



Great River Region Update

4724 Hillcrest Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72205

April 18, 2019

grrdisciples.org

According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation, other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ (I Cor. 3:10-11 NRSV)



Notre Dame Cathedral Engulfed in Fire during Holy Week! This is the headline that entered our living rooms and social media platforms on Tuesday Night. One of the most famous and treasured architectural icons, engulfed in flames. A symbol of national pride immortalized in Victor Hugo's 1831 Novel "Notre Dame de Paris, also known as "The Hunchback of Notre Dame."¹ Commentators and firefighters, stated that because of the beautifully laid stone structure on the outside, the fire could only be contained from the inside. Because the structure was wood on the inside, it was easier for the structure to burn from the inside. (That's another sermon)!

What is beautiful about this news story is that many of the ancient artifacts were left untouched. Also, in the midst of embers, smoke, rubble, and debris, there stands the cross and the altar. A frantic rescue effort saved the monument's most precious treasures, including the Crown of Thorns purportedly worn by Jesus Christ.

During this most holy week, I am excited that the cross, the altar, and the crown of thorns were unscathed during this fire. They testify that when the world is dark, gloomy, and grief-stricken, the church remembers a Savior, who died on a cross, on the altar of Golgotha's hill. And the good news is that the cross, the altar, and the crown of thorns will always stand. Because they represent for us, a God of good news, hope amid the ashes, a fire that is never quenched and resurrection to new life and unconditional life for all.

Happy Resurrection Sunday to you, Great River Region! May the Lord God bless you real good!

¹From the Los Angeles Times Article, April 16, 2019

Regional Office Building is under contract!

On March 26, 2019, the Executive Committee of the Regional Board voted to accept an offer to purchase for the regional office property located at 9302 Geyer Springs Road. The sale should close in May.



Priorities for 2019

- Develop Future Vision Story Strategies and Tactics for Congregational Engagement
- RCOM (Regional Commission on Ministry) nurture of candidates for Ministerial Credentials
- Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism and Boundary Training development for All Clergy
- New Church Committee Development: New Church Planter for Covington, LA Project
- Hiring of Part-time Regional Youth Pastor, Camp and Conference
- Congregational leadership (laity) training and development

Future Story & Capacity Report Goals:

- To develop transformational Clergy Leaders who foster good collegial relationships and teach each other
- To facilitate and resource congregational program life through the development of the Great River Region Institute
- To re-develop congregations through strategic partnership and new church development
- To seek Racial Reconciliation and justice and full participation of all church in regional life

Mark your calendar now for Fall Future Story Visioning Sessions – let your voice be heard!! Dates and locations for these sessions with Dr. Burton are:

October 12 – Central Arkansas

November 2 – Central Mississippi

November 9 – Southern Louisiana

The Business of the Region

Great River Region February 2019 Financial Statement, click [here](#)

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

- Giving by Congregation - [March 2019](#)
- Giving by DMF amount - [March 2019](#)

Great River Region Giving as of March 2019:

- Disciples Mission Fund (includes Blessing Box) giving is **down 10.8%**
- Christmas Offering **up 43.2%**
- Designated for Operating is **down 6.8%**
- Week of Compassion is **down 55.2%**
- Reconciliation is **down 68.5%**
- GRR Operating deficit of – **\$13,930***

*as of February 2019 (March financial statement not avail at time of printing)

Regional Board Update

Regional Board meetings are scheduled for August 8-9, 2019; October 25-26, 2019 (via Zoom conference) and January 31-February 1, 2020



Giving to the Annual Fund of the Great River Region

When you make a pledge to the Annual Fund of the Great River Region, you help strengthen the financial base for the program work that we do in the Great River Region: congregational visits, clergy visits, workshops, camp and conference ministries, Regional Commission on Ministry (RCOM Administration), and regional and general church life and participation.

To donate to the Annual Fund – make your check payable to Great River Region and indicate “Annual Fund” on the memo line.

Search and Call

The region currently has five congregations engaged in a search process to call a new pastor:

FCC, Berryville; FCC, Mountain Home; FCC, Leesville; FCC GNO, Metairie; and Kings Hwy CC, Shreveport.

The New Church Committee reports that an offer is in progress for a New Church Planter in Covington, LA.

SAVE THE DATES

GRR CLERGY - The 2019 Clergy Retreat will be held on
April 29 – May 1st
at Ferncliff Retreat Center, Little Rock.

