO
Copy Editor
Doris Daugherty, Washington, DC
Treasurer
Donna Haynes, Washington, DC
Production Manager

Editorial Staff:

Rev. Dr. Ernest Newborn, Claremont, CA
Jimmy Mohler, Kansas City, MO
Kim Atwater, Washington, DC
May F. Reed, Indianapolis, IN

We are accessible through our **editorial office:**
5314 Moonlight Dr. Indianapolis, IN 46226-1755,
(317) 545-9335 oldtimers.grapevine@gmail.com.

Contributions should be sent to our treasurer at:
3611 Bangor St. SE, Washington, DC 20020-1245.

The OLTIMERS' GRAPEVINE

3611 Bangor St., SE

Washington, DC 20020-1245

NONPROFIT ORG

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

MEERFIELD, VA

PERMMIT NO. 2333

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Quality Work in Housing Ministry: Gary White Retires

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.

Colossians 3: 23 (NIV)



"I personally would like to honor and celebrate Gary White on a job well done. He is indeed an efficient and effective servant and leader in the church. I've personally witnessed and heard from the residents about the impact that Gary had on that community."

These words from Rev. Derrick Perkins, Pastor of Centennial Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), are in celebration Gary White, who recently retired from a nineteen year career in senior housing ministry at Hylton Point Apartments in St. Louis, Missouri. Over the years Gary stated that his title changed from administrator, CEO, site manager, and community manager. One thing that did not change over the years is Gary White's attitude toward his position and his role. *"I consider it a ministry because it is a means of helping others which demonstrates the love of God within us. When we serve others, especially those less fortunate, we not only provide needed service(s) but we become the "hands and feet of Jesus" to carry out his mission to spread the Gospel."*

Gary White began his career in senior housing management in March 1994. Previously he had a dual ca-

reer as a systems engineer for IBM and as a US Army Reserve Commissioned Officer. He grew up in Jefferson City, Missouri where he was nurtured by his mother, Phyllis Mae White and his grandmother Minnie Francis White. Mr. White stated: *"I learned at an early age to love God with all my mind, body, and soul and to love my neighbor as myself."* He is a graduate of Lincoln University, in Jefferson City, Missouri where he met his wife, Jeanette White, a native of Tulsa, Oklahoma. In 1969, the couple moved to St. Louis, Missouri and became members of Centennial, under the pastorate of Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hylton. They have remained active members and leaders of Centennial to date. The couple is the proud parents of daughter Malkia Shani White.

Gary's career in senior housing management is also the story of our church: the local church (Centennial in this case) and the general church as represented by the National Benevolent Association (NBA), at that time, the social and health service division of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Recruiting African American management level staff was a key affirmative action goal of NBA president Richard Lance. Indeed, Gary Whites' initial position with NBA as an Administrator in Training (AIT) was funded by an Affirmative Action grant, recommended by the NBA Affirmative Action Committee.



After serving as an AIT in nine NBA HUD 202 facilities across the country, Mr. White became the administrator for Hylton Point in May 1996. With his years as an AIT, he served almost 19 years in senior housing ministry. In those years he did quite well in carrying out the administrative, management, and operational functions of a housing manager who works for a federally funded project and a church related social service organization. Most importantly however, it was his servant leadership style and engaging manner that made Hylton Point a success. Residents considered Hylton Point as their home and it felt like home for residents and visitors. Over the years this writer has spoken with many residents of Hylton Point. The common threads in all their comments were the genuine love and respect their manager, Mr. White showed them on a daily basis.

Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hylton, who was involved in recruiting Mr. White, commented: *“He showed his true colors every day on the job... He was a committed Christian, strong, highly intelligent and compassionate. He fit the bill. Although he was not an ordained minister, he acted like a minister in the way he treated people. The successful experience we have had in housing ministry belongs to Gary, the board, and the church!”*

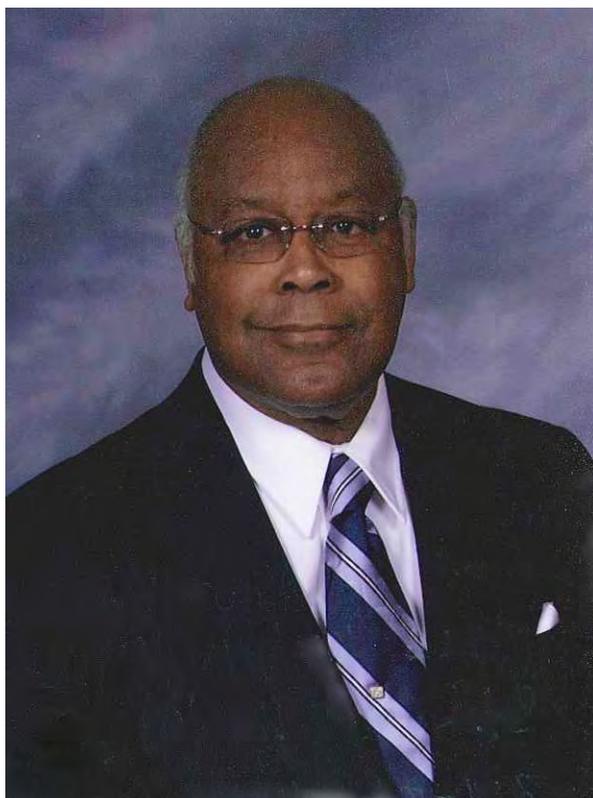
Another NBA affirmative action goal was to develop partnerships with African American congregations to develop safe and affordable independent living housing for their church members, 62 years and older, as well as persons in their community. Hylton Point Apartments represented the second partnership between Centennial, the National Benevolent Association (NBA), and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to build HUD 202 housing units across the country.

The first HUD 202 housing partnership of Centennial and NBA began in 1985 when this writer was serving as the Vice President for Program Planning and Evalu-

ation at NBA. Paul Kennedy, the HUD 202 staff person asked: *“Does Centennial want to do a 202 with NBA this year?”* After getting an explanation, this writer spoke with Rev. Hylton, who said yes. In 1988 the partnership resulted in the opening of Centennial Plaza, NBA’s first HUD 202 unit with an African American congregation. This unit provided 76 apartments for predominantly low income African American residents.

The second Centennial/NBA HUD 202 partnership resulted in Hylton Point in 1996. This facility was named for Rev. Samuel W. Hylton, the pastor of Centennial. This honor was bestowed on Rev. Hylton because of his wide ranging community work that involved education, health, and social justice. He also served as the Chair of the NBA Affirmative Action Committee that made significant contributions to policy and program changes within NBA that created a more diverse and inclusive organization. Rev. Hylton commented on a housing campus that included Hylton Point, a 72 unit and Hylton Point II a 60 unit apartment complex: *“My parents, my liberal arts education at Morehouse, and my seminary education prepared me to look for ways the church could be an instrument for good in the community. To provide affordable senior housing was one way to help people, the community and the church. This was a winning combination Centennial could not pass up.”*

With the help of Patricia Clark, the NBA Director of Social Services, who nurtured NBA relationships with Black churches and Kevin McKinney, NBA HUD 202 Associate Vice President for Affordable Housing: NBA established 13 HUD 202 senior housing units with Black churches, providing over 680 apartments. Some of these units were named for African Americans, including: King David Cole Place in Kansas



City, Missouri; Jackson-Peoples Senior Living Center in Indianapolis, Indiana; Poston Housing in Memphis Tennessee; and Roscoe Dunjee Apartments in Spencer, Oklahoma. With the restructure of the National Benevolent Association, the management of Centennial Plaza, Hylton Point, and Hylton Point II were transferred to Lutheran Social Services in 2005.

Since retiring in January 2015, Mr. White stated: “*I am truly blessed! God has/is good to me!*” Who would have thought that as a member of a local congrega-

tion, a person could find a third career that was so fulfilling and impactful? Hundreds of residents of Hylton Point are very glad that Gary White, put his “*mind, body and soul*” into making their lives better. A grateful church is very glad that Gary White was “*the hands and feet of Jesus*” to the hundreds of residents he served so well on behalf of the church. As he retires, Mr. White plans to continue to follow the Omega motto: “*Friendship is essential to the soul.*”

Charleston Shooting Families Proved Grace Wins Out Over Hate by

Michael Daly

Appearing in court to address the shooter, family members gave testimonials of forgiveness that stunned a nation with their power and faith.

Even the most cynical atheist had to have been in awe as the family members of the murdered faithful rose one after another in the Charleston courtroom and proved the power of their own faith in the face of crushing loss.

“I forgive you,” Nadine Collier said through tears to the accused killer of her mother, Ethel Lance. “You took something very precious away from me. I will never get to talk to her ever again. I will never be able to hold her again, but I forgive you, and have mercy on your soul.”

She managed to keep on, “You hurt me. You hurt a lot of people. But God forgives you and I forgive you.”

Next came Anthony Thompson, husband of Myra Thompson. He began by addressing the court rather than his wife’s accused killer.

“I would just like him to know that, to say the same thing that was just said: I forgive him and my family forgives him. But we would like him to take this opportunity to repent.”

The husband then spoke directly to Dylann Roof, who was watching and listening via a video connection from jail.

“Repent. Confess. Give your life to the one who matters most—Christ. So that He can change him and change your ways.”

Thompson’s wife was not yet buried and he was actually offering Roof a way to salvation.

“So no matter what happens to you, you’ll be okay.”

The next to speak was Felicia Sanders, mother of a magical young man named Tywanza Sanders.



“We welcomed you Wednesday night in our Bible study with welcome arms,” she said to the killer.

Roof has reportedly told police that the group was so welcoming and manifestly decent that he nearly decided to abandon his murderous plan.

But that would have meant giving up the hate that filled the hollowness of

being born of a fleeting reunion between his parents three years after their divorce and of getting no further in high school than the ninth grade, but wearing a jacket with an “Academic All Stars” patch rightfully worn only by seniors in the top 10 percent. He had compensated for that false claim by sewing two other patches on the jacket, flags of apartheid-era Rhodesia and South Africa, symbols for those seeking another kind of supposed supremacy.

And his older sister, Amber, was to be married on Sunday. To have just left the Emanuel A.M.E. Church on Wednesday night would have meant going to the wedding at the end of the week as a rank loser from a fractured family who could rightly declare himself supreme in nothing at all.

Even so, Roof seems to have understood in his moments of indecision that these warmly devout people of the Bible study group were putting the lie to his racism. He may have sensed that the faith filling their lives might also fill his own.

After an hour, just as he was apparently losing his resolve and his hate was slipping away, Roof seized it anew. He allegedly produced the Glock .45 automatic that he is reported to have purchased with birthday money from his father.

That was when Tywanza Sanders is said to have told him, "You don't have to do this."

Roof is said to have replied as if he were also trying to convince himself. He was not some loser. He was a champion of the white race about to start a race war.

"I have to do it," he reportedly cried out.

His next words were the language of white supremacists.

"You rape our women and you're taking over our country. And you have to go."

Sanders could have sought to flee. He instead placed himself between the gun and his aunt. He was killed and now his mother stood in the courtroom, addressing the killer.

"You have killed some of the most beautiful people that I know," she told him. "Every fiber in my body hurts and I'll never be the same. Tywanza Sanders was my son. But Tywanza Sanders was my hero."

She repeated, "Tywanza was my hero."

Yet, instead of cursing Roof, she then said this:

"May God have mercy on you."

She was followed by Wanda Simmons, granddaughter of Daniel Simmons.

"Although my grandfather and the other victims died at the hands of hate, this is proof, everyone's plea for your soul, is proof that they lived in love and their legacies will live in love," she told Roof.

She was speaking absolute truth.

"So hate won't win," she went on. "And I just want to thank the court for making sure that hate doesn't win."

Finally, there was Bethane Middleton-Brown, sister of DePayne Middleton Doctor.

"That was my sister, and I'd like to thank you on behalf of my family for not allowing hate to win," she said.

Where so many of us see grief as a justification for righteous retribution, Middleton-Brown was resolutely humble in her effort to overcome what she was feeling even as she was feeling it.

"For me, I'm a work in progress," she said. "And I acknowledge that I am very angry. But one thing that DePayne always enjoined in our family, is she taught me that we are the family that love built."

She was talking about all the bullets had not been able to kill, about a family that was surviving even this, about love that was saving her in her grief.

"We have no room for hating, so we have to forgive," she told Roof. "I pray to God for your soul."

Nobody from the family of the slain pastor, Rev. Clementa Pinckney, rose to speak, but everything the others had said was suffused with the beliefs that he had long taught and shared.

Roof kept his eyes lowered, surely hearing the dead speak along with the living. He must have felt the weakness of evil in the face of such good.

Even atheists had to see divinity in these families built by love. God was there in that courtroom if He has ever been anywhere.

JOINT PASTORAL LEITER

Christian Church in South Carolina and Christian Church in North Carolina June 19, 2015 June

Dear Church:

As you are aware, late Wednesday evening a young man shot and killed nine members of Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. Among those killed was the congregation's senior pastor, the

Rev. Clementa Pinckney. Others killed were congregation pastor, the Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, a relative of our own Rev. Sekinah Hamlin; the Rev. Daniel Simmons, age 74; Susie Jackson, age 87; Ethel Lance, age 70; Myra Thompson, wife of the Rev. An-

thony Thompson, vicar of Holy Trinity Reformed Episcopal Church; Rev. Depayne Middleton Doctor, mother of four children; Tywanza Sanders, age 26, and a recent college graduate; and Cynthia Hurd, a Charleston County Public Library employee. We were all devastated to learn of this tragic and horrible event.

All murder is tragic. Mass murder bears much more horror when so many victims are senselessly killed so quickly. When mass murder happens in a place of worship and prayer our sense of well-being is threatened. But, our hope for humanity is at stake when murder is motivated by racism!

With tender hearts and deepest pain, we hear the words of the Hebrew prophet, Jeremiah: I hurt with the hurt of my people. I mourn and am overcome with grief.

Is there no medicine...? Is there no physician there? Why is there no healing

for the wounds of my people? If only my head were a pool of water and my eyes a fountain of tears, I would weep day and night for all my people who have been slaughtered. (Jeremiah 8:24-25 - 9:1}

The congregation of Mother Emanuel AME Church is a precious expression of the body of Christ and as it is written, "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26). Right now we suffer with them and extend our compassion towards them with open hearts knowing that as the Church we have traveled a similar road in the early and later decades of the 20th century when racism tore apart our country and churches. We learned then that silence and inaction was not helpful or faithful.

As Disciples of Christ we must take bolder steps to become the anti-racist/pro-reconciling church we are called to be, and end the systemic racism that causes such hatred and violence. There is no easy fix to racism. We must start--NOW! We cannot wait.



