



Currents

A publication of the Great River Region of the Christian Church (DOC)

Great River Region Newsletter

9302 Geyer Springs Road, Little Rock, AR 72209

May 2017

grrdisciples.org

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“Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:46-27)

Many of us who grew up in the church are old enough to remember the glory days of the church. Following World War II, men returned from the war and young families began to build homes in the suburbs. In the late 1940s and early 1950s the church was already becoming more diverse. It was in this atmosphere that the church thrived. You could open the door of a new building and people just showed up. The church was part of the dominant culture, but as we entered into the 60's, 70's, and 80's, the church began to lose its influence and prestige. In a sense, the church returned to its natural roots. We returned to and we are a remnant church culturally. By this we mean that the church has historically lived most of its life on the margins of society.

This is the challenge the church faces in this century. How do we present the church in the most effective way possible? We can no longer go door to door to tell people about God and the church. In many cases, we don't know our neighbors. Direct mailing is no longer effective. So, we must change the way we do church. We do, however, have social media and we also have our most effective tool available – our personal testimony! We as church leaders, all people who follow Jesus, need to be able to precisely explain how God has touched our lives. We must be able to empower and train the next generation of sisters and brothers how to share their story. This is the way the early Disciples spread the Gospel. It is the method that worked for Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell as Disciple folk shared their faith on the American frontier. It's the way that God is calling Disciples to witness to the living Lord in our time.

Question for Reflection: What is your congregation doing to prepare for the shift that has already taken place?



It's a beautiful day in Little Rock! I pray that the Sun and the Son are shining throughout your states of ministry as well!

This is a reminder that the Oreon E. Scott deadline is approaching on June 1. Click [here](#) to download the guidelines and application. If you have a grant that you want to submit, please know that the Great River Region has to partner on all grants coming out of our Region. And I welcome the opportunity to strategize and come up with creative ways to get funding for the ministries and projects that may interest you and your congregation.

For a while now, Don Morrow, Pastor at FCC and Waterway CC in Bentonville, and Shawn Wallace, Pastor at FCC Rogers, have been throwing around the idea of supporting small and struggling churches throughout the region who are without a pastor, by providing a satellite for pastoral leadership. If you are interested in hearing more about this, or if you know of a struggling congregation without a pastor that may be interested, please send me an email - drnburton@grrdisciples.org.

We are also submitting a grant for the Mission Insite funding proposal that we have been sharing with clergy groups over the two months. This grant would be in addition to what you are able to give: **Remember 40 churches giving \$65 would take care of a one year contract?** With a three year project, we could focus on studying our target areas throughout the three states, provide workshops and seminars on church decline and growth, pray and discern creative ways to meet the needs in our communities, provide support and visioning for closing churches, and seek out potential new church opportunities.

“In addition, I just learned of the Black Leadership Project Grant deadline. There may be opportunities to submit a proposal to this grant governing body as well.”

Have a blessed week!

Mission Insite has developed the best target demographic service on the market for churches. It will allow us the opportunity to develop target community profiles for each congregation in the Region, based on age, ethnicity, education, income, spiritual needs, lifestyles, life goals, with 71 mosaic groups, and 600 variables.

If we can get 40 congregations to donate \$65, this would pay for the service for one year. We are soliciting donations because this is not a budgeted item. If you would be willing to share in the cost of this service (\$2600 for a one-year contract), please send your donation to the Great River Region (9302 Geyer Springs Road, Little Rock, AR 72209) designated for Mission Insite. The Regional Office will be in contact with you to get you started on your target community profile this summer.

(Source: Rick Morse, New Church Ministries, Christian Church (DOC))

GRR Disciples Men Retreat - How Is It With Your Soul? - June 2-4, 2017 at Eagle Ridge Conference Center, Raymond, MS - To register, click [here](#). **Registration deadline is Monday, May 22** - if you want to attend, please contact Wendy TODAY at the regional office! 501-562-6053, office.

MCMC Magnolia Camp & Conference - June 19-24, 2017 at Roosevelt State Park

Theme: ***Branching Out - Connecting Through Christ***

Registration fee: \$140

Come, join us as we share the Bible through Exploring Scriptures, Drama, Crafts, Story Telling and Hands-on-Explorations

For additional information, please contact Josie McClorine at 601-437-4850 or jmcclorine6@bellsouth.net

GRR Disciples Youth Summer Camp Registration is now open!!

Curriculum for this summer's camps at Disciples Crossing is **"Branching Out - Connected Through Christ"** and will help remind your campers that they can take that camp-feeling with them everywhere they go reminding them that they are connected to one another and to God by Christ. The Bible stories in **Branching Out** encourage campers to use prayer, relationships, family, and more to stay connected throughout their lives.

