



Currents

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

Great River Region Update

4724 Hillcrest Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72205

May 21, 2018
grrdisciples.org

**ROSES - Heartland
Interregional Clergy Group**
with Rev. Jarrett Banks, FCC Fort Smith
at the
**Poor People's Campaign Press
Conference**
Arkansas State Capitol
May 21, 2018



(L to R - Chris Morton, Pam Holt, Penny Ross-Corona, Bill Rose-Heim, Jarrett Banks, Nadine Burton, Teresa Dulyea-Parker, Rick Spleth)

Greetings!!

I thought we finally managed to leave winter behind and spring into Spring. However, things took a twist at our April General Board and College of Regional Ministers Meeting. We met in Newton, IA, hosted by the Upper Midwest Region with Bill Spangler-Dunning. We met their season with ice, snow, and low temperatures. I found myself traveling to my governance small group in one of the distant cabins scurrying through a wintry mix – almost every day. But the weather did not hinder the warm collegiality, the wonderful hospitality of volunteers, making new acquaintances, reconnecting with friends, working through the business sessions, and the call to finish work which had been started, and starting again work which had stalled.

This was my first official General Board Meeting. Remember February 2017? I got sick the day I was to travel to Indianapolis, and had to return to Little Rock and rest. Therefore, I have no past history with board meetings. However, I sensed excitement and passion, expectations, and a willingness to move into uncharted waters to work on our identity, vision, funding and governance structures. *Rev. Dr. Cynthia Lindner, Director of Ministry Studies and Clinical Faculty for Preaching and Pastoral Care at the University of Chicago Divinity School*, reflected on her understanding of DOC identity:



You see, people of God, the question was never "who are we?" -- though as human beings who are ever self-absorbed, and as institutions and denominations at this point in our rapidly-shifted civic landscape, that question is always on our minds and on our lips. But for people of faith, for people who know their personhood to be completely bound up with that of all our brothers and sisters, and our own welfare to be bound up with that of the city, and our very survival to be bound up with the wellbeing of the planet we call home; for church people who know ourselves never to be self-sufficient islands but always persons – in relation – for us, the question is not "who are we?" That question can only separate us from one another and from our true source of life, and love, and power. The real question, the only question, for people of faith is not who are we, but whose --- whose are we?

From the sermon, "The Power of 'Of.'" General Board Meeting, April 2018.

Search and Call

The region currently has four congregations engaged in a search process to call a new pastor; Highland Christian Church, Bella Vista AR; First Christian Church, Slidell LA; First Christian Church Russellville AR; and Pulaski Heights Christian Church, Little Rock AR. We also have an opening for a New Church Planter in Covington, LA. For more information, please contact the regional office.

To see the **Great River Region March Financial Statement**, click [here](#)

Great River Region congregational giving YTD comparison (DMF, Blessing Box, Designated for Operating and Christmas):

- Giving by Congregation – [March 2018](#); [April 2018](#)
- Giving by DMF amount – [March 2018](#); [April 2018](#)

Great River Region's Giving as of April 2018:

- Disciples Mission Fund (DMF) giving is down 31%
- Christmas Offering down 13.1%
- Designated for Operating is up 16.5%
- Week of Compassion is up 16.5%
- Reconciliation is down 29.5%
- Thanksgiving Offering
- Easter Offering
- Higher Education Offering
- GRR Operating deficit of -\$25,000

Regional Assembly Nominating Committee - The Work Begins

Expectations for Nominating Committee Work

May 8, 2018

As the Executive Regional Minister, I want to emphasize the need for us to recruit those who will best serve the work throughout the Great River Region. Please note that these are my aspirations for board officers and members at large (they are not listed in the By-laws or Operating Guidelines). To that end, I offer the following suggestions:

- A. *Candidates who are nominated to serve as elected officers of the Regional Board or Members at Large must be willing to serve in their respective roles. We have too much work to be done to allow commitments to wane in this area. This means that newly elected leaders need to be present for all board meetings whether in person or via virtual. We have 2 to 3 board meetings each year, based on the work.*

B. Nominees will need to be engaged in the life and work of the Great Region. Our Moderator, David Britt, has done a great job of defining our scope of work and the ways we are called to govern the work assigned to us.

C. As we move forward with board development, there are expectations for financial investments into the work of the region. We have done a fairly good job of asking for and responding to buy-in and commitment to the work. We desire new leaders rotating onto the Regional Board to be aware of this commitment.

When you have conversations with potential candidates, please make them aware of the responsibilities and commitment involved. We want to a highly functioning board, who is passionate and excited about what God is doing in the GRR!