Therefore, we call upon all Disciples of Christ congregation in the regions of the Carolinas to enter into a period of eight days of prayer, June 21-28, as we petition the Creator of every human life.

During these eight days of prayer, we urge each congregation to pray during worship services, classes, meetings, small group gatherings, and as families and individuals, for:

- the Charleston families who grieve the death of loved ones,
- the leaders and members of the Mother Emanuel AME Church,
- the leaders of the AME Denomination,
- all African American churches,
- the City of Charleston,
- the political leaders of our cities, states and country,
- the leaders of our congregational, regional and general expressions of church; we pray for:
- boldness in naming the sin of racism in our lives, our church and our country,
- boldness in confronting racism, in all its manifestations,
- boldness in confronting hatred and violence, in all its manifestations; we pray for:
- peace and forgiveness,
- guidance and fortitude in following God's leading our next steps.

Please join the church in these eight days of prayer. In the name of Jesus, the Christ,

- Rev. Sotello Long Regional Minister
- Rev. John M. Richardson Regional Minister
- Eleanor Davis Regional Moderator
- Reginald Stroud Regional Moderator
- Harold Samuel Vice Moderator
- Rev. Dr. William Barber II Moderator Elect

BILL SIGNED

By Mark Berman



South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley signed a bill ordering the removal of a Confederate battle flag flying near the state Capitol, a remarkable event that would have been inconceivable just weeks ago.

“The Confederate flag is coming off the grounds of the South Carolina statehouse,” Haley, a Republican, said at a packed news conference in Columbia.

In her remarks Thursday, Haley spoke of the nine victims of last month’s church shooting in Charleston and their relatives, who offered the accused gunman forgiveness and prayer last month. This compassion, she said, helped lead the state’s legislature to send her the bill allowing for the flag to be taken down.

“This is a story about action,” she said. “This is a story about the history of South Carolina. And how the action of nine individuals laid out this long chain of events that forever showed the state of South Carolina what love and

“So 22 days ago, I didn’t know that I would ever be able to say this again,” she said, speaking of the time since the church massacre took place. “Today, I am very proud to say that it is a great day in South Carolina.”

“I saw passions get high, I saw passions get low, but I saw commitment never ending,” Haley said Thursday.

“The confederate battle flag as a symbolic stain of racism has been dismissed from the state Capitol grounds and may now be deposited to a museum,” Cornell William Brooks, president and chief executive of the NAACP, said in a statement on Thursday. “This flag should be studied and no longer honored.”

Haley, like numerous other politicians who have recently called for the flag’s removal, had not previously seemed amenable to moving it, but her position changed in the wake of the church shooting.

Let There Be Peace On Earth

by Jimmy Mohler

Perhaps, like me, you have been blessed with mentors who encouraged interfaith and ecumenical dialogue as part of the faith journey. In that pursuit, I discerned some years ago that there are two principles that guide my view of faith: I should never deliberately shut down the brain God gave me. I should not exclude anyone.

When encountering a person or group, through personal experience or through my reading, that insists that I not read something or listen to someone – my caution flag goes up. God gave me a brain to read and listen, to discern what parts of that reflect God’s message of love, grace and redemption. How better to make that call than to read and listen to many perspectives? In my view, much of the radicalization that takes place in our world is borne of restricting opportunities for learning.

As for exclusion, I believe that God created everything in the universe. Every surviving baby born on this planet was a gift from God, added to our circle of life. God has given us dominion over his creation, including those babies. What is it we do in exercising that dominion that creates the notion that some are better than others? ...that some have a right to education and others do not? ...that we should make it more difficult for some to vote? ...that some have a right to choose who they marry and others don’t? ...that those mentally or physically incapacitated should not receive our care?

Compassion is caring, and standing up in protest and action against the violence so often created by exclusion and lack of knowledge. May we pledge to God and one another that we will pursue that caring with all in the Christian, interfaith and non-faith communities who seek peace in non-violent ways.

GA-1539
(Emergency Resolution)
CHARLESTON AND BEYOND: TERROR, INTIMIDATION
AND
THE BURNING OF BLACK CHURCHES
(Sense-of-the-Assembly)

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world, endeavors in both word and deed to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God”; and

WHEREAS, it is with profound sadness and righteous indignation that we mourn the lives of nine victims of gun violence fueled by racism, hate, and ignorance at “Mother” Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, SC, last month on Wednesday, June 17, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the names and ages of the Charleston Nine are Cynthia Hurd, 53 years old; Susie Jackson, 87; Ethel Lance, 70; Rev. Depayne Middleton-Doctor, 49; Rev. Clementa Pinckney, 41, Tywanza Sanders, 26; Rev. Daniel Simmons, 74; Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, 44; and Myra Thompson, 59; and

WHEREAS, the families of the Charleston Nine showed extraordinary compassion, forgiveness and grace; and

WHEREAS, we affirm our common call to love amidst challenges, even during tough times as these, ever mindful that if any part of the Christian body is hurting, we’re all hurting (1 Corinthians 12:26); and

WHEREAS, Ephesians 4:4-6 reminds us all that there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all; and

WHEREAS, following this act of domestic terrorism, the ripple effects of hate-filled and racially motivated attacks on Black congregations throughout the United States have caused intimidation, fear and panic among members through the burning of church buildings, threatening letters, and phone calls; and

WHEREAS, several members of our congregations have become fearful and suspicious of visitors on Sunday mornings and other weeknights, especially our children who wonder aloud, “What are we going to do if someone comes in our church and tries to do that?”; and

WHEREAS, we recognize, as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote in his Letter from Birmingham Jail, that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” and “we truly are “tied together in a single garment of destiny;” and

WHEREAS, our assembly is itself a manifestation of the Body of Christ in the world, remembering of one another at the Table and bearing witness to a divine love that transcends and must triumph over terror enacted upon that sacred Body and individual members of it, thus standing with our fellow Christians and declaring that we are truly the keepers of our “brothers and sisters;” and

WHEREAS, General Assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) since the 1969 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Seattle, WA, have adopted resolutions and reports affirming the responsibility of the followers of Christ to pro-reconciliation/ anti-racism, especially having approved the Pro-reconciliation/ Anti-racism Initiative as a mission priority of the 20/20 Vision during the 2001 General Assembly;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, July 18-22, 2015, will seek justice for those harmed, comfort those who mourn, and join with those who struggle for justice and equality, until “justice rolls down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream (KJ21);” and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly affirms our General Minister and President’s continuing public condemnation of the massacre of the Charleston Nine and the burning of African American Churches; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls upon the College of Regional Ministers to be especially attentive to the ongoing pastoral care needs of Disciples ethnic minority congregations within their regions, endeavoring to provide pertinent training and support for pastors and leaders who are trying to help their congregations cope with acts of racial violence such as the recent tragedies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of General Minister and President send a letter to the African Methodist Episcopal Church informing them of this resolution and offering Disciples partnership of solidarity in their ongoing initiatives to take meaningful action in response to this tragedy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls

on the General Minister and President's Pastoral Table to work with Reconciliation, the Council on Christian Unity and the College of Regional Ministers to establish appropriate means to commemorate the Charleston Nine and their families and to encourage predominantly white Disciples congregations in the United States and Canada to worship and serve with predominantly African American congregations to work to eliminate the sin of systemic racism; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the Office of General Minister and President report back to the 2017 General Assembly actions taken in response to this resolution and suggestions of future, concrete action that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may take to end the cruel evil of racially motivated violence, especially the kind targeted against black churches.

Submitted by:

Rev. Jesse Jackson Jr., pastor of East Sixth Street CC, OKC, OK
 Rev. Derrick Perkins, pastor of Centennial CC, St. Louis, MO
 Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, pastor of East Second St. CC Lexington, KY
 Rev. Dr. Judy Cummings, pastor New Covenant CC, Nash-

ville, TN
 Dr. William Crowder, pastor Park Manor CC, Chicago, IL
 Rev. Kevin McNeil, pastor Mt. Zion CC, Floyd, VA
 Rev. Geoffrey Brewster, Phillips Theological Seminary, Tulsa, OK
 Rev. Rob Crawford, Bartlesville, OK
 Rev. Michael Riggs, pastor First CC, Tulsa, OK
 Rev. Joseph Garkovich, pastor, First CC, Canon City, CO
 Rev. Dr. Eric Brown, pastor, Woodland CC, Columbus, OH
 Rev. Kelli Driscoll, pastor, Bethany CC, Tulsa, OK



The General Board in April 2014, approved GB 14-0885, directing Moderator, Glen Miles, and General Minister and President, Sharon Watkins, to appoint a task force to facilitate a consultative process "about how we as one church, discern God's mission for Disciples today and organize to accomplish that mission." Tony Rodriguez, Second Vice-Moderator, served as chair.

Mission First! addresses the need to find a shared focus on God's mission in the world. It seeks to help Disciples identify the next set of mission priorities. It creates a space for strengthening the connections among congregations, regions, general ministries, higher education and key partners in mission locally and globally.

Mission First! also seeks to improve the way we engage in, and hold our Church in all its expressions accountable to God's mission together. The task force proposed Mission First! to the 2015 General Board as a call to and a model for shared focus in mission."

General Minister and President Sharon Watkins presented Mission First to the General Assembly. In the spirit of the children's rhyme "This is the church, this

is the steeple", General Minister and President Sharon Watkins taught us a new version for our time by former Regional Minister Ben Bohren - Here's the Church/with prayer and vision/Throw open the doors/ Go out into mission!
 Quoting great Disciple preacher Fred Craddock, Watkins asked, "Are we giving our lives for the world?"

Watkins went on to make the case for Mission First!, a pilot program for the next biennium to find new ways to cooperate across the life of the church on shared mission. The steps will include input, identify, implement and impact and in the process the "i's" become "we".

"We need to get up from the table and get out the door," Watkins said. "With prayer and with vision, go forth into mission.

For more information or to sign up for a mission gathering, go to <http://missionfirst.disciples.org>.



“I’m Not a Wannabe!”

By Norma Ellington-Twitty

If you were blessed to attend Sunday Service at Centennial Christian Church, (Disciples of Christ) on May



31, 2015 you would have heard Minister Marilyn F. Williams deliver a powerful, melodic, soul stirring sermon; that not only boldly stated she was not a Wannabe, but proudly declared who she was as a child of the king. She quoted Psalm

139:14 (NKJV): “I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are your works, and that my soul knows very well.”

Rev. Derrick Perkins, Pastor of Centennial expressed joy and great pride that the women of the church provided a month long worship and commemoration of women entitled: “Jewels In His Crown” that culminated in Minister Williams’ moving sermon. “Marilyn’s spirit, wisdom, and creative way of delivering God’s word connected with us all and inspired our congregation, including the men, to demonstrate the fruit of the spirit and to live a faithful life for Christ in our present world.”

In her introductory remarks Minister Williams described being called “skinny” by other children as she was growing up. Her father, Rev. Dr. J. O. Williams, told her: “You are not skinny honey; you are ‘petite’.” Those words affirmed and emboldened her to be the very best she could be. Being ‘petite’ often turned out to be a benefit. For example, as a baseball player, the opposition would play her shallow and she “beat them every time” because her opponents underestimated her ability to hit the ball because she was ‘petite’.

Throughout the service Minister Williams was an active participant, singing and praising God with fervor. She assisted Pastor Perkins in honoring Sister Irene Soll, who has provided faithful service and leadership

for Christian Women’s Fellowship at Centennial and the Mid America Region of the church for over 40 years. Throughout the month, women from across the country were showcased for their tireless service to the church. On this final Sunday, it was good to showcase one of Centennial’s own to receive well deserved recognition. As is typical of Irene, she received her certificate and plaque with humility and gratitude.

Centennial was proud to showcase Minister Williams who has a long history of leadership and service within the denomination. Currently she serves as President of the International Disciples Women Ministries (IDWM) of the Christian Church, (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. She is the immediate past President of the National Convocation Disciples Women, and past 2nd Vice-Moderator of the Christian Church, (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

For some Centennialites, including this writer, the most important thing about Minister Williams’ background is that she is the daughter of Rev. Dr. J. O. Williams and the late Josie Jones Williams. As staff for the National Benevolent Association (NBA), Cheryle-Dyle Palmer, Patricia Clark, and this writer worked closely with “J. O.”, as we called him, when he served on the board of the NBA’s Southern Christian Services for Children in the late 1980’s. His daughter’s presence evoked fond memories of “J. O.” who truly exemplifies the fruit of the spirit that his daughter preached about on this special Women’s Day celebration. This petite, powerful, and anointed speaker is a fine representation of her fine family heritage.

Rev. Perkins expressed confidence in Minister Williams and her colleagues in leadership as they, along with Disciples’ women in the United States and Canada, re-imagine how to do compassionate and impactful ministry in new and exciting ways. He stated: “Sounds like transformation is coming soon and every woman in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has the awesome privilege of assisting and partnering with one another to make a difference.”

Minister Williams resides in Raleigh, North Carolina where she works as a registered dental hygienist. She is a Commissioned Minister by the North Carolina Re-

gion, where her father served as Associate Regional Minister for many years. She is a member of Covenant Christian Church in Cary, NC where she serves as choir member, Sunday school leader and participant, and also served as Vice-Moderator and Elder. She is the mother of two children: Antoinette LaTrice Francis (Dyrhan) and Major E. Cowan III. She has four beautiful grandchildren: Deja and Dionna Francis, 11 and six; and Jasmine and James Cowan, 15 and 13.

In both areas of her work, Minister Williams has the same passion: Saving – “Saving teeth and Saving Souls”. Her favorite scripture: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths. (Proverbs 3: 5 NKJV)

Rev. Perkins described the impact of Minister Williams: “Her short stay has set ablaze our hearts and spirits, and empowered our women to continue serving God’s people.”

HALLELUJAH AND AMEN!

First award recognizes Disciple for connecting building with mission



Under the leadership of Bishop Chester Aycock, St. Paul Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, in Wilson, N.C., has grown into a thriving ministry, reaching lives through mission around the world.

And, as St. Paul’s membership and ministry has grown, so has

the congregation’s need for additional space. Recognizing that need, Aycock forged a strong partnership

with Disciples Church Extension Fund, who served St. Paul’s building planning needs by providing new construction and renovation loans and consultation. “For more than two decades Disciples Church Extension Fund has enjoyed a great and lasting partnership with St. Paul and in particular, Bishop Aycock,” says Bill Singer, vice president of Disciples Church Extension Fund.