2017 Summer Camp Dates and registration fees are as follows:

Dates		Reg Deadline	Ages	Reg Fee
June 7-10	Adventure Camp	5/24	Grades 6-12	\$ 290
June 12-17	Niner's Youth Conference <i>"Leadership Development & Spirituality"</i>	5/29	Grade 9	\$ 430
June 19-24	Chi Rho Camp <i>"New Testament"</i>	6/5	Grades 6-7	\$ 415
June 19-24	CYF Conference <i>"InterFaith Dialogue"</i>	6/5	Grade 10-12	\$ 430
June 25 - July 1	Eighter's Youth Conference <i>"Spirituality & Sexuality"</i>	6/11	Grade 8	\$ 480
June 25-July 1	ADDaM Camp	6/11	Grades 9-12	\$ 480
July 3-7	JYF Camp <i>"Branching Out-Connecting Through Christ"</i>	6/19	Grades 3-5	\$ 355
July 24-27	Water Sports Camp	6/10	Grades 6-12	\$ 290

*accompanied by adult chaperone, 21 years or older

**accompanied by one or more grandparent

***accompanied by one or both parents

**Mississippi Christian Missionary Convention "MCMC"
Pre Assembly Seminar will be held in Jackson, MS**

Wednesday, July 19, 2017

9 AM - 3 PM

Tougaloo College Campus, Jackson, MS

"Church Growth and Transformation"

Led by

Rev. Zedric Clayton from Real Faith CC, Clarksdale, MS
and Rev. Dr. Charlie Wallace, FCC, Little Rock

Do you want your church to grow? Do you know who is in your community? Do you know what their spiritual, socio-economic, and physical needs are? How can we minister to the people around us? Come and join in a day of learning and sharing. Registration coming soon!

Great River Region of the Christian Church (DOC) Regional Board will meet again on June 30-July 1st at First Christian church, Baton Rouge, LA

GRR Disciples Clergy Retreat - September 25-27, 2017 at Subiaco Abbey in Subiaco, AR

"An Acceptance Based Approach to Spiritual Growth" - We are growing not to become included but because of the good news that "I am already included." Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. David Artman, FCC, Harrison. For a registration form, click [here](#)

Attention Clergy - Disciples History & Polity Class offerings

- The next **Center4Ministry.org** course will begin on October 10, 2017. You can register at center4ministry.org
 - **Phillips Theological Seminary** will have an online History & Polity course in Fall 2017
 - **Disciples Seminary Foundation** is also offering a Disciples History & Polity course - scheduled for August 16-19 at DSF in Claremont, CA. You can register at <https://www.dsf.edu/history-polity>. For more information, please contact Jess Kimm at jkim@dsf.edu.
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The Disciples Women Cabinet of the Great River Region - Our theme & scripture for 2017 is *Many Branches, Rooted in Love*, Ephesians 3:17-18 (Common English Bible). This theme came out of a conversation at DW Cabinet meeting in February about diversity and inclusivity. Be sure to mark your calendars NOW for the upcoming Fall Retreats - August will be here before you know it!!

Arkansas Retreat, August 4-6 at 4H Center ~ Speaker - Martha Lester

- Saturday afternoon workshops at Retreat this year: Card Making & Stamping with Linda White and her "crew"; Woman2Woman Worldwide Presentation on the Middle East 2016 trip by Anne Page, FCC, Vicksburg and a Bible Study with Rev. Dr. Nadine Burton.

Mississippi Retreat, September 15-17 at Eagle Ridge ~ Speaker - Rev. Dr. Pat Donahoo

- New this year - Retreat begins on Friday evening with supper!!

- Saturday afternoon workshops: Card Making & Stamping with Linda White and her "crew"; Making Blessing Jars with Avis Phillips; Angel Jewelry with Anne Page & Avis Phillips.

Louisiana Retreat, September 29-October 1 at Wesley Center ~ Speaker - Rev. Angie Ruggia-Kretzer

- Saturday afternoon workshops: Laughing Yoga led by Khadijah Tucker; an Indoor labyrinth led by Tina Lewis; Bible Study with Patty DeVille; Crafting crosses out of old hymnals and/or burlap with Yvonne Taylor and Suzanne Lara.