[**Great River Region Operating Guidelines**](#)

[**Great River Region Bylaws**](#)

Priorities for 2018

- Regional Board visioning workshop toward a future vision story and capacity building strategies to present to the Regional Assembly November 2018
 - Preparation for Regional Assembly on November 2-4, 2018 at Kings Highway CC in Shreveport, LA.
 - RCOM (Regional Commission on Ministry) nurture of candidates for Ministerial Credentials
 - Develop a training strategy for Anti-Racism Certification for Ordained and Commissioned Clergy
 - New Church Committee Development: to enhance our new church and demographic development initiatives
 - Visit remaining 10 congregations to complete the 106 congregation visit rotation
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GRR Disciples Clergy

The Regional Commission on Ministry will meet with clergy candidates on June 4-5 in Jackson, MS and on September 10-11 in Little Rock, AR.



The Pentecost Offering is received in most congregations on May 20 & 27

Planting churches can help change the world

"Planting a church can make a huge and lasting impression in the community it serves," says Terrell L. McTyer, minister of New Church Strategies and church planter. "By empowering the oppressed, praying for the

disenfranchised, caring for the poor and promoting hope in a fragmented world, the church can literally help change the world," he adds.

Each year, half of the Pentecost Offering is designated to the local Christian Disciples Region/Area in an effort to start and sustain new churches. The other half is used by Hope Partnership to support the recruitment, assessment, training and coaching of new church leaders at events like Leadership Academy.

Great River Region Youth News & Gathering Opportunities

Youth Commission Applications are now being accepted for 2018-2019

Will you be a junior or senior in high school in 2018-2019?

Serving on the Youth Commission will provide you with an opportunity for spiritual growth and development in conjunction with personal growth. As a Commission member, you will have the opportunity to participate in the planning and implementation of youth activities, be called on as a leader during GRR events and be called on to contribute to the GRR Regional Board meeting updates.

To apply to serve on the GRR Youth Commission - click [here](#)

**The deadline for youth commission applications is Friday, May 25, 2018
with selection announcement to be made on June 1st.**

Disciples Crossing Summer Camp, Athens TX 2018

Dates	Camps	Reg. rates
June 8-10	Discovery	\$ 210
June 11-16	Chi Rho 1	\$ 415
June 18-23	CYF	\$ 430
June 18-23	Niners	\$ 430
June 24-30	Eighters	\$ 480
June 24-30	ADDAm Camp	\$ 480
July 2-6	JYF 1	\$ 355
July 16-21	Chi Rho 2	\$ 415
Jul 30-Aug 3	Water Sports Camp	\$ 370
Aug 6-10	JYF 2	\$ 355
Aug 10-12	Family Camp 2 (ages 12 & up)	\$ 200
	Family Camp 2 (ages 6-12)	\$ 155

Registration closes two weeks prior to camp start date

Magnolia Camp & Conference - June 18 - 23, 2018

Beyond Belief: The Universal God

For information and registration, please contact Josie McClorine at 601-437-4850

[GRR 2018 Calendar link](#)

MCMC PreEvent with Rev. Frank Thomas

9a-3p July 25 at My City of Truth Christian Church (DOC)

Registration opening soon

MS Christian Missionary Convention Annual Assembly

July 25-28 at My City of Truth Christian Church (DOC) in Clarksdale, MS

"A Love That Won't Quit" – I Cor. 2:9 –
**"However, as it is written, no eye has seen, no ear has heard,
no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."**

**Make plans now to attend Regional Assembly 2018
November 2-4, 2018**



Join us at the
Great River Region
of the Christian Church (DOC)
Regional Assembly

November 2-4, 2018
Kings Highway Christian
Church (DOC)
Shreveport, LA



Continuing Education Pre-Event on Friday, November 2nd, 9a-3p

"We Are Message Bearers!"

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are Ambassadors for Christ."

(2 Cor. 5:17-21 NRSV)

Disciples Women News

2018 Theme: *WE: Moving Forward Together*

Scriptures: Philippians 2:1-4; Hebrews 10:24-25 and Ecclesiastes 4:12

Beginning in 2018, and continuing for the next two years, the GRR Disciples Women will journey through an interim period, to re-vision and restructure the organizational components of the ministry between the three states. We are discerning new ideas, new ways of unifying our gatherings, and new ways of "doing" ministry as Disciples Women. This year, in addition to the fellowship days, there are several opportunities to join in retreats across the life of the region:

- **The first retreat will be August 17-19** at the Arkansas 4H Center, Little Rock AR. Keynote Speaker: Rev. Linda White, former Senior minister at Park Hill Christian Church in North Little Rock
- **The second retreat will be September 14-16** at Eagle Ridge in Raymond MS. Keynote Speaker Rev. Chesla Nickelson, Program Manager in the Office of Disciples Women
- Our Regional Assembly gathering - details yet to be determined

We encourage women from all three states (AR, MS, & LA) to join us at one or more of these gatherings to connect, worship, fellowship, and serve, as *WE move forward together*. Registration info coming soon.

Save the Dates: September 13-15, 2019 for the next ROSES Disciples Women Interregional Leadership Training Event. Location: First Christian Church, Tulsa, OK.