Bill and Alton A. Smith, presiding general bishop of the Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, International and pastor of St. Mark Church of Christ in Goldsboro, N.C., recently presented the surprised Bishop Aycock with Disciples Church Extension Fund’s first Partnership Award at the Biennial General Assembly of the Church of Christ (Disciples of Christ) International and Incorporated in Williamsburg, Va. before a crowd of approximately 550.

The Partnership Award recognizes those congregations with whom Disciples Church Extension Fund has worked, that appreciate and practice effective use of their buildings for mission and ministry. The award also recognizes individual partners who help build connections and relationships between congregations and Disciples Church Extension Fund. The award was presented to Bishop Aycock for his overwhelming support of the Disciples Church Extension Fund ministry. “Bishop Aycock has been an excellent partner of DCEF, helping our ministry build relationships with Church of Christ (Disciples of Christ) congregations throughout the Goldsboro/Raleigh district and other districts of the General Assembly,” Bill says. “He understands that utilizing building space effectively results in having the best outcome for ministry.”

This was the first Partnership Award that Disciples Church Extension Fund has presented. Bishop Aycock is also the Bishop of the Goldsboro/Raleigh District Assembly. He has served as a pastor for 39 years.

Capital Area region calls new regional minister

The Regional Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Capital Area is pleased to introduce our next regional minister. The Rev. Allen V. Harris will begin his ministry in the region in June.

The Rev. Allen V. Harris has served congregations in Cleveland, Ohio; New York, New York; and Grapevine, Texas. He was ordained to the ministry of Jesus Christ on May 19, 1991. His most recent pastoral experience was in leading a multi-age, multi-racial, declining urban parish through a transformational process that resulted in it becoming an Open and Affirm-



ing, Anti-Racist/Pro-Reconciling, and Accessible congregation whose membership increased by more than 100%.

He has received

specialized training in the Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation initiative of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and has participated in a number of community-based conference opportunities both as a participant and as a presenter. Rev. Harris has participated in and presented at the Congress on Urban Ministry, a biennial event where persons with a passion for social justice explore creative ways and identify resources that are helpful in confronting the issues and addressing the needs of the urban communities the participants serve. He has participated in and presented at the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Children Welcome! conference offering perspectives on diversity in working with children and youth in our churches.

In his Letter of Interest submitted to the Regional Minister Search Committee, Rev. Harris says that he is first and foremost a pastor, keenly aware of “the power and grace of a pastoral presence in the grand moments and the tragic movements of an individual’s and a congregation’s life.” He understands that pastoral care, to the clergy as well as to the congregations, is one of the fundamental facets of the work of a Regional Minister. He understands too, that the Capital Area, even with its geographical diversity, is a setting that is, markedly, urban. Rev. Harris states that his “commitment to, understanding of, and immersion in hospitality, diversity, and inclusiveness” are some of the tools that are required for the transformation that is desired for this Region of the Christian Church. He is keenly aware of the need and the responsibility to reach out to all areas of the Region and especially to those areas where the sense is that the more rural the setting the more distant the people feel from the care of the Region.

Virzola Law to Lindenwood

On this Sunday, July 12, 2015, Pastor Virzola Law will celebrate her official last Sunday with Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church. Pastor Law has served faithfully for 12 years in various roles within our church. She has walked with us through transitions of beloved family members; she has been by our side in hospital rooms; she has prayed for us and with us through various life cycles and circumstances; she has presided at our weddings, baptisms; baby dedications, house blessings, funerals and so many other life changing moments.

She has been faithful to our ministry, and God has now blessed her to be able to share her gifts with another congregation as their Senior Minister. To God be the Glory!!!

We will celebrate Pastor Law at two special receptions following worship services on Sunday, July 12, 2015. The 1st reception will take place immediately following the Southwind Campus service in the Fellowship Hall, and the 2nd reception will take place immediately following the Midtown Campus service in the Fellowship Hall.



This will be your opportunity to love on Pastor Law and shower her with cards and gifts to wish her God’s blessings as she begins this new journey in ministry.

Please make plans to attend and share in the celebration as we release Pastor Virzola Law from the BLVD to serve as Senior Minister of Lindenwood Christian Church.

Rev Clarence Johnson is Director of Disciples Seminary Foundation in Northern California



I wanted to share with you some of the good news from the west coast here at DSF. As of this week, Rev. Clarence Johnson has joined our staff as Director of Disciples Seminary Foundation—Northern California. He will continue on as pastor at Mills Grove, of course, as our position is only part time. He will

be our chief leader for our work at Pacific School of Religion and San Francisco Theological Seminary, and will be the mentor for our seminary students there. I'm thrilled to be working with Clarence.

Jon L. Berquist
President
Disciples Seminary Foundation

SARAH WILSON FUND: FROM A DREAM TO REALITY

The late Sarah Wilson was a member of Summit Christian who responded by standing up, giving a quarter, and asking others to join her in raising money for Cal Crawford who said, "He accepted God's call into the Ministry", after hearing a sermon at the 1937 National Christian Missionary Convention hosted by Norwood Christian Church (now Summit) in Dayton, Ohio.

In 1970, the Rev. Dr. William K. Fox, pastor of Summit invited Disciples churches from Xenia, Springfield, Columbus and Cincinnati to come together every Fifth Sunday with a Songfest for fellowship and to raise money to continue what Sarah Wilson had begun.

On Sunday, October 31, 1971, the Sarah Wilson Scholarship Committee was reactivated at East Main

Street Christian Church (now First United) Xenia. On March 11, 1972 the following officers were elected: President/Treasurer: Marguerite McLemore; Vice President: Verdell Dawson; Secretary: Harriette J. Smith; Corresponding Secretary: Margaret Echols.

In 1971-1983 the committee made loans in the amount of \$200-\$300 to Lorenzo Harris, Sr., Lonnie McGill, Ozark Rouge, Ward Roundtree, and Malcomb Taylor.

During 1981-2000 the Sarah Wilson Scholarship Committee has given \$1,000 per year to the Star Supporter Fund.

In 1995, Pastor J. Thomas Johnson shared Sister Marguerite McLemore-Jackson's dream of memorializing Sarah Wilson at the October 29th, Fifth Sunday Songfest by telling about Endowed Scholarship Funds at Jarvis Christian College, named for Dr. S.S. Meyers, Dr. Emmit J. Dickson and Dr. Carmella Barnes.

After much discussion, it was decided to launch a drive to raise \$10,000.00 to establish the Sarah Wilson Endowment Fund, since we had one half of the funds in a saving account and CD's at Board of Church Extension. After several proposals and motions, August 30, 1998, the Fifth Sunday Disciples Songfest voted that the Sarah Wilson Scholarship Committee invest \$10,000.00 with the Christian Church Foundation, who would divide equally the interest earned annually between Jarvis Christian College and The Star Supporter Fund.

The Sarah Wilson Scholarship Committee consisted of laypersons such as: Marguerite McLemore-Jackson, Harriet J. Smith, Margaret Echols, Cordelia Hill, James Clemons, John Bumper, Camille Hill, Signora McClure, Bobbie Hunt, Mattie McCloria, Verdell Dawson, and the pastors of the participating churches.

The Fifth Sunday Songfest Churches are: Fifth Christian, St. John Christian (now Kemper Road), United Christian (Cincinnati), Bethany Christian, New Fellowship Christian, Woodland Christian (Columbus), New Fair Street Christian (Springfield), First United Christian (Xenia), Light of the Community Christian, Summit Christian (Dayton), and United Community Christian Church of Covington, KY. (Continued on Page 19)

A Letter From The Board President

April—June 2015

“You’ve got to be taught to hate and fear... You’ve got to be carefully taught.”

(Musical - South Pacific Song Title)

Beloved Grapevine Readers,

One of my four year old granddaughter Journee’s best friend is a white girl she met in preschool two years ago. Even when this friend left the preschool, she and Journee had play dates. Recently Journee attended her friend’s fourth birthday party that the mother described as a simple family gathering, at the time she offered Journee the invitation. Journee and her friend are currently taking a summer ballet class together, at the invitation of her friend’s mother.

As I continue to process the massacre of the Mother Emanuel Nine in Charleston and its aftermath; I look at how these two children have become friends across, what for many is, a cultural chasm. Families of both these children, by word and deed, must be teaching something different than the racist killer of the Mother Emanuel Nine learned. It is clear to me that Journee and her friend are being taught to value cultural differences and to see people of all colors as deserving of respect, and in some cases, lasting friendship.

As I look to the future for these two precious children I wonder: “Will they be able to remain friends and bridge this cultural chasm throughout their lifetimes, even if they desire to do so? What will enable other children of different racial backgrounds to grow up seeing one another as equals, who are worthy of love and respect?” How do we eliminate the “white supremacy” system that stacks the deck against people of color and produces a racist killer who would boldly invade the sanctity of a church?

The answer to these questions goes beyond Journee, her friend, and their respective families and involves all of us. Many of us have spent a lifetime fighting injustice and racism. Although we might be grateful for retirement and a more leisurely life style; recent events indicate we cannot retire from this fight to end racism. Once we recover from the shock and outrage of what happened to the Mother Emanuel Nine: we

must wake up, and prayerfully discern what role we will take in what needs to be a national groundswell for change to end racism and achieve the democratic ideals on which our country are founded.

If we continue to do our part and commit to ending racism, individually and as “the church: that would be a beautiful gift for Journee and her friend. I can imagine them over the years attending more birthday parties, graduations, weddings, and maybe even living in the same retirement community – a lifetime of love and friendship. Oh what a day that would be for these two friends, not to mention the millions of us who love this country and want a similar result for our children and their friends.



We have two images: Journee and her friend enjoying a lifetime friendship: versus a racist killer who would confidently walk into a warm and welcoming church and then after receiving their warmth and hospitality – kill nine of the twelve attendees. What are we teaching our children? What should we be teaching our children to end racism? A lot is at stake – what are you going to do about it? Let us hear from you – your actions could inspire others.

Your Sister in Christ,

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

POET'S CORNER



MEMORY

Memory is such a blessedness, and tears that often accompany these memories are truly a gift of God. Tears help to wash away the heaviness, weariness

and refresh us to journey on. Memory, a store house, a warehouse of thought which can occur purposely or at random. How careful we should be to store up good memories, good thoughts to carry along with us as we make this journey in life. Often it is those bad memories that hold us prisoners in our own minds—but those joyful memories are a benevolence that enlivens and rejuvenates us in our daily walk. When we lose a loved one we weep although our tears do not profit the dead, they embalm their memory; and at that time we will sometimes recall to memory something that will bring **laughter** into our midst, bringing a release of some of the pain we hold, and we can almost feel the presence of the person who is absent as if they are with us and quietly listening.

PARENTS

Lots of parents today don't talk to their children and get to know them the way they could/should. Many don't express their love and concern in a way that the children become discerning of things and others. They give them things, send them to their room with a lot of toys, TV, computer and other technological gadgets which their senses become adapted to being able to turn-off or maneuver rather than the human voice/touch. Don't be a robot mom/dad. Talk to your children. Explain things of life to them; why it rains, why trees grow tall, why birds sing, who made all these things.

Look into their eyes and talk to them when they are little babes. Let them hear good sounds and healthy **laughter**.

MICHAEL JACKSON

He left behind
A sea of music,
In a sea of broken hearts.
Many tears pouring
In his earthly depart.
He seemed tired, weary, lonely and alone.
The Father heard his voicing

And early brought him home.
Oh, the days and hours of joy he brought
To all who heard his songs.
The magic in his dancing
In our hearts will stay, belong.
Whether state side or across the
Bright blue sea
Michael sang, danced, smiled
And twirled with glee;
With all his heart, enchanting you and me.
With his voice, his charisma,
He held a winning key
Jubilantly singing,
For all the world to hear, to see.
He rests well now within a world
He truly sought.
A world of soothing quiet
A world of silent thought.
Sleep on, Michael, take your
Much needed rest
For Jesus dearly loves you in that
He rendered you His best.

May Reed

(I loved him too, didn't you?)

Written Thurs., May 14, 2015

[Michael's favorite song was SMILE].

PLEASURE is a smile as it slips out to do push-ups
on your lips.

A Beginning Look at our Founding Fathers

There were 5 characters who shaped our Disciples beginnings. They were Barton W. Stone, Thomas and Alexander Campbell, father & son, Walter Scott and "Raccoon" John Smith. Smith was not deemed as one of the Four Founding Fathers but he was very much a part of the making and shaping of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Stone first sought to be a lawyer. He enrolled in David Caldwell's "log college" Academy in North Carolina. He found religious excitement there among the other students. After weeks of soul-searching he came to know the true meaning of the gospel. He said, "my soul found peace. I lost my love for law and gave myself to preach the gospel." He left the academy and began to preach whenever the opportunity arose. After being ordained he began to serve the Presbyterian Church at Cane Ridge, Bourbon Co., KY., established in 1791.

[More to come in our next issue.]

DHM & Real Faith



Real Faith Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was in the middle of a major building campaign when disaster hit. The once thriving congregation was a pillar in the city of Clarksdale, Mississippi. In 2009, the congregation was in the process of adding onto the current 98-year-old structure that included a gym and fellowship hall for community use, narthex, a new sanctuary, classrooms and media room. However, due to a stream of unfortunate events caused by people who didn't have the church's interest at heart, including problems with the construction project that were beyond the congregation's control, the building project was put on hold indefinitely.

At General Assembly in Orlando, Florida in 2013, Rick Reisinger, President of Disciples Church Extension Fund [DCEF], Ronald Degges, President of Disciples Home Missions [DHM], and Joshua Baird [Director of Disciples Volunteering] sat together to discuss what it would look like to gather folk from across ministry lines to help the Real Faith congregation complete its thwarted building project using long-term Disciples Volunteers and volunteer support teams from across the United States and Canada.

After General Assembly 2013, a site visit was planned and the principals from DHM and DCEF visited the site of Real Faith Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Clarksdale, MS., assessed the situation, and began to develop a plan to help the congregation bring to completion its building project. Over the next 18 to 24 months, Disciples Home Missions, Disciples Church Extension Fund, Disciples Volunteering, Disciples Women, the Great River Region, Reconciliation Ministry, Week of Compassion, National Convocation, and Hope Partnership have helped this congregation bounce back from their disaster. On Easter Sunday 2015, the Real Faith congregation dedicated its brand new facility to the glory of God. Just look at what can happen when we work together in the life of this church and focus on strengthening congregations for mission.