Online registration is now available [here!](#)

REGIONAL COMMISSION ON MINISTRY Meeting Dates

July 8-9, 2019 in central Mississippi
October 1-2, 2019 in central Arkansas



Laying on of hands at Rev. Cheryl Sybrant's Ordination
April 14, 2019

GRR TRAINING INSTITUTE

Great River Region & MS Christian Missionary Assembly PreEvent

Pro-Reconciliation / Anti-Racism training event

Registration required – no cost to attend

Click [here](#) to register now

Mark your calendars now for: Wednesday, July 10, 2019
9 am – 3 pm (lunch on your own)

Training will be held at Christian Church of Deliverance,
4196 Highway 18, Port Gibson, MS

MISSISSIPPI CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY CONVENTION (MCMC)

132ND ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

July 11-13, 2019

Christian Church of Deliverance (DOC)
4196 Highway 18, Port Gibson, MS

Host Pastor: Minister Columbus Felton

"How to Survive in a Wicked World"

2nd Chronicles 7:14

Guest Speaker

R. Wayne Calhoun Sr., is the Executive for the Office of Evangelism & Congregational Transformation for Disciples Home Missions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. He began his tenure on October 1, 2003. Dr. Calhoun's major focus is on providing leadership in evangelism, church growth, transformation, and vitality for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with an emphasis to African-American congregations.



Youth Activities – Friday afternoon

The youth will visit the Windsor Historical Place in Claiborne, Alcorn University campus, the Old Church in Rodney MS where James Brown movie was filmed as well as the Poplar Hill School and Museum of African American history.

PreRegistration is NOT required

Lodging – A block of rooms has been reserved at the Comfort Suites, 100 Berryman Road, Vicksburg, MS
Phone: 601-638-2290

Great River Region Youth



If you are interested in serving as a Camp Counselor this summer – download the Counselor Interest Form [here](#)
Counselor positions are now being filled – get your forms submitted ASAP

Constituency Groups: Youth, Disciples Women, Disciples Men, MCMC, ASF

Great River Region Youth (cont'd)

Disciples Crossing Camp Dates 2019

May 24-26	Family Camp
May 31-June 2	Grand Camp
June 3-8	Adventure Camp
June 7-9	Discovery Camp
June 10-15	ChiRho Camp 1
June 17-22	CYF Conference & Niners
June 23-29	Eighters
June 24-29	ChiRho 2
July 1-5	JYF 1
July 28-30	Water Sports Camp 1 (Jr high)
July 31-Aug 3	Water Sports Camp 2 (Sr high)
August 5-9	JYF 2

Disciples Crossing information and registration, click [here](#)

Registration Deadlines:

	5/1/2019	after May 1
Grand Camp	\$ 170	\$ 210
Discovery Camp	\$ 170	\$ 210
JYF Camp	\$ 330	\$ 370
Chi Rho Camp	\$ 390	\$ 430
Eighter's Camp	\$ 440	\$ 480
Niner's Camp	\$ 390	\$ 430
CYF Conference	\$ 400	\$ 440
<u>Family Camp:</u>		
Ages 12 & up	\$ 160	\$ 200
Ages 6-12	\$ 115	\$ 155
5 & under	Free	
*Adventure Camp	\$ 330	\$ 370
**Water Sports Cmp	\$ 330	\$ 370

*For Adventure Camp, some camping gear is required - no prior camping experience is required. Adventure Camp is very strenuous and a doctor's physical is required to participate.

**For Water Sports Camp - No previous water sports experience is required. Youth should be experienced swimmers. Two swimsuits are required, but the camp will provide all other equipment.

FOR EACH CAMP, REGISTRATION CLOSES TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE START DATE OF THE CAMP

Magnolia Camp & Conference – June 24-30
Peace Works: Empowering the Next Generation of Peacemakers

Registration cost: \$145 ~ Contact Josie McClorine for more information – 601-415-1762

Disciples Women 2019 Events

ROSES InterRegional Assembly

Sept 13-15, 2019
at First Christian Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Great River Region Disciples Women Retreat -

Theme: "Dream on, Sisters"
Friday-Sunday, Sept 27-29, 2019
at The Wesley Center, in Woodworth, LA

For those Disciples Women who were unable to attend their local workshop – all handouts will be on the Disciples Women page of the regional website – www.grrdisciples.org.

Disciples Women in Arkansas workshop



Disciples Men

New Directors of Disciples Men Announced!

Disciples Home Missions (DHM) is grateful to announce the call of new leadership to offer their gifts among Disciples Men in the persons of Greg Alexander as Director of Disciples Men and Alex Ruth as Associate Director of Disciples Men!



Rev. Greg Alexander



Rev. Alex Ruth

Around the Region in our Congregations

Mission Trip to Los Fresnos, TX

In the last issue of Currents, we announced a joint mission trip between First Christian Church in Little Rock and the Great River Region. However, due to recent violence in Haiti, we have postponed our mission trip in 2019 and will re-evaluate at a later date for 2020. For this year, FCC and the GRR are in the process of organizing a trip to Los Fresnos, Texas. Tentative dates are Oct. 19 – 26. This mission experience will be open to all churches in the Great River Region.