General Assembly 2017 - *'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one.*



For registration and housing information, contact Wendy in the regional office – 501-562-6053

Never been to an Assembly before? Imagine this:

- Worship that lifts your soul.
- Stories that touch your heart.
- Educational resources to assist your congregation in ministry.
- Conversations that stretch your mind.
- Messages that call you to action.
- Connections that remind you that God's family is bigger than a local congregation.

Education CORE and Learning Tracks information can be found [here](#)

All this and more in five short days! And 2017 will feature historic events – the election of a new General Minister and President as well as hearing the results of the Mission First! pilot project.

Black Leadership Projects Grant Applications due May 31, 2017

Project Guidelines

A *project*, for the purpose of awarding this grant, will be defined as an *event, activity, or resource that develops, nurtures, and strengthens lay and/or clergy leadership of the African American congregations* of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Project categories **must** include one or more of the following:

- **Leadership in Congregational Life** – To provide educational opportunities and/or training for leaders within the congregation such as teachers, officers, committee chairpersons, constituency groups, etc.
- **Leadership in Outreach Ministries** – To provide development opportunities for congregational leaders to serve the community in mission, locally and globally.
- **Faith Development of Leaders** – To prepare and nurture future leaders in the ministry of the Church through spiritual growth opportunities such as retreats, spiritual direction, auditing courses, and mission trips/experiences.
- **Scholarship Support for Leaders** – To assist participants (lay and clergy) in attending particular educational events or programs such as those provided by the Institute for African American Faith and Life of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of

Christ).*Note:* Leadership Grant funds may not be used toward an academic degree program (other funds are available for academic training).

- **Leadership in African American Programming** – To assure that new and vital ministry continues to be developed and offered to the African American constituency of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- Amount of Grant - all requests will be considered, up to \$5,000. There is no minimum request.

Application Deadline – May 31, 2017 – If you are interested in submitting a project please review the [guidelines](#) and [application](#). Submit completed applications no later than **May 31, 2017** to [Marissa Ivey](#), Ministry Associate, 317-713-2641.

Please contact [Min. Sheila Spencer](#), 317-713-2634 with any questions

Oreon E. Scott Grant Applications - due June 1, 2017

Grants have to be written and submitted in conjunction with the Regional Office. If or your ministry teams have been sitting on a vision for your ministry because of funding, I would be glad to partner with you to look at ways we can get funds through Oreon E. Scott. The maximum grant amount is up to \$15,000. With a June 1st deadline, we have time to think, vision, and write a well-thought out grant.

You may, or may not, know that while serving at New Church Ministries, I wrote a significant number of small grants for leadership summits, training and development, and internships. I am well acquainted with the systems and structures that house and monitor these grants. If you are interested in hearing more, please feel free to reach out to me at drnburton@grrdisciples.org.

Oreon E. Scott grant [Guidelines and Application](#)

From Our Partners

Juliette Fowler Communities is thrilled to announce that the congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) were selected to receive the **2017 Erika McKenzie Volunteer Award** at the *5th Annual Visionary Women Luncheon* on **Friday, May 12, 2017**. *The Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of the United States and Canada received the award on behalf of the churches.*



For 125 years, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has embraced Juliette Fowler Communities providing care, support and love for children and aged adults. Fowler's care ministries help children and older adults realize the maximum of their potential as human beings created in the image of God. The support of Disciples throughout the Southwest and Great River Regions has ensured that those we serve experience a fullness of life as God intends.

Thank you for sharing the deeply sympathetic nature of Juliette Fowler and for being as she was - a sharer of the joys and griefs of others. www.fowlercommunities.org

PHILLIPS SEMINARY

Wrestling. This is what we hear from many of you thinking about a seminary degree.

- You're wrestling with your calling
- Wrestling with the financial and time commitment
- Wrestling with how acting on God's call on your life will change you and affect the people around you

We will help and guide you as your wrestling moves to a decision to live and lead in the way of Jesus, to bring hope to the world. Learning and living the way of Jesus is challenging work. At PTS, we strive to educate the whole church to be responsible biblical and theological interpreters.

Whether you're a clergy candidate, a member of a congregation, or a seeker with questions, Phillips can provide you with a diverse, ecumenical community to explore what "the way of Jesus" means that is distinct in this part of the United States.

Phillips Theological Seminary offers a Diploma and Certificate, a Master of Divinity, a Master of Theological Studies, a Master of Arts in Social Justice as well as a Master of Arts in Ministry & Culture, AND a Doctor of Ministry program. For more information, www.ptstulsa.edu.

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Please pray for our campers and camp staff this summer as they expand their horizons at Camp & Conference and pray for safe travels for your leadership as they attend meetings, retreats and conferences across the region in June.

Until next month, blessings to you all!