Rev. Ronald J. Degges, President of Disciples Home Missions, and Rev. Joshua Baird, Director of Disciples Volunteering, visited Real

Faith Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on Pentecost Sunday 2015, to dedicate a hand-made cross created by long-term volunteers, Mike and Julie Robinson. The Robinsons relocated to Clarksdale and dedicated 18 months of their life to see this project through to completion. The Worship Service at Real Faith on Pentecost Sunday brought the project officially to a close. Now, Real Faith holds two Sunday morning worship services with a packed house at each service and educational and community service ministries throughout the work week. It is a congregation on the go!

DHM is Disciples Hands on Missions

Pastor Cedric Clayton in new sanctuary!
Julie Robinson, Mike Robinson, Regina Smith working at Real Faith Christian Church along with other members of DHM Staff doing 'Hands On' Mission!
Sheila Spenser, Assistant to the President, and Kathy Watts, Ministry Associate, and Corporate Secretary.



FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

EFFIE LONG BLAIR

Effie Long Blair



EFFIE LONG BLAIR went to be with the Lord on Nov. 24, 2014 in Maywood, IL. Rev. Blair, a native of Phoenix, IL, joined the Christian Church when a child. She studied at Warren Business College in Warren, and Youngstown, OH. University. She received her Bachelor of Theology degree from Northwest Christian College in Eugene, OR., and the Master of Education degree at Phillips University, Enid, OK. Effie was recom-

mended for ordination by the official board of Bethany Christian Church, Houston, TX. where she had been an active member for 3 years. She was ordained to the ministry by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on January 25, 1976, at First Christian Church, Houston, TX. She became director of education for minority constituencies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on February 1 of that year. Her ministry included the development of education programs for minority congregations and leading the department of Christian Education, Division of Homeland Ministries – a special ministry calling in which she had prepared herself well for the task.

Rev. Dr. Charles Harvey Lord (1924-2015)



Rev. Dr. Charles Harvey Lord, pastor of University Church from 1970 to 1989, passed away peacefully on Friday, April 3, 2015. As many of you know, Harvey lived with Parkinson's and is a courageous example of the force of life.

It is with heavy hearts that we enter this time of mourning. On Good Friday, I ask you to remember a good man, one whose sacrifice and boldness made possible this season in our church's life and health. In the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) tradition, Har-

vey is considered by many a mentor and a champion for social justice.

Rev. Fredrick L. Nixon



Rev. Fredrick L. Nixon is the 1st Vice President of MRSEJ, and the Founding Pastor of the Community of Faith Church (Christian Church Disciples of Christ and UCC) and Chief Executive Officer of the La Amistad Love and Learning Academy in Houston, Texas. Prior to this, he served as

Pastor of Pilgrim Congregational UCC in Houston, Texas; Saint John's Congregational UCC, Springfield, Massachusetts, and First Congregational UCC, Savannah, Georgia. Rev. Nixon's interest are reflected through his work with youth and young adult ecumenical groups on the local and national levels. Along with his compassion for children, Rev. Nixon is known for his rich singing voice.

Isabell Marshall Smith

1933 - 2015



Isabell Marshall Smith, 81, retired teacher, died April 13, 2015. Isabell was born May 12, 1933 in Edwards, Mississippi, to Roscoe and Adell Jordan Marshall. The sixth of ten children, she was educated at the Chapel Hill Public School in Bolton, Mississippi and Southern Christian Institute, Edwards, Mississippi. Isabell received a Bachelor

of Science Degree from Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins, Texas and a Master of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education from Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi.

While a student at Jarvis, Isabell met A.F. Smith. The couple courted, and married on July 8, 1956. To this union, two children were born: Cheryl Diane and Allen, Jr.

Isabell's teaching career began in 1961 at Smith Robertson Elementary School in Jackson, Mississippi. She continued her career at Boyd and Casey elementary schools, retiring from teaching in 1992. Mother was a member of the Superintendent Advisory & Shared Governance Committee. She also joined the P.T.A. and the Jackson, Mississippi and National Teachers Associations. A dedicated teacher, Mother found creative ways to encourage her students to learn and explore, and she spent time after school tutoring students who needed individual help. Her skills were highlighted on "ABC News with Peter Jennings," and she was selected as a Star Teacher.

Baptized as a child and raised in a Christian home, Mother was a very active member of United Christian Church. Over the course of her almost sixty years at United, she served as an usher, choir member, Trustee, Elder, Church School teacher and Superintendent,

president of the Christian Women's Fellowship (CWF), chair of the Membership and Worship Committees, and Moderator of the Church Board. Among her many state and national church related services were: President of District III of the Mississippi Christian Missionary Convention (MCMC); Chairman of the Leadership Workshop for the MCMC; President of the CWF for the MCMC; President of the CWF for the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Vice President of the National Convocation; member of the International CWF Cabinet; Director of Stewards for Quadrennial Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Youth sponsor for the MCMC; Co-Director of the Magnolia Camp and Conference; member of the Nomination Committee for the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and was a member of the Church Women Coordination Council.

In 2005, Mother was inducted into the Jarvis Christian College Pioneer Hall of Fame, joining Daddy who was inducted in 1994.

Rev. Gardner C. Taylor



The Rev. Gardner C. Taylor, a grandson of slaves who took over a Baptist pulpit in Brooklyn in 1948, when overt racism defined much of American life, and became an influential voice for civil rights and one of the nation's most eloquent churchmen, died on Sunday in Durham, N.C. He was 96.

Mr. Taylor died at the Duke University Medical Center after attending Easter services at Mount Vernon

Baptist Church in Durham and a luncheon with his wife, Phillis Taylor. She said the cause was apparently a heart attack. Mr. Taylor, who had retired 25 years ago and moved to Raleigh, N.C., in 2004, had lived at the Hillcrest Convalescent Center in Durham since 2011. For 42 years, until his retirement in 1990, Mr. Taylor was the senior pastor of the Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. But his impact as a speaker, writer and political force in the city and in a nation of long-segregated schools, churches and other institutions reached far beyond his 10,000-member congregation.

The author of many books and 2,000 sermons and the recipient of 15 honorary doctorates, Mr. Taylor was a rumbling, rhythmic orator who marshaled Scripture, mystical allusions and the art of plain talk into sermons of emotional power. In 1980, Time magazine called him the dean of black preachers in America. In 1996, Baylor University said he was one of the most effective preachers in the English-speaking world.

Elizabeth P. Edmondson

Elizabeth P. Edmondson, age 93, of Xenia, peacefully went home to be with the Lord Friday, July 17, 2015 at her residence. She was born in Greenville, Virginia on December 20, 1921 the youngest of eight children born to Junius and Mamie (Ross) Perry.



In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by 7 brothers and sisters and her husband, Wilhelm Edmondson.

She is survived by her children: Wayne Sr. (Inez) Edmondson of West Chester, OH; and Ursula (Charles)

Williams of MD; 2 grandchildren: Wayne Jr. (Jamie) Edmondson and Warren (Lynn) Edmondson; and 8 great grandchildren; as well as numerous other family members and friends.

Mrs. Edmondson was retired from the Dayton Public School System, where she had been a long-term substitute teacher. She received her Bachelor's degree from Bluefield State University in West Virginia. She was an active member of the First United Christian Church in Xenia, being a Deaconess of the Church, Sunday School Teacher and singing in the choir. She had also been a Girl Scout Leader. Mrs. Edmondson was the 1st Recipient of Xenia's "Hospitality Award." The City of Xenia also recognized her 90th Birthday by declaring December 20, 2011 "Elizabeth Edmondson Day." She was a loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend. She will be missed and will always be loved and remembered.

Pastoral letter to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) from the College of Regional Ministers concerning excessive force against unarmed African-American men

On April 9, 2015 the College of Regional Ministers wrote a Pastoral Letter to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) regarding excessive force against unarmed African American men. Space will not permit printing the entire letter in this edition of OTG. The entire letter is available on request. Note the following calls to action detailed in the letter.

To pursue our calling to more abundant life as an Anti-Racism/Pro Reconciliation Church, the College of Regional Ministers calls upon the Church, as:

General and Regional Ministries

to form Anti-Racism teams to develop strategies and training for pro-reconciling action, consulting with the Disciples' Reconciliation Ministry;

to review the goals of each ministry to confirm that pro-reconciling objectives are implemented and realized; and

to utilize the Executive Search Model as recommended by the Office of the General Minister and President when preparing to call new executive leaders.

Congregational Ministries

to work in partnership with other congregations, ecumenical ministries, schools and community organizations to become reconciling agents between law enforcement and communities of color, and to support the health, security and education of at risk youth;

to give full and fair consideration to pastoral candidates of varying race and cultures;

to reach out to a congregation of another culture for both fellowship and shared community action; and

to work in partnership with your regional church as pro-reconciling strategies are developed, and with your general church by interpreting and supporting our Reconciliation Ministry in the local church.

Individual Disciples

to pray for the leading of the Holy Spirit in moving the Church beyond the normal comfort zones to build up all of God's people;

to advocate for public policies that respect and empower all people;

to pray for and support Disciples Reconciliation Ministry financially and to participate in Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation training when offered in your region; and to speak up when you see or hear something that demeans people through racist individual comments or institutional practice.

Jesus prayed for the church to be one, that the world may believe (John 17:21). As 21st century Disciples, we are shaped by a history of racism, by the legacy of those who have courageously stood for justice, and by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who lived, died and rose

with love for all and who promises to sit at the table and break bread with all who would seek a new and redeemed future (Rev.3:20). We now share the responsibility to make choices that will shape the character of Disciples witness as our third century unfolds. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S. and Canada, much like the two nations in which we reside, is becoming a much more racially diverse body. While some may react to these demographic changes with isolation, fear or aggression, we see tremendous potential for the Church to glorify God. The way of Christ leads us to more abundant life following the One who breaks down the dividing wall of hostility (Eph. 2:14).

As of April 30, 2000, The Sarah Wilson Endowment Fund reached its goal of \$10,000.00 invested with the Christian Church foundation. In January 2001, the CCF sent a check to Jarvis Christian College and the Star Supporter Fund for \$368.08 each.

From the late 1990's to 2014 students who requested and/or received a \$1000 scholarship from the Sarah Wilson Checking Account at PNC Bank are: Valerie Simpson, Kathy Wilson, Crystal Jackson, Christopher Vaughn, Michelle Dixon, Shelby Walker and Pamela Barnes-Jackson.

From a dream to reality: The Sarah Wilson Endowment Fund will continue the legacy of Sarah Wilson by participating in the education of young men and women who have said "Yes to God", attend the Commission On Ministry, and seek a Master of Divinity Degree in order to prepare for a local church pastoral role.

by Rev. Dr. J. Thomas Johnson
Regional Elder of Christian Church in Ohio

The Oldtimers' GRAPEVINE Good Faith

Donation Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Enclosed is my/our donation of: \$10 ___ \$15 ___ \$20 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ Other \$ _____

Please send your gifts - check or money order to:

The Oldtimers' GRAPEVINE, Attn: Doris Daugherty, 3611 Bangor St., SE
Washington, DC 20020-1245

OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE is a free print and electronic ministry published four 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.

THE REV. DR. WILLIAM K. FOX (1917-2004)
Founder

OSCAR HAYNES (1916-2014)
Publisher/Executive Editor Emeritus

Board of Directors:

Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty, President, St. Louis, MO
President
Sandra Bryant, Los Angeles, CA
Patricia Clark, St. Louis, MO
Rev. Dr. Paul Crowe, Jr., Indianapolis, IN
Dr. D. Duane Cummins, Swanton, MD
Katherine Fox-Cunningham, Indianapolis, IN
Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale, Decatur, GA
Ruth Hobbs, Clinton, MS
Rev. Claude Maples, Dallas, TX
Rev. Patricia Maples, Dallas, TX
Karen Vroman, Des Moines, IA

Administration:

John Richard Foulkes, Sr., Indianapolis, IN
Publisher/Executive Editor
Kelsey Danielle Berry, Springfield, MO
Copy Editor
Doris Daugherty, Washington, DC
Treasurer
Donna Haynes, Washington, DC
Production Manager

Editorial Staff:

Rev. Dr. Ernest Newborn, Claremont, CA
Jimmy Mohler, Kansas City, MO
Kim Atwater, Washington, DC
May F. Reed, Indianapolis, IN

We are accessible through our **editorial office:**
5314 Moonlight Dr. Indianapolis, IN 46226-1755,
(317) 545-9335 oldtimers.grapevine@gmail.com.

Contributions should be sent to our treasurer at:
3611 Bangor St. SE, Washington, DC 20020-1245.

The OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE
5314 Moonlight Dr.
Indianapolis, IN 46226-1755

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MEERFIELD, VA
PERMMIT NO. 2333

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

A Letter From The Board President

August—October 2015

It is more blessed to give, than to receive.

Acts 20: 35b (KJV)

Beloved Grapevine Readers,

Recently as my daughter and I were talking about our plans for Christmas, she asked what worthy cause we would be supporting this year. She felt that last year's fund raising effort to provide gift cards to families moving into their homes, was a good way to teach Journee and Zion about the blessedness of giving. (As their grandmother, I can attest to the fact they are very well versed on the blessedness of receiving.)

Last Christmas I invited family and friends, from the St. Louis area and around the country, to give toward an effort to provide funds that would enable two single parent families who were moving into their new Habitat for Humanity homes, to purchase needed household items. When middle class folks move into a new home, friends often throw them a "house warming" party that includes good wishes and household. These Habitat families would not have this type of outpouring; so our gift would let these families know that their community cared and we were willing to extend our love and resources to encourage them.

I was surprised at the timeliness and generosity of family and friends who responded to my invitation to help. In less than two weeks, we raised a thousand dollars and families were blessed with gift cards from people they had never met, from near and far. The



Habitat social worker expressed thanks on their behalf and indicated how meaningful our gifts were, both on a material, as well as a spiritual level. I shared with our donors how much their giving had blessed these families and Christmas for them took on a special meaning.

As persons who are retired, we may underestimate our power to make a difference. One lesson this experience has taught me: "If you ask, they will respond".

Many people are just waiting for an opportunity to give to a worthy cause. The blessedness of giving is that you don't know who all will be blessed by your gift. Although we touched the families who received the gift cards in a special way; the Habitat social worker was also touched by our spontaneous outpouring of love and generosity to these deserving families.

As Christmas approaches – I will be thinking of what worthy cause our family can rally around this year, as we live out being a part of the "beloved community" Martin Luther King spoke of. What worthy cause will you be supporting? As a retiree you can share the "joy of giving" with grandchildren, nieces, and nephews: they will be the better for it and our world will be the better as well!!

Your Sister in Christ,

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

Search For the Next General Minister and President

General Assembly 2017 will kick off a season of renewal for Disciples. We have an opportunity to elect a new general minister and president and this historic election will come on the heels of our Mission First! pilot project. We will have the feedback from our Mission Gatherings and the Mission Council and, potentially, structural adjustments. Together, we will be set to cast a new vision together.