National Benevolent Association Mental Health Initiative Shares Resources

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Through our [Mental Health Initiative](#), the [National Benevolent Association](#) (NBA) is contributing to this campaign on our website and social media by sharing [webinars](#), [blog posts](#), and [videos](#) from Disciples across the life of the church. Raise your awareness of mental health in the next few weeks by visiting our [Resources](#) page to find materials you can share in your congregations and communities! For additional information, click [here](#).

Global Ministries

Vacation Bible School and summer youth camps are exciting opportunities to engage young people on a range of global topics, including the realities of young people around the world as well as how to engage and participate in God's global mission.

Global Ministries offers [several resources and VBS curricula](#) to help young people connect to and learn about God's global mission. Many international partners are offering children's ministry and outreach programs in a variety of contexts. If you are interested in highlighting and supporting a specific international partner's ministry with children, [you are welcome to browse several of our suggestions here](#).

If you have questions or if you would like to request display materials and giveaways, you can contact Resource Development at 317-713-2571.



Disciples Home Missions National Convocation July 19-22 in Birmingham, AL

Theme: "A CALL TO ACTION: ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS" taken from 2 Samuel 10:12 and Ephesians 6:13. It's a call to fight against injustice, racism, abuse, poverty, hatred, sexism, apathy, and hopelessness.

Main Speakers: Rev. Dr. William Barber, Bishop Teresa Snorton and Rev. Shannon Dycus. Come to worship, to fellowship, to break bread, to learn and to inspire... as we lift up Jesus Christ, the author, and finisher of our faith.

Registration is now open, click [here](#) for additional information.

PreEvent Registration - Clergy Institute or Lay Leaders Institute

Thursday, July 19, 2018 ~ 9 am - 4 pm

PreEvent Registration fee \$50

	Jan 1 – May 30	May 1 – July 10	Late Onsite
Adult	\$ 150	\$ 200	\$ 225
Young adult (18-35 years)	\$ 125	\$ 150	\$ 175
Youth (11-17 years)	\$ 75	\$ 100	\$ 125
Children (5-10 years)	\$ 65	\$ 90	\$ 115
Seminarians Students	\$ 125	\$ 150	\$ 175

Free admission for children 4 and younger

The Center for Parish Development

July 26-28, 2018 - Chicago area
Missional Church Anniversary Convocation 2018

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the church is called to take part in God's mission for the sake of the world. In every generation, the church is challenged to be faithful to a living and dynamic God who says, "Behold, I am doing a new thing" (Isaiah 43:19).

What is God calling the church – your church – to be and do NOW?

Join in this 50th anniversary convocation to discover new ways of putting the questions, new frameworks for dealing with them, and crafting new proposals for shaping the church's ministry and mission. And join in celebration of the Center's life work – both legacy and future – in this 50th anniversary year at this convocation event: *Faithful at the speed of change!*

For more information, click [here](#)

Outcomes of General Board Meeting 2018

Newton, IA
Upper Midwest Camp and Conference Center

General Minister and President, Terri Hord-Owens, shared her state of the church report. Vision and goals include: a foundation for biblical literacy, a deep and abiding spirituality, theological grounding for mission and justice, connections, mission, operational objectives, and communications.

There are two opportunities to serve on the front lines of justice and mission:

- The poor people's campaign, led by Rev. Dr. William Barber, Senior Pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church, Goldsboro NC. The initiative, "40 Days of Action" will culminate with an event on Capitol Hill, Washington DC, on June 23. I attended a meeting on May 6 at First Christian Church, Fort Smith, AR, hosted by Jarrett Banks and Sonna Key. It was an informative gathering of ecumenical folk from the area. Another training event is scheduled for May 12 in Little Rock. For more information please visit (wendy please insert link to website)
- "ACTNOW" United to end Racism. This work is also just beginning, led by our former General Minister and President Sharon Watkins. For more information please visit (please insert link to website)

We celebrated the close of the Mission First Pilot! Remember the gatherings we had across the life of the region in 2016? Well, that work is complete. Our charge is to share the statement to be nurtured throughout our congregations:

- *The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is called to participate in God's mission and move people and communities toward wholeness. We work together across generations to: Equip leaders grounded in Scripture, centered on Christ, and immersed in the Spirit, create communities of inclusion and care, attend to the needs of the vulnerable, and overcome structural and systemic injustice.*

The Governance Committee and Mission Funding Council were charged with forging ahead to develop proposals to bring back to the General Board next year. As a member of the governance team, I heard that the work is great, "we are too far behind – there is a big hole in our leadership, it will take another 10 years to implement a plan, and we need practical training for congregations." Lori Tapia, Obra Hispana Executive, told a story of one person on a bridge, letting everyone

know that it is safe to cross. Then, we get out of silos and go across the bridge together. How do we listen from outside our communities? How do we engage stories when people are gathered together?

We passed Resolution GB-191-108: To Enter Full Communion with the United Church of Canada

Mark your calendars now for the General Assembly 2019

July 20-24, 2019 ~ Des Moines, IA