Our partner in mission along both sides of the border is Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries. This ministry was founded 33 years ago by Rev. Feliberto Pereira along the border. The purpose of the experience is to see first-hand the situation. This will allow us to engage with our ministry partners in the region without going through the filters of the media and will give us the opportunity to see how the churches of the Great River Region can respond to the needs of our sisters and brothers in Christ in this zone.

For more information, please contact either Charlie or Ruth Wallace at crwallace35@gmail.com or 317-459-9220.

On the Road with Dr. Burton



With Linda DeMann, Kings Hwy in Shreveport



With Vivian Woods & Gwen Chambliss



With Disciples Women in MS



With Mrs. Ruth Hobbs

Across the Disciples

InterGenerate is a conference designed for both practitioners and academics seeking to enhance life-long faith formation through intergenerational Christian experiences. Senior pastors, professors, age-level ministers, sociologists, church consultants - anyone who seeks to better understand and ultimately cultivate more intentionally intergenerational discipleship practices will find something at **InterGenerate**. If you want to **bring the generations together in your church**, this conference is designed just for you!

May 20-22, 2019
Lipscomb University in Nashville, TN

For additional information and registration:
www.intergenerateconference.com

General Assembly 2019

July 20-24, 2019 ~ Des Moines, IA

Promote General Assembly in your congregations
– [click here for Promotion RESOURCES](#)

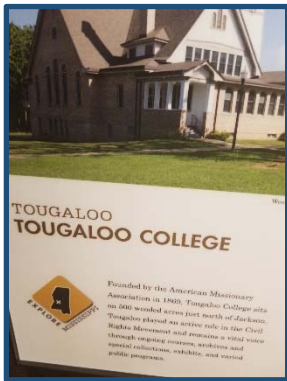
General Assembly – Voting Representatives

from paragraph 38 of The Design

All members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who register for the General Assembly shall have all privileges of the Assembly, except that voting privileges shall be limited to the following:

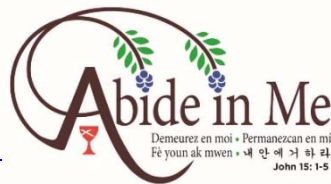
- Voting representatives from congregations. Each congregation of the CC (DOC) shall be entitled to have 2 voting representatives, plus 1 additional voting representative for each 100 participating members, or major fraction thereof, over the first 100. These voting representatives from congregations shall be in addition to persons holding standing in the Order of Ministry.
- Ministers. Persons holding standing in the Order of Ministry in the CC (DOC), in accordance with the policies and criteria established by the General Assembly through GenI Comm on Ministry

The BUSINESS docket of the General Assembly can be reviewed [here](#)



One of the resolutions this year (GA-1932), acknowledges the covenantal affiliation of Tougaloo College in Jackson, MS and affirms our commitment to higher education

Registration is now open
[General Assembly Registration](#)



Resources for your congregation?

This event is going to be super! If you are interested in promoting



generosity in your congregation, then you will want to attend **Generosity Transformed** in Indianapolis, April 30 – May 3rd. For information about this event, click [here](#)

Black Leadership Projects Grant – application process now open, deadline May 31, 2019
Funds are granted to applicants whose projects develop, nurture, and strengthen church leadership in African American congregations of the Christian Church (DOC).

If interested in submitting a grant application, please click to review [guidelines](#) or download the [application](#)

Project categories must include 1 or more of the following:

- > Leadership in Congregational Life
- > Leadership in Outreach Ministries
- > Faith Development of Leaders
- > Scholarship Support for Leaders*
- > Leadership in African American Programming

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

Amount of Grant - All requests will be considered, up to \$5,000. There is no minimum request.

Application Deadline – Submit completed applications no later than **May 31st** to Ministry Associate Marissa Ivey at mivey@dhm.disciples.org or 317-713-2641.

Questions? Please contact Min. Sheila Spencer at sspencer@dhm.disciples.org or 317-713-2634 with any questions***



Open Your Doors, But Not Your Risk

Churches often extend the use of their premises to 3rd parties for 1-time only events (weddings, concerts) or recurring events like Scout or AA mtgs. The use of church premises for these activities exposes the church to liability.

It is recommended that when outsiders use the church premises, you obtain a signed Facility Use Agreement & obtain a Certificate of Liability Insurance from the party. The Agreement spells out who is responsible for what, and the Liability Insurance pays for accidents that result in Bodily Injury or Property Damage.

But what if the third party does not have insurance?

Through a product called TULIP (Tenants and Users Liability Insurance Program), a 3rd party can obtain liability insurance specifically for use of your church. TULIP allows the Tenant or User to purchase a low cost general liability product to cover their liability related to the utilization of the church, protecting the entity as well as the church by providing an extra layer of insurance protection.

For more info, contact Cindy Howell at chowell@insuranceboard.org.