With prayer and God's leading, the process is already beginning to identify the leader who will take us past the 50-year marker for our current organizational model and put us on a path for mission. The Administrative Committee of the General Board named the search committee tasked with nominating the next general minister and president. The General Board approved the search committee in a Nov. 2 conference call. (Procedures for the search committee are laid out in the Standing Rules of the General Board in Section 8. As stipulated in the rules, all are members of the General Board.)

The committee will have an organizing meeting in January 2016 to begin their work toward a deadline to bring candidates to the board in February 2017. A job description will be released to the Church in May with names being received in June and July 2016. The work of the general minister and president is broadly outlined in The Design of the Christian Church (paragraphs 50-53).

The Church's intentional efforts toward more diversity and acknowledgement of the gifts of women are bearing fruit. Many of the board members who are eligible for the search committee are women with a number being women of color.

"We definitely see the needle moving in the number of women, particularly women of color, at this level of leadership," said Sharon Watkins, general minister and president.

Please keep these dedicated people in your prayers as they do this important work for the next 18 months. The legend for the demographic information following the individuals' names is below.

Jackie Bunch, Ohio region
Monique Crain Spells, Indiana region
Allison Enari, Indiana region
Jennifer Garbin, Canada region
Danny Gulden, Georgia region
Mary Lou Kegler, Greater Kansas City region,
Young Lan Kim, Pacific Southwest region,

Sue Morris, Nebraska region,
Tom Perring, Pacific Southwest region
Tony Rodriguez, Florida region,
Lori Tapia, Arizona region

Alternate

William Jennison, Northwest region

W. Darwin Collins Honored

The Rev. Dr. W. Darwin Collins – the pastor, the planned giving officer, the mentor – was honored



for his 39 years in ministry by the Board of Directors of the Christian Church Foundation during its fall meeting in Pittsburgh in November.

Collins, vice president for the Foundation's Great Lakes Zone, will retire in February 2016.

The celebration, held at PNC Park in Pittsburgh, chronicled his ministerial career that included four different positions at Central Christian Church in Uniontown, PA; his 14 years as regional minister for the Christian Church in Pennsylvania; and his nearly eight-year career at the Foundation.

Foundation Senior Vice President Ruth Weaver, while acknowledging more than \$52 million in gifts and new investments from the Great Lakes Zone during Collins' tenure, chose to focus on the key role that Darwin had played on the Foundation's staff.

"I know that many of those dollars were surprises to you," Weaver said. "I also know that your successors will be receiving gifts and investments for years to come from seeds that you've been planting." In the end, "numbers don't begin to tell the story of Darwin's ministry, which will be remembered for his caring presence and his faithful prayers for each individual who is a part of this ministry."

Collins gave thanks to God for the opportunities he has had to serve and witness. And he thanked his wife, Rachel, for her unwavering support. Collins received the Honored Minister's Pin from the Pension Fund, and it was pinned on by his wife..

Hamlett to step down as Pension Fund President



James P. Hamlett, 8th President of the Pension Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) announced that he will retire effective August 31, 2016. Hamlett has served as President since January 1, 2004. He will be succeeded as president by the Reverend Dr. Todd A. Adams, who was called to be Senior Vice President / President-elect by Pension Fund's

Board of Directors following an exhaustive nationwide search directed by Anne F. Keating, President of Keating Associates, LLC, and consultant to the search committee, chaired by the Reverend Dr. James P. Johnson. Adams will join Pension Fund on March 1, 2016 and will become President on September 1, 2016.

In making the announcement, Hamlett stated "It has been my great honor to serve with extraordinary colleagues in this ministry to those who accepted the call to Christian ministry. Together we have sought to enhance the financial wellbeing of pastors, lay employees and retirees, holding firm to Pension Fund's core values of "Trust, Security and Compassion. During my years at Pension Fund, I have been blessed beyond measure by the support and encouragement of so many. I know Pension Fund will be in good hands as the mantle of leadership passes to Dr. Adams."

During his tenure as President, Hamlett has overseen the growth of Pension Fund from \$2.07 Billion to more than \$3 Billion in assets under management. He led the move to restructure the various financial programs into separate trusts, directed the development of reserves for each program to protect them from market volatility, launched IRA and Roth IRA programs, and directed the process to reestablish the Benefit Accumulation Account program. Under his leadership, Pension Fund weathered the market crash of 2008 - 2009 with no reduction in pension benefits and no investment loss to any participant. Pension Fund's endowment, which provides resources for Ministerial

Relief and Assistance programs, has grown from \$25.2 million to more than \$41.7 million during his tenure as President.

Hamlett is married to Linda Jonker Hamlett, his wife of more than 44 years. They have two adult children, Ryan Hamlett and Elizabeth Hamlett Slagle, both of Indianapolis, and two grand children, Dolores Slagle and Augustus Slagle.

Prior to joining the Pension Fund staff in August, 2001, Hamlett served more than 28 years with Board of Church Extension (Disciples Church Extension Fund) rising to the position of Vice President, Treasurer and CFO. He also served for two years at United Christian Missionary Society. His service to the Church spans more than 45 years.

Adams named senior vice president/president-elect



The Board of Directors of the Pension Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has called the Reverend Dr. Todd A. Adams to serve as Senior Vice President / President-Elect beginning March 1, 2016. Adams will become the Pension Fund's 9th Chief Executive on September 1, 2016, following James P. Hamlett in that role. Adams currently serves as the denomination's Associate General Minister and Vice President.

The Reverend James P. Johnson, search committee chair, stated, "After a comprehensive, nationwide search, and following the Executive Search protocols of the church, Todd Adams rose to the top of our list. Over the past 8 years, he has demonstrated the key executive leadership skills the Board was seeking in our next President to continue the legacy of leadership of William Martin Smith, Lester Palmer, Art Hanna, and Jim Hamlett."

During his tenure in the Office of the General Minister and President, Adams has overseen the merger of Church Finance Council into the General Assembly,

the creation of Treasury Services and the consolidation of Christian Church Services. These efforts have reallocated over \$500,000 from administration to programmatic ministries. Currently, nineteen regional and general ministries of the church utilize treasury services with two more considering participation in 2016.

The Reverend Dr. Sharon E. Watkins, General Minister and President, shared with the search committee, "Todd is a faithful minister, skilled executive and devoted husband and father. He understands the Disciples context and is able to get things done within that context. Our church will be well served with him in this role."

Since July, 2014, Adams has served concurrently as the Interim President of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN. Over the past 17 months, Adams has eliminated a \$400,000 operating deficit, sold the building, and begun construction on a new archive in Bethany, West Virginia, working closely with a newly-constituted board of directors.

In his remarks to the Pension Fund Board, Adams shared his excitement about collaborating with the Pension Fund's staff to continue the legacy of a strong, smart and secure retirement for the church's employees. "We have a legacy of providing one of the best-managed and financially-sound defined benefit programs in the country. I am humbled by the Board's confidence and call to step into a long line of faithful leaders, caring for our church's servants."

Hamlett echoed the Board's decision, stating, "I am delighted by the calling of Todd Adams as Senior Vice President / President Elect. He brings considerable management and financial skills coupled with a strong commitment to ministry that will benefit Pension Fund and those it serves. I look forward to working with him in the coming months."

The Indianapolis-based Pension Fund has nearly \$3B in assets under management, including the defined benefit program and alternative retirement and savings vehicles, in addition to managing the church's Healthcare Benefit Trust. The Pension Fund offers separate programs in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.

Anne F. Keating, President of Fraser Keating Associates, LLC, served as the search consultant.

The Reverend Dr. Adams is a 1994 graduate of Chapman University. In 1997, he completed his Master of Divinity at Phillips Theological Seminary. He earned a Doctor of Ministry from Wesley Theological Seminary in 2007. He was awarded the honorary Doctor of

Divinity from Bethany College in recognition of his service to the church.

Todd has been married to Kimberly Hall Adams for over 21 years. Todd and Kim met at the Pacific Southwest Regional Assembly, hosted by Chapman University. They have two children, Claire and Jackson. Claire, a high school senior, is a world junior record holder and a member of USA Swimming's National Team. She has committed to swim for the University of Texas. Jackson, a freshman, plays baseball for the Indiana Prospects and Carmel High School.

Members of the search committee included:

Rev. James P. Johnson, Chair; Peggy Brittan; Laura Reed Gelarden; Rev. Sandra Gourdet; Rev. Dr. Timothy James; Rev. Dr. William Lee; Rev. Dr. Janet Long, and Antonio Rodriguez.

Greater Kansas City region calls minister



The Regional Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Greater Kansas City is pleased to introduce our next regional minister, the Rev. William Rose-Heim. He has served in regional ministry for the last 15 years, as Northwest Area Minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Mid America, and most recently as part of the Regional Ministry Team for Mid America. He also has experience as a theology teacher, mental health therapist, fire fighter, and in his own business.

He earned a bachelor of arts degree in psychology/theology from Rockhurst University, Kansas City, MO and his master of divinity degree from St. Paul Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, MO. Rev. Rose-Heim has also done extensive training in congregational transformation, coaching, and pro-reconciliation/anti-racism.

He is married to the Rev. Donna Rose-Heim.

Disciples Center for Public Witness convenes conversation on race

by Ken Brooker-Langston, executive director



On Oct. 23, 2015, a diverse group of 36 invited guests participated in a conversation on Disciples and Racism in the United States. The conversation, hosted by National City Christian Church, was organized, convened, and facilitated by the Disciples Center for Public Witness.

The conversation began with a theological reflection on Matthew 15:21-28 (The Story of the Syrophenician Woman) by Dr. Bill Lee, Senior Pastor of Loudon Avenue Christian Church in Roanoke, VA. The theme of this reflection, which became the framework for the conversation, was "Do You See Me?" According to Dr. Lee, "Before Black lives can matter, Black people must be seen."

One-on-one conversations then took place, conversations in which partners from different races and ethnicities discussed how this reality of seeing and not seeing people of color affected their lives, relationships, and views of the world. This was followed by presentations and table discussions about the relationships between really seeing each other and structures of accountability that might allow and encourage this to happen more often.

"In my view, this was a remarkable event," said Dr. Alvin Jackson, Senior Pastor of Park Avenue Christian Church in New York and Co-President of the Center's Board of Governors. "People seemed to open up with each other about some of the dynamics of racism and began to think together about ways for us to

be more accountable to each other in our efforts to eradicate racism in both church and society."

Next steps include: (1) continuing this particular conversation online through social media; (2) promoting this or similar conversations in other contexts; and (3) formation of a group or groups to put more thought into the issues of accountability related to seeing, especially from the perspective of Black Lives Matter. Text of Lee's remarks | Jackson sermon on the subject on YouTube

ONE YEAR AGO

One year ago Ferguson, Missouri was a little obscure suburban city outside of St. Louis. It was suddenly snatched out of seclusion into national prominence when Michael Brown, an 18 year old unarmed African American male was shot and killed by Darren Wilson a local white police officer claiming self-defense. The accounts of the incident will remain controversial, particularly when Wilson was later acquitted of any wrong doing. Ferguson experienced social unrest and fires in August and November of 2014 following the shooting and decision respectively. We are thankful, however, that the majority of protests have been non-violent.

It was a rude reminder and awakening of an ongoing systemic issue that has been a part of America's painful reality – racism. Ferguson is roughly 70% African American with the city's power, authority and resources resting in the hands of the white 30%. This disparity is a menu for oppression and the victimization of the most vulnerable. The federal investigation revealed more of the historic and worst practices exercised by a city, which seemed to police for profit. It is certainly hoped for and desired that things will change. Rev. Derrick Perkins, Pastor of Centennial Christian Church in St. Louis, constantly reminds me when we talk about the conditions in Ferguson and St. Louis, "We are just THAT close to another outbreak. Things have got to change."

There has to be a better way to relate to one another and get along. Ferguson has produced the themes and slogans, "Black Lives Matter!" and "Hands Up! Don't Shoot!" "Black Lives Matter!" in all actuality, has become a movement that has crossed the landscape of the nation and has even gone global. "Black Lives Matter: A Movement for All" (GA-1518), was a resolution brought to the General Assembly by the National Convocation. The resolution was adopted, after energetic dialogue.

[Continued on Page 6]

Administrative Committee meets

The Mission First! pilot got under way with the meeting of the Administrative Committee (AC) in Indianapolis Oct. 23-25. Led by the new moderator team elected in Columbus - Moderator Tony Rodriguez (Florida), First Vice Moderator Tom Perring (Pacific Southwest), Second Vice Moderator Mary Lou Kegler (Greater Kansas City) and Moderator Elect Sue Morris (Nebraska) - the committee completed an agenda that included work traditionally assigned to them as well as additional items, serving as the Governing Board under the Mission First! pilot model adopted by the General Board in April 2015.



Moderator Tony Rodriguez consults with Parliamentarian Bill Bailey

More history was accomplished as the Administrative Committee worked on the composition of the search committee for general minister and president. The final candidates will be presented to the winter 2017 Administrative Committee. The General Board will approve the search committee in a conference call Nov. 2. According to the Standing Rules of the General Board, the search committee is made up of the four moderators, two Administrative Committee members and five (plus one alternate) from the General Board. The GMP search follows the executive search model approved by the General Board.

The remainder of the AC agenda was packed with initiatives stemming from the 2015 General Assembly and from the business life of the Church.

- **Mission First!:** In reviewing Mission First!, the Administrative Committee asked the moderators to consult with the General Nominating Committee on balancing the membership of the Mission Council according to General Board policy. The

AC is responsible for naming 18 persons to the Mission Council who will serve in addition to members nominated by regional ministries, racial/ethnic ministries and other bodies of the Church, such as higher education, for a total of 46.

- **Governing Board:** Meeting as the governing board in the pilot model, the Administrative Committee approved two changes to Pension Fund policy that in the past would have had to wait for the annual meeting of the General Board.
- **Future of General Assemblies:** A group chaired by Glen Miles, immediate past moderator of the General Assembly, is being named to re-examine how and when we gather. (GA 1532)
- **Choosing meeting sites:** A task force to look at justice concerns as we search for sites for future assemblies and assemble guidelines is being formed. Names proposed include representatives from Green Chalice, National Convocation, Disciples Women, Disciples Home Missions and others. (GA 1537)
- **Resolutions:** A task force on how the Church addresses ethical issues at assemblies (resolutions) is also being convened that will include 12 representatives from General Ministries and 12 from congregations. (GA 1524)
- **Organizational concerns:** A task force to address organizational concerns from the Hispanic Pastoral Commission is meeting in December. An earlier task force on eliminating racist language from governing documents will be consulted as well.
- **OGMP board:** As the board of the Office of General Minister and President, the AC reviewed budgets and received a crash course in the history, covenants and current distribution processes of Disciples Mission Fund.

The Administrative Committee is scheduled to meet again in person April 18-19, 2016. The 2016 meeting of the General Board was suspended by a board vote in spring of 2015.

The General Assembly is encouraging congregations to take the Black Lives Matter Movement seriously and avail themselves to be safe spaces for sanctuary and participate in sacred conversation around the matters and ramifications of race. "Charleston And Beyond: Terror, Intimidation And the Burning of Black Churches (Emergency Resolution GA-1539 Revised), was brought to the Assembly by National Convocation board president, Rev. Jesse Jackson and Rev. Michael Riggs of First Christian, Tulsa. This resolution calls for the church to seek justice for those harmed, comfort those who mourn, and join with those who struggle for justice and equality until 'justice rolls down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream (Amos 5:24)'. [Continued on Page12]

The Columbus Dispatch

July 23, 2015

By Joshua Lim

America has a “heart problem,” a pastor from North Carolina told members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on Wednesday at the closing event of their 2015 General Assembly.

The Rev. Dr. William Barber, speaking to about 500 people during a banquet Downtown in the Greater Columbus Convention Center, said

America does not struggle with political affiliations — whether left or right, liberal or conservative — but is struggling with social and political inequity.

“We got a heart problem when we’re in a country that sings about God’s grace being shed on us but then keeps trying to deny grace to immigrants and grace to the LGBT community and grace to women’s rights,” Barber said. “We have a heart problem when a candidate for the presidency can trump his competitors by saying in public what they really think about immigrants in private.”

Barber said the church has been called to be the moral, social and political defibrillator, whose job is to “shock this nation with the electricity of love and justice and mercy.”

But first, he told the people in the convention-center ballroom, they must change their hearts if they want to make a difference in the nation.

“We must have the heart for what is right,” he said. “We must still believe that right can be actualized and justice can be mobilized and meanness can be neutralized. We must refuse to believe that the heart can’t be changed.”

Barber is the pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church in Goldsboro, N.C., and is president of the North Carolina NAACP. The Disciples’ General Assembly, which started on Saturday, is held every two years, and participants gather from across the United States and Canada. There are multiple churches of the denomination located in central Ohio.



In 2013, Barber established what came to be known as Moral Mondays, during which demonstrators challenged legislative action by the government of North Carolina, such as changes in voter rights that demonstrators felt were restrictive. Demonstrators

typically protested in the legislative building and were often peacefully arrested.

During his talk on Wednesday, Barber highlighted the incarceration rates in the United States, which are higher than in other countries with less population. He also said the conversation on racism should not be limited to symbols, such as the Confederate

battle flag, but should include structural inequality.

Moral Monday Movement leader receives Roosevelt 'Four Freedoms' award

On Tuesday, Sept. 29, the [Roosevelt Foundation](#) presented awards to five laureates including the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, pastor of Green Leaf Christian Church in Goldsboro, NC, and leader of the Moral Monday Movement. Other honorees included Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg with the Freedom Medal.

The foundation annually honors those who exemplify the four freedoms outlined by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his historic speech to Congress on Jan. 6, 1941, as essential to democracy. Barber's award was for freedom of worship. Others include The Nation weekly magazine for freedom from fear; Arthur Mitchell of the Dance Theater of Harlem for freedom of speech/expression; Olofunmilayo Olopade of the University of Chicago's Center for Clinical Cancer Genetics and Global Health for freedom from want.

The awards are presented in odd-numbered years in the United States and even-numbered years internationally.

Dialogue series begins in Southwest



The Coastal Plains Area in the Christian Church in the Southwest (around Houston) gathered early this month for the first in a series of area events on racial issues. Titled "Who is My Neighbor? The _____ elephant in the room," the Oct. 4 event drew 45 to University Christian Church in Houston resourced by Dr. Alex Byrd, associate professor of history at Rice

University, and a member of First Christian in Houston.

The series was first conceived in a conversation between Rev. Marilyn Fiddmont, Christian Church Foundation staff in the southwest, and Rev. Wayne Ivey of Conroe in January, when the events of Ferguson were very much on the minds of many around the country. Fiddmont recounts, "My personal angst was it didn't seem that we were discussing any of these things in wider forums. Ivey had been part of the Reconciliation team for CPA 20 years ago when we sponsored several multi-cultural awareness events. He took the idea and the discussion to the Ministry Planning Team of the area. We are charged with the assignment of creating a variety of opportunities throughout Coastal Plains Area using the Reconciliation funds that were available to us."

After several small clergy gatherings, a plan was hatched and promoted by word of mouth with clergy and laity. It was announced at the Coastal Plains Assembly in May and planning began in June. Peggy Trott, chair of the Christian Action and Outreach committee for the area, tells about the "God-wink" story that made the speaker possible.

"Marilyn spoke about this upcoming racial reconciliation event at the assembly. As she talked, there was a youngish black man sitting down the pew from me who was very engaged in what she was saying. We both noticed him - he spoke to Marilyn afterwards - but we did not know who he was. She assigned me the task of locating this individual. One week later, I visited First Christian Church, Houston to share in an event called Real Conversations whereby Pastor Mi-

chael Dunn holds a round table discussion about a current topic. As I sat at the table waiting for the event to begin, you guessed it ... in walks the gentleman I was supposed to find and he sat at my table."

But this is just the beginning of the work the Coastal Plains area will do to promote dialogue. Plans include essay and art contests for youth around the issue, books, movie nights, on-going work with Byrd, anti-racism training events, and a visit with April Johnson of Reconciliation Ministry in the spring of 2016.

Disciples of Christ Historical Society breaks ground for new archive



On Friday, Oct. 2, the board of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society celebrated new beginnings in a historic place. With the groundbreaking for a new archive facility, complete with greetings from Hal and Evelyn Watkins, DCHS is on its way for a planned fall 2016 opening of the facility.

For those familiar with Disciples history, Bethany College is a touchstone of the Stone-Campbell Movement. Founded in 1840 by Alexander Campbell for "the instruction of youth in the various branches of science and literature, the useful arts and the learned and foreign language," as laid out in the original charter, Bethany is celebrating 175 years of academic pursuits. It is located in West Virginia adjacent to the Campbell Mansion.

Now in the 21st century, Bethany College is celebrating two moves of historical importance. The archives of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society will be moved there and the college has just named a long-time Disciple as its 20th president, Tamara Rodenburg.

Watkins installed as chair of National Council of Churches of Christ



During a ceremony Nov. 17, General Minister and President Sharon Watkins was installed as the chair of the board for the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC) for 2016. Watkins has been serving as vice chair for the past year. The Rev. Dr. Rick Lowery preached the sermon.

“I am honored

to join a long line of Disciples who have been leaders in the Council,” Watkins said. “Recent years have brought fresh initiative and focus. I’m excited for the opportunity to be part of the renewal.”

Watkins served on a task force from 2011 to 2013 that reorganized the work of the NCCC.

Disciples have been an integral part of the National Council from the 1950s to today. Mr. J. Irwin Miller of Indiana was the first layman to serve as president of the NCCC (1960-1963). The Rev. Joan Brown Campbell served as general secretary for a decade (1990-2000). And more recently, Dr. Michael Kinnamon, served as general secretary from late 2007 to December 2012.

Since its founding in 1950, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA has been a leading force for seeking unity, racial justice and ecumenical cooperation among Christians in the United States. The 37 NCC member communions — representing a wide spectrum of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, Evangelical, historic African American and Living Peace churches — include 45 million persons in more than 100,000 local congregations in communities across the nation. List of NCC Member Communions

The key areas of focus for the NCCC are to address the issues of interfaith understanding and mass incarceration. The NCCC is also responsible for the translation of the Revised Standard Version and New Revised Standard Version of the Bible and as such, receives royalties from the sales of the translations.

Week of Compassion welcomes Rev. Caroline Hamilton-Arnold as the new Associate Director

Caroline Hamilton-Arnold is a proud TCU graduate, having studied English, religion, and political science. She completed an M.Div. at Claremont School of Theology. Her greatest strengths are in preaching and teaching—equipping people to connect stories of faith to their lives and to translate their faith into action.



She is recognized as a gifted writer and speaker and a creative and critical thinker.

As a lifelong Disciple, Caroline is familiar with all three expressions of our church. She has been active in Disciples congregations in the Southwest and Pacific Southwest regions, where she served on congregational and regional boards. Caroline has also been active serving on the General Board and Administrative Committee. In addition to her strong Disciples identity, Caroline has ties with our covenanted denomination, the United Church of Christ, having served a joint Disciples-UCC congregation in California and currently serving at Newtown Congregational Church, UCC.

Caroline looks forward to helping congregations connect to the ministry of Week of Compassion and collaborating with our ecumenical partners. Caroline is excited to serve the church and the world with Week of Compassion, and writes, “it is my conviction that we are called to partner with God in the ongoing work of creation, to speak a word of life into chaos—sometimes with a whisper and sometimes with a defiant shout.” Week of Compassion is one such voice in our world, and we are excited to welcome Caroline’s contributions to this ministry.

PREACHING MATTERS

by Ron Deggs



Sometimes when I close my eyes my mind lights up with images of colleagues I have known and admired over the years. I remember the stories we shared about the joys and frustrations of ministry. But most of all, I remember them in the pulpit preaching the gospel and weaving together a message that would call the listener to a higher, better way of living. Their presence in the pulpit led the listener to conviction and that conviction led the listener to action. These women and men of the cloth knew that there is no substitution for the preaching of the gospel.

My home pastor, Otis Doherty, was one of those pastors. He went home to be with the Lord on Tuesday, June 16, 2015, surrounded by his loving family. Otis had a love of preaching and a gift for building up the body of Christ. I remember when he donated a kidney to his son, Glen. Glen had double kidney failure and was near to death. Otis was the closest match. The surgery then was long and difficult and the recovery time elongated. I can see him with cautious calculation waddling his way down the aisle of the church on a cane, making his way to the pulpit, on his first day back to preach after an extended absence. The surgery was successful. He was still weak. The text for the sermon I still remember 52 years later: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends"[John 15:13]. His example and life illustration still preach today.

On one occasion, Otis preached about the destructiveness of gossip. He said that gossip was like a feather pillow that has been broken open. Once the feathers get loose it is hard to gather them all back inside the pillow case again. I have always tried to resist gossip lest feathers get loose that I cannot recover.

Then there was that terrible controversy in the congregation: Should women wear lipstick or not? Some felt that painted lips were a distraction to men and could lead to sin and debauchery. When Otis was asked his thoughts on the topic, he paused and thoughtfully replied: "Well, I've never seen a barn that didn't look better after a coat of paint." The controversy immediately ended.

Like, Otis, I remember hearing another mentor and colleague in ministry preach. He told the story of the pastor who was visiting an old lady near death. Her mouth is gaping open and she's drooling out the side. He says, "Mrs. Jones, before I leave, is there anything you would like me to say or do?" She told him she would like him to pray. He asked if there was something specific she would like him to pray for. "I'd like you to pray for my healing, of course," she answered. He thought to himself, "Oh God." So he prayed that, if it was God's will, to please heal her and, if it was not [God's] will, then to help everyone to adjust to the situation. Amen.

With that, she sits up in bed and says, "Wow!" she throws her feet over the side of the bed, stands up, flexes her muscles, and says, "This is unbelievable! I feel wonderful!" Then she walks down the hall and calls out to the nurses' station, "I think I'm well! I think I'm well!" The pastor leaves the hospital, gets into his car, and says to God, "Don't you ever do that to me again!"

Sometimes when I close my eyes my mind lights up with images of colleagues I have known and admired over the years, like Fred Craddock, the author of that story. He went home to be with the Lord on March 6, 2015. Preaching changes lives. I know it did mine thanks to colleagues like Otis and Fred, and all who labor week in and week out to make that vital connection that has the power to transform life.

Global Ministries statement on France and Lebanon

BY GLOBAL MINISTRIES ON NOVEMBER 14, 2015



In recent days, the world has witnessed heinous acts of violence in Beirut and Paris. These horrible attacks have claimed the lives of more than 170 people, and traumatized so many others physically, emotionally, and

spiritually. In the aftermath of this violence, we observe a time of silence and offer our fervent prayers for all who have suffered this week.

Message from Our President

As so often, it was the innocent and unsuspecting civilians who are the victims. Shopping, enjoying a sporting event, or a musical concert, Parisians and Beirutis suddenly faced indiscriminate violence and tragedy. We pray for them, for their families and friends, and for the people of France and Lebanon as they mourn—and fear—the renewal of terror on their soil

The Common Global Ministries Board of Directors of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ, meeting this weekend in Cleveland, Ohio, wishes to express its sympathy for and solidarity with church partners in France and in Lebanon, and with the people of those countries who live with questions about the future of their own safety and security in an uncertain time.

Our churches deplore and condemn this—and all—violence that has shattered hopes and dreams, knowing that violence is never the way to strive to attain a better and more abundant life. And we believe that violence in retaliation is too easy a response.

The group known as the “Islamic State” (sometimes referred to as ISIL and ISIS) has claimed responsibility for these two attacks, as well as the downing of the Russian airplane returning from Sharm al-Shaikh, Egypt with more than 200 vacationers on board last week. There were no survivors of that crash. We reject the use of religion to justify violence. We will continue to be among the many voices of churches and faith-based organizations—Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and others—that steadfastly oppose such violence, and that detest the employment of sacred texts to justify such acts.

We work and pray for reconciliation and peace with justice among God’s people and for creation. We yearn for the day when grievances and aggression shall be no more, and the lion can lay down with the lamb. We walk with the people of Lebanon and France, of the Middle East and Europe, and of the entire world, accompanying them in their times of tragedy and despair, hoping with them for release. We acknowledge the pain of the refugee and displaced who long for home; and of parents whose children’s futures seem bleak. We imagine the end of violence and conflict among nations, faith communities, and people, and cry unto God that God’s vision for creation be revealed.

In your mercy, God, hear our prayer. Amen.

My Sister,

We have been truly blessed in this season. The General Assembly, Piedmont District Convention, Mississippi Christian Missionary Convention, Kentucky Missionary Convention, Texas Missionary Convention Fellowship, and Church of Christ (DOC) General Assembly-



all have brought us together to be in fellowship with one another in the presence of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We can't help but to be standing on the mountain top praising God.

Let's keep our focus on training and empowering Women of God for Kingdom work in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). I encourage you to get the Leadership Apprentice Program in your region, district, or state area. You will find all of the information needed about the LAP on discipleswomen.org.

Let us keep the officers of the National Convocation in our prayers as we prepare for the 24th Biennial Session in Kansas City, MO July 21-24, 2016. Check out the new webpage nationalconvocation.org for more information. Don't forget to register and get your tickets for the DWM banquet. You don't want to miss it!

Finally, we are still looking for our #DOT50 Challenge offerings to come in to support the president's travel fund and our own endowment fund. Transmittal information is found below.

While reviewing the promotional information at the end of this message, please click on the links for the new human trafficking resources, which may be of interest to your groups.

Be blessed my sisters, Wanona Redd

August 28, 2015

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,
Few of us will ever forget the horror of the murder of nine church members in Bible study - in church. Nine African American faithful, including pastors and laypersons, had welcomed the white stranger into their midst at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. But he was intent on death. Leaders in the African Methodist Episcopal Church are determined to re-write the significance of this heinous act, and make it the moment that the church leads the United States into a genuine commitment to end racism - not just the direct, individual racism that causes one person to pick up a gun, but the broad systemic racism that nurtures such a motivation in the first place.

Our brothers and sisters in the African Methodist Episcopal Church have called all Christians to participate in a "Confession, Repentance and Commitment to End Racism" Sunday, to be observed on Sept. 6. We write to encourage all Disciples to accompany our ecumenical partners in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the National Council of Churches and Churches Uniting in Christ, among others, in recognizing this moment to come together as God's children.

We urge Disciples in the U.S. and Canada to participate - if not on Sept. 6, then within the next four weeks. This emphasis is at the heart of our striving to be a pro-reconciling, anti-racist Church. The matter is of particular urgency in the United States in the wake of the June shootings in Charleston and the many other examples of racially-motivated violence from the Midwestern heartland to the coasts.

Worship materials have been compiled by both the AME and ELCA which may be used for your preparation. In particular please see the litany by Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr., "After the Vigils, Vigilance!" These materials are available on

the Reconciliation Ministry website. In addition, you will find conversation-guides and other resources there which will be useful for ongoing engagement in the struggle against the insidious nature of racism.

One Sunday is a place to begin. Our ecumenical family is calling us to join them on a difficult journey. We are not alone. Jesus accompanies us as we reach out to bridge the divides between us. This, too, is part of being a movement for wholeness. Let us go forward together.

In Christ,

Timothy M. James, Associate General Minister and Administrative Secretary, National Convocation
April Johnson, Reconciliation Minister
Sharon E. Watkins, General Minister and President
Robert W. Welsh, President, Council on Christian Unity

Further recommendations for actions of accompaniment were offered to substantiate our resoluteness. I commend the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, for we are living out and into our initiative to truly be Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racist Church. The workshop led by Dr. Bill Lee, Rev. April Johnson and Dr. Jack Sullivan focused on Racism in the church in days gone by and where we are now. Many honest questions and transparent discussion followed in these sacred conversations.

Unfortunately, the list of killed unarmed black males continues to grow. The incidents of police brutality and aggression continue to fill the news. Ferguson appears to only have been the tip of the iceberg. Black Lives Matter is a movement that we cannot ignore and is necessary for the improvement of our nation. As a church we must seek to empower our African American constituents in the midst of injustice. The young people of America across racial lines and from all walks of life are working to keep the movement alive and ask the church; "to be for real"; to get out of the way and don't use this plight for our own agenda. Young people today are determined to advocate, work and pray for significant change. In this endeavor we have witnessed the development of new leaders and there is a general awakening taking place in communities all over.

[Continued on Page 17]

POET'S CORNER

AUTUMN'S GLOW

When golden leaves
Fall from the trees
And leave its branches bare.
I then can see
Across the main
and watch waves toss and rear.
Oh, the beauty of my Father's world
Is such a sight to see
It'd only be more beautiful
On heaven's shore with Thee.
May Reed
Written Sat., October 3, 2015



TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

WE KNOW TO-
MORROW IS
NOT PROMISED,
YET WE OFTEN
DILLY-DALLY
AND DAWDLE,
WASTING PRE-
CIOUS MO-
MENTS THAT

CAN NEVER BE RECAPTURED. TREAT YOUR
TIME LIKE MONEY AND YOU'RE SURE TO
SPEND IT WELL.

SHOULD WE NOT BE SEEKING TO TOUCH MORE AND TEACH OUR YOUTH

Man measures material wealth. Man says we must have something. God measures character. God says we must be something. There are so many fires of good things, good traits that can be lighted in the heart and minds of our youth. Many families are too busy with other things that it leaves little time for their children. Life has become so hurried and fast paced with exorbitant, excessive technology. We don't seem to have time to be with or even listen to one another. We almost need a 'Burning Bush' to capture our attention – and yet, today, it may not even be enough. Dear

Lord, help us to be flames of light that will impart Your understanding in our youth. Let your majesty be ignited in our midst through word and deed, that young and old will see, receive and proclaim Your majestic love and goodness.

LAUGHTER – LEARNING AND SMILES

When I was a little girl in 3rd grade, a Dentist came to my class. The teacher had told us he was coming but I never expected to see and learn so much that day. He had placed a big white tooth in front of the classroom; I mean a BIG white tooth. I looked at it with great interest, and even greater delight for it was so LARGE. He had a red and white tooth brush too big for my mouth. I, and the other students stared at it as we entered the class. I went to my seat and quickly sat down. He wore a stark white medical jacket. Smiling, he spoke to the class. He shared the most interesting information and demonstration of how to keep our teeth clean. I never forgot what he said or what he said to do.

A Beginning Look at our Founding Fathers

In the late 1790's, Barton W. Stone became the supply minister for the Concord and Cane Ridge churches, Bourbon Co., KY. The summer of 1801 a nationwide revival spread across Kentucky and into Tennessee. At Cane Ridge as many as 35,000 folks attended the revival and hundreds were converted to Christianity. Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian ministers joined in the preaching.

As there were no platforms or stages upon which to stand they would cut down trees, jump upon the stumps and begin preaching. This was called 'Stump Preaching.' As a result of all this renewed, emotional interest in religion, and the strong opposition from the Presbyterian Synod (governing body), Stone and four other ministers withdrew and formed their own presbytery. However, Stone was not comfortable with any organization that separated him from Christians in other denominations. Within a year these five ministers dissolved their presbytery. In 1804 Stone explained their decision in his Historic writing "The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery" which expressed his strong desire for Christian union, affirmed the right of each congregation to govern itself, singled out the Bible as the only standard of Christian faith and life, and repudiated the Westminster Confession because it was both useless and harmful.

“Stones burning desire to heal division within the Body of Christ caused him to pay special attention to a group of Reformers led by two Irish immigrants, Thomas Campbell who had come to America in 1807, and his son, Alexander who came with the family in 1809. Stone felt that only to be known as Christians was enough. One of his key phrases was “We are not the only Christians but Christians Only.” The Campbell’s and Stone would eventually meet.

[More to come in our next issue.]

From: Ruth P. Hobbs

Thought I would send you this to see if you agree, (ha ha ha). Much Love, Ruth

- ☼ MONEY TALKS; MINE KEEPS SAYING GOOD-BYE.
- ☼ I AM IN CHARGE OF HOW I FEEL AND I AM CHOOSING HAPPINESS.
- ☼ WORK FASCINATES ME. I CAN SIT AND LOOK AT IT FOR HOURS.
- ☼ I WALKED INTO THE HEARTS OF FRIENDS AND FOUND A HOME.
- ☼ LOVE CURES PEOPLE— BOTH THE ONES WHO GIVE AND THE ONES WHO RECEIVE IT.
- ☼ I AM A MAGNET OF BLESSING. I ATTRACT HEALTH, WEALTH AND HAPPINESS.

Nine”

From “A Teachable Garden” by CHibbler

“Nine people studying the word of God *one evening*, entered history and heaven with a price. Their lives.

Nine families prepared for funerals. *One morning*, a President of the United States sang “Amazing Grace” with the nation.

Nine bibles were open *one evening*. Nine to ninety bible verses had been spoken before a welcomed guest, without mercy killed them.

Nine families and communities in court said these words “We forgive you”. These words hovered over

our nation as the family dealt with grief. The country pondered divine forgiveness.

Nine at peace spirits and family members, joined hands with the nation at 10am *one morning* to take down a symbol of hate.

Nine Christians, traded their American citizenship for a citizenship in heaven. Nine people are honored by taking down a symbol of division, a Confederate flag.

God bless the grieving families, the church, the people and Governor of South Carolina, President Barack Obama, our nation, and the world.

Chibbler. July 10, 2015

What is Love?

A poem from a “Teachable Garden” by CHibbler

Love is a chance to be conceived, a chance to be born; to see, hear, touch, feel, imagine, create, think, taste, remember. A chance to have a soul that yearns to be loved. A chance to love.

Love is an opportunity to be re-born from the pains of earthly mutilations to having everything is not everything or somewhere in between. Our soul needs to be loved.

Jesus said “Nick you must be born again.” God created you. He knows what you need. There is a desire to be at peace with ourselves and the Creator. That peace, oneness with God, is Love.

Happy you were born.

Happy you are Born Again.

You are Loved,

Cynthia

10-20-2015

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Wilbert Alvin Buckner, III

Wilbert Alvin "Peppy" Buckner, III was born February 2, 1958, the fourth child born to Wilbert, Jr. and Della Buckner in Indianapolis, IN, who preceded him in death. In 1981, Wilbert was united in marriage to the late Sharon (Welch) Buckner, and to this union, two sons were born, Wilbert A. Buckner, IV and Sean J. Buckner. In 2013, Wilbert was united in marriage to Peggy Anne (Hayes) Buckner, and inherited a bonus daughter Eugene Annetrice B. Clifton, and a large extended family.

Wilbert accepted Christ at an early age and was baptized at St. Luke Missionary Baptist. He recommitted himself to Christ in 1996 when he joined Light of the World Christian Church and became active, immediately ascending to leadership roles. As a servant leader, he served in various capacities, including Boys to Men Middle School Mentor, Original member of the "Brotherhood" where he helped lay the groundwork for the Men of Discipline (MOD) security team, the Vice Treasure on Financial Council, Chair of the Executive Church Council, Board Member Jackson Peoples Living Center, Board Member of C.O.M.P.A.S.S Leadership Academy. He served as a spiritual leader in the community as the Assistant Lay Director of the Great Banquet. His most pivotal role culminated as Chairman of the Board and President of the Congregation from 2002 - 2006 leading the congregation in an historical transition from the "Miracle on 38th Street" to Northview Middle School and on to the current location fondly referred to as "City on a Hill".

Wilbert attended Indianapolis Public Schools. He graduated Shortridge in 1976. Wilbert graduated



from Indiana University in 1986 with a B.A. in Computer Science. He later received his Master of Business Administration from Purdue University, Krannert School of Management, in 1999, as a part of the prestigious Executive Management Master's Degree

Program. Wilbert began his professional career at RR Donnelly, North America's largest printer, where he served in various capacities including IT Manager, Systems Engineering Manager and Director of Business Process Design. In 2009, Wilbert moved into the not for profit world, where he found his true calling of serving the community in becoming the Deputy Director of Flanner House of Indianapolis, Inc.

Wilbert's philosophy was that people could achieve success and self/sufficiency by education, training and ultimately by gaining and maintaining employment. He strived to ensure that Flanner House was not perceived as a "beggar" entity and that its services were focused on helping the displaced and underserved in the community. He worked to retool the community centers image in the non/for/ profit society and developed a vision to ensure both families and community organizations in becoming self-sufficient. Wilbert believed in personal empowerment. He believed that people not only want but need the opportunity to participate in their own success and those of us who are successful are responsible for showing them how. Wilbert departed this life on Monday, October 5, 2015 at the age of fifty/ seven years.

In memoriam Following are member deaths that were reported to Pension Fund between April 1, 2015 and June 30, 2015

Deaths in active service

Rev. Steven Johns-Boehme, Middletown, MD May 7, 2015
Mr. Mark Parsons Calimesa, CA June 3, 2015
Rev. Michele Johnson Uhlig, Cushing, OK February 2, 2015
Dr. J. Lynn White Fort Worth, TX May 6, 2015

Deaths in retirement

Mrs. Tommye Adams Martinsville, TX, April 2, 2015

Mrs. Martha Altfilish Camas, WA, April 18, 2015
Dr. Paul Ausherman Milan, IL, May 20, 2015
Mrs. Hope Baird Boring, OR, May 2, 2015
Mrs. Helen Barger Freeport, IL, May 10, 2015
Rev. Harold Barnett Atlanta, IN, May 7, 2015
Mrs. Mary Bastow El Dorado, KS May 15, 2015
Mrs. Paula Bell Hesston, KS June 16, 2015
Mrs. Charlotte Best Santa Barbara, CA June 9, 2015
Mr. O. Merrill Boggs Port Charlotte, FL April 10, 2015

Mrs. Martha Bradshaw, Indianapolis, IN May 29, 2015
 Mr. Clifford Brooks Siloam Springs, AR April 16, 2015
 Mrs. Dorothy Burton Alameda, CA, June 17, 2015
 Ms. Norma Chapman, Kilgore, TX June 2, 2015
 Mr. Hugo Cinciripini Waterloo, IL, April 16, 2015
 Dr. J. Allan Clarke Tacoma, WA June 5, 2015
 Mrs. Sara Allison Coble, Fort Worth, TX May 7, 2015
 Dr. James Collins Young Harris, GA May 3, 2015
 Rev. Howard Ditrick Kankakee, IL, June 18, 2015
 Mr. John Dotson Mason City, IA April 2, 2015
 Dr. Ezra Dunnavant Colonial Beach, VA May 14, 2015
 Mrs. Violet Floyd Findlay, OH April 6, 2015
 Mrs. Joan French Springfield, IL March 17, 2015
 Mrs. Donna Freund Boise, ID, January 15, 2015
 Rev. Leland Gartrell New Waltz, NY, May 7, 2015
 Rev. Jean Georges Philadelphia, PA April 8, 2015
 Rev. Dr. Jeanne Groom, Creston, IA June 20, 2015
 Ms. D. Paulette Hara Sylvana, OH, April 27, 2015
 Mr. Kenneth Harold Dallas, TX, May 13, 2015
 Rev. Larry Hixon Claremont, CA May 17, 2015
 Dr. William Imhoff Emporia, KS, June 14, 2015
 Mrs. Ruby Ivy Fort Worth, TX April 18, 2015
 Mr. Lloyd Kemper Canton, IL, June 17, 2015
 Mr. John Knowles Bothell, WA, April 25, 2015
 Mrs. Judith Lemieux Marineette, WI, April 15, 2015
 Rev. Don Lindblom Long Beach, CA May 22, 2015
 Rev. Hubert Lines Springfield, MO June 6, 2015
 Dr. James Livingston, Princeton, NJ May 17, 2015

Following are member deaths that were reported to Pension Fund between April 1, 2015 and June 30, 2015

Rev. Steve Comstock, Hillsboro, OR June 5, 2015
 Mrs. Dorothy Ames, IA June 25, 2015
 Rev. Martha Crookham, Franklin, KY June 16, 2015
 Dr. Robert Danner Virginia Beach, VA April 7, 2015
 Mrs. Bertha Davis Boulder, CO, May 6, 2015
 Mr. Lewis Dickson Falls Church, VA April 15, 2015
 PAGE 20 Mr. C. Harvey Lord Indianapolis, IN April 3, 2015
 Mr. F. Victor McAnallen, Hendersonville, NC June 14, 2015
 Mrs. Leona McClure Palos Park, IL, April 26, 2015

Mrs. Juanita McCubbins, Tulsa, OK June 3, 2015
 Mr. Marvin McKern Princeton, MO April 10, 2015
 Dr. Lewis McPherran, Mathews, VA June 10, 2015
 Mr. William Neeriemer Richmond, IN April 11, 2015
 Mr. David Nixon Katy, TX, April 18, 2015
 Rev. Clifford Parke Jonesboro, TX May 30, 2015
 Mrs. Dorothy Plumbly, Fort Worth, TX June 5, 2015
 Mr. Domenic Poggi Follansbee, WV April 3, 2015
 Mrs. Helen Pointer Chagrin Falls, OH May 6, 2015
 Mrs. Grace Pomeroy-Ott, Syracuse, NY May 6, 2015
 Mr. James Powell Harrodsburg, KY April 25, 2015
 Mrs. Jewel Quinn Greeley, CO, June 16, 2015
 Mrs. Donna Ray Lichfield, IL January 17, 2015
 Rev. Juanita Roberts Lorida, FL, April 24, 2015
 Mrs. Ruth Ross Buckeye, AZ April 7, 2015
 Rev. Robert Rueter Calif City, CA, June 12, 2015
 Mrs. Lillian Savitz Fort Worth, TX May 6, 2015
 Mrs. Peggy Scates Cortez, CO, June 28, 2015
 Mrs. Joan Scheid-Harper, Harold, TX May 19, 2015
 Mrs. Carol Sick Cleveland, TN May 3, 2015
 Rev. Carl Smith Philadelphia, PA June 4, 2015
 Mrs. Elaine Snowden, Hilliard, OH June 30, 2015
 Mr. R. Douglas Spangler Richmond, CA, June 16, 2015
 Mrs. Margaret Spangler, Gainesville, OH February 24, 2015
 Mr. Lloyd Sparks Peoria, AZ, June 4, 2015
 Rev. Gary Staddan Fredericksburg, VA April 6, 2015
 Rev. Leonard Stansbury Houston, TX, May 7, 2015
 Mr. Lambuth Tomlinson, Fort Worth, TX January 1, 2015
 Mrs. Billie Welsh Dallas, TX, June 19, 2015
 Mrs. Virginia White Enola, PA, June 1, 2015
 George Williams Mechanicsville, VA June 7, 2015
 Mrs. Ann Zinzel St Charles, MO April 26, 2015
 Ms. Patricia Zwick Salem, OR, June 6, 2015

Other Deaths

Rev. Maxine Burch Newton, KS, June 13, 2015
 Mrs. Earline Hury Louisville, KY April 1, 2015
 Mr. Merle Peachee Jasper, IN, March 23, 2015
 Mr. James Wheeler Edmond, OK, June 15, 2015
 Correction: Rev. Dr. James L. Merrell who passed in Jan. 2015 was listed as 'Mr. James L. Merrell' and should have been listed as 'Rev. Dr. James L. Merrell.'

Rev. Dr. Gail F. Davis

Former Arizona regional minister dies. Rev. Dr. Gail F. Davis (Oct. 16, 1932 – Oct. 22, 2015) passed away at his home in Spokane, WA. Born in Mission, SD and raised in Spokane, WA, he attended Northwest Christian College. He married his high school sweetheart Eva in 1953. She survives. After he graduated in 1957, he was ordained in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and went on to Phillips Theological Seminary. He served congregations in Oregon, Oklahoma, Washington



and Idaho. He also served on the regional staff of the Northwest Regional Christian Church as associate regional minister 1989-1992, and as the regional minister in Arizona from 1992-1997. In retirement, he served as an interim minister in churches around Washington. A frequent church camp director, he was also known throughout the Disciple denomination for his passion for stewardship, teaching people the importance of giving their time, talents and resources. Gail is survived by his wife Eva; daughters, Sheri Kight and Judy Davis; six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. .

Disciples speak up for shared Eucharist at Catholic conference

by Rev. Dr. Robert Welsh, president, Council on Christian Unity



Holy Father and Members of this 14th General Synod of Bishops: Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am honored to be present

with you as the fraternal delegate of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). My comments will be centered upon three brief reflections:

First, I want to applaud you for choosing the topic of “The Vocation and Mission of the Family.” How do we understand marriage and family life today? What can we do to respond to the growing number of divorces and the impact on the children in those families? These (and other issues) are urgent matters before all Christians, and all churches, that represent major theological, practical, and pastoral challenges.

Second, I am one of those referred to in the working document for this Synod as living in a “mixed marriage,” that is I am a Protestant, my wife is Roman Catholic. In the paragraphs included in that working document, “mixed marriages” are only described in relation to presenting problems. My hope is that this Synod might also identify “mixed marriages” more positively as “great opportunities” for witnessing to God’s gift of oneness in Christ and God’s love for all persons -- especially for those marriages between persons baptized as Christians.

And a third reflection (*on a very personal level*): My wife is Roman Catholic; my daughter has become Roman Catholic through her marriage to a life-long Roman Catholic; and I have now have three beautiful grandchildren – all baptized within the Catholic Church. My oldest grandson (Trace), now 14 years old, frequently serves as an altar boy. He loves the church. He loves the Mass, especially helping during the celebration of the Eucharist.

My deep regret continues to be that, when I attend Mass with my grandson, I am not allowed to partake of the Eucharist. This is personal, and it’s painful. As a Disciples of Christ and as a life-long ecumenist, I not only experience being excluded from my own human family; I also experience exclusion from the family of the church: the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church that we all confess.

But, it’s not just about me. I also believe this pain is deeply felt by hundreds of thousands of persons around the world who long to experience their unity in Christ as one family sharing in the one Eucharist. Indeed, I believe the world itself is waiting, and longing, for such a sign of God’s reconciliation, and healing, and peace.

Holy Father, as part of the “Extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy” that you have declared to begin in just a few weeks (on December 8), I hope that you might offer a strong word and a concrete “real-life” sign of hope and healing that would be both pastoral and evangelical: where all Christians might be welcomed to share in the one Eucharist. The Holy Year of Mercy could thus be the occasion to act upon the wealth of theological agreement that has been produced through ecumenical dialogue over the years since the Second Vatican Council: Celebrating the family, gathered together at one Table of God’s love.

I pray that this Synod of Bishops will not only bring renewal to the life of the Catholic Church, especially in its local parishes and dioceses -- but also, that it will bring renewal to the ecumenical movement and to all churches in our common calling to God’s mission in the world and God’s gift of unity in Christ.

One year ago Ferguson was almost unknown but today it is well known. As we mark this anniversary with remembrance, let us also be prayerful in our thoughts and actions. I will close with an excerpt from a prayer from Sharon Watkins, our General Minister and President, “So I pray for release from racism at times like these. I pray everybody; the police – most of whom are courageous, well-meaning persons – who have to face the anger of the crowds, for protestors who have a lot to protest, for decision makers who have the authority to bring reform. I pray for the grieving, the injured, the fearful. I pray that we all will find the courage to face the truth and do something about it.” Amen. (Poisonous Threads of Racism).

Timothy James

Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan Jr. to Lead National Victim Family Member Group

RALEIGH, NC, October 9, 2015 -- Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation (MVFR), the country's largest membership organization of victim family members advocating for an end to the death penalty, has appointed an Executive Director – death penalty activist, ordained minister and racial justice educator, Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Jr.

Rev. Sullivan formally begins his duties at MVFR on October 9, the eve of the 13th World Day Against the Death Penalty observed around the globe. He will direct a nonprofit advocacy organization with more than 10,000 members and supporters nationwide, committed to lifting the voices of family members of murder victims, and of state execution, in the national movement for death penalty abolition.

Rev. Sullivan, who prefers to simply be called “Jack,” is Immediate Past Regional Minister and President of the Pennsylvania Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), has previously served as a Unit President in the Pennsylvania State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and has been a key leader in faith-based anti-death penalty efforts. A native of Cleveland, Jack's baby sister Jennifer, who was only 21, was shot and killed there over 18 years ago. The crime has never been solved. It was Jennifer's murder that sealed Jack's opposition to the death penalty and led him on this journey which has resulted in his appointment as Executive Director at MVFR.

“Hiring Jack is an important moment in the trajectory of the work of MVFR,” said Rosemary Lytle, a Colorado death penalty activist and nonprofit director who serves as Chair of the MVFR Board of Directors. “He is a powerful orator who comes to us with all the expertise, skill, qualifications – and the personal experience – necessary to lead our organization, our members, and our movement.” Lytle added.

A resident of Greensboro, NC, Rev. Sullivan has worked on death penalty and restorative justice issues in Missouri, Ohio, North Carolina, and Washington where he led clergy efforts in support of ending the



death penalty there. He has been a leading voice in efforts to dismantle systemic, institutional racism while forming interracial and cross-cultural partnerships that work for the common good. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in interpersonal communication from Ohio University, Athens, OH; a Master of Divinity degree from Lexington Theological Seminary, Lexington, KY; a Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH, and an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Bethany College, Bethany, WV.. Jack is a Life Member of both the NAACP and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

He is married to the Rev. Sèkinah Hamlin and is the father of Nia and Jacquelyn.

A Legacy Of Saving Our Youth

A 2015 Christmas Outreach Project to Share the Love of Christ

When they (the Wise Men) saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Matthew 2: 10-11

Have you ever felt: “I want Christmas to be more than just giving gifts to those who are so blessed they really don't need anything.” Well last year I acted on that thought and invited family and friends to give to Habitat for Humanity families – supplying gift cards for those necessities and little extras to make Christmas more joyous as they moved into their new homes. Again – many thanks for your support that made a difference in the lives of these families.

[Continued on Page 19]

This year the **Christmas Outreach Project** I am inviting you to support is a bit more personal. This year I would like you to consider giving to an organization my department helped establish over 25 years ago. In my role as Vice President for Program Planning & Evaluation for the National Benevolent Association (NBA), along with Cheryle Dyle- Palmer and Patricia Clark; in 1988 we were privileged to work with members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Mississippi to establish Southern Christian Services for Children & Youth (**SCSCY**), a program to serve homeless and troubled youth.

One of the program founders, Ruth Hobbs, my centenarian friend, invited me to support SCSCY. Upon receiving Ruth's invitation to support SCSCY, I knew that this would be my Christmas Outreach Project for 2015. How could I pass up an opportunity to support Ruth AND SCSCY? Indeed, I met Ruth because of SCSCY and she has been a wonderful mentor and friend since that time. Some of you know that earlier this year I attended her 100th birthday celebration in Jackson Mississippi.

My Invitation: I am inviting you to join Ruth and me in supporting this program. Your gift will mean much to the current clients of the program. Ruth recently shared the story of a 14 year old boy who was

observed at the bus station on successive days. Initially it was thought that he might be meeting someone; however after the third day, it became clear that this boy was homeless. The authorities were called and he was placed at SCSCY. He is doing well in the program and is experiencing a sense of security and caring that enable him to view his future in positive terms.

Although the program is no longer under the auspices of NBA, the love and spirit of Christian caring that started the program continues. I am touched by this 100 year old woman who still cares so much about our children that she "puts her money where her mouth is". I am also touched to see how something we started over 25 years ago is still going strong and saving our youth. What a legacy of caring!

How You Can Help: You too can join this legacy of saving our youth by making a gift to SCSCY. Your support ensures that the SCSCY legacy of caring for youth will continue into the future. **Please make your check out to SCSCY and mail it to me. Norma Ellington-Twitty at 30 Crabapple Court – St. Louis, MO 63132**

***The Oldtimers' GRAPEVINE* Good Faith**

Donation Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Enclosed is my/our donation of: \$10 ___ \$15 ___ \$20 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ Other \$ _____

Please send your gifts - check or money order to:

The Oldtimers' GRAPEVINE, Attn: Doris Daugherty, 3611 Bangor St., SE
Washington, DC 20020-1245

The OLTIMERS' GRAPEVINE

5314 Moonlight Dr.

Indianapolis, IN 46226-1755

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MEERIFIELD, VA
PERMMIT NO. 2333

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE is a free print and electronic ministry published four 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.

THE REV. DR. WILLIAM K. FOX (1917-2004)

Founder

OSCAR HAYNES (1916-2014)

Publisher/Executive Editor Emeritus

Board of Directors:

Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty, St. Louis, MO

President

Sandra Bryant, Los Angeles, CA

Patricia Clark, St. Louis, MO

Rev. Dr. Paul Crowe, Jr., Indianapolis, IN

Dr. D. Duane Cummins, Swanton, MD

Katherine Fox-Cunningham, Indianapolis, IN

Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale, Decatur, GA

Ruth Hobbs, Clinton, MS

Rev. Claude Maples, Dallas, TX

Rev. Patricia Maples, Dallas, TX

Karen Vroman, Des Moines, IA

Administration:

John Richard Foulkes, Sr., Indianapolis, IN

Publisher/Executive Editor

Kelsey Danielle Brown, Springfield, MO

Copy Editor

Doris Daugherty, Washington, DC

Treasurer

Donna Haynes, Washington, DC

Production Manager

Editorial Staff:

Rev. Dr. Ernest Newborn, Claremont, CA

Jimmy Mohler, Kansas City, MO

Kim Atwater, Washington, DC

May F. Reed, Indianapolis, IN

We are accessible through our **editorial office:**
5314 Moonlight Dr. Indianapolis, IN 46226-1755,
(317) 545-9335 oldtimers.grapevine@gmail.com.

Contributions should be sent to our treasurer at:
3611 Bangor St. SE, Washington, DC 20020-1245.