

# The Indiana Christian



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## Regional Assembly to Feature Great Speakers

When the Regional Assembly comes together this fall they will be inspired by a rich array of speakers slated for the event. The featured preacher for Saturday afternoon worship on October 1 will be Quaker preacher and writer **Philip Gulley**. An eclectic author, Gulley has published 20 books, including the acclaimed *Harmony* series chronicling life in the eccentric fictional Quaker community of Harmony, Indiana and the best-selling *Porch Talk* series of inspirational and humorous essays. In addition, Gulley and co-author James Mulholland have provided

### Regional Assembly Speakers



(left) Julie Richardson, Philip Gulley, Rick Lowery and Rick Spleth

helpful and accessible theological works in their books *If Grace Is True* and *If God Is Love*, followed by Gulley's books *If the Church Were Christian* and *The Evolution of Faith*.

Philip Gulley is a 1992 graduate of Christian Theological Seminary, where he was awarded an honorary doctorate in 2010. In addition to his books he writes for the *Indianapolis Monthly* and *The Saturday Evening Post* and hosts a television program on the Indiana PBS affiliate WFYI. He is co-pastor of the Fairfield Friends Meeting near Indianapolis.

Opening the Assembly on Friday evening will be two noted authors and speakers—Julie Richardson and Richard Lowery—who will speak at the Women's Dinner and

Men's Dinner respectively. These gatherings will be at the Indiana Interchurch Center on Friday, September 30 at 6:30pm.

**Julie Richardson** is the author of *Available Hope* just published by Chalice Press. In her book she invites you to examine your own life and discover how your struggles actually make you stronger, and a better parent. "Find courage and live out your beliefs and values as you speak up on behalf of those who have no voice. Realize how your own transformative relationships can help build a better tomorrow, together, with your children." She is a former staff person of the Christian Church in Indiana who now works for Lexington Theological Seminary.

**Rick Lowery** is a popular professor who teaches at Christian Theological Seminary and a variety of other theological institutions across the country. He is the author of three books and he blogs for the *Huffington Post*. Rick Lowery regularly speaks at church gatherings throughout the US and Canada, and has written

## Regional Assembly Posts!

By Diane Zehr, Interim Regional Minister

Plans continue for a gathering of Disciples from all across Indiana at our biennial Regional Assembly to be held October 1 at Christian Theological Seminary from 9:30am to 4:30pm. The day will begin with registration and a continental breakfast, and move to a morning session where we will share music, opening worship, the celebrations and news of what is happening among us and because of our ministries. We will take our lunch to the first of two chances to have meaningful conversations in any of 13 "Chat Rooms" (Forums led by a variety of leaders). Then we will gather again in Shelton Auditorium for worship and communion as our preacher of the day, Phil Gulley gives us some guidance on how we can speak and be the Gospel in an ever changing world.

There will be exhibit areas, a chance to buy a new book or two to read and plenty of other surprises! You won't want to miss this day together. †



## CONGO CONNECTION



### Officials From the Disciples Community in The Congo to Come to Regional Assembly

**R**évérénd Ilumbe Ndjongo Bernard and Mr. Oscar Pekombe from Mbandaka, Democratic Republic of the Congo, will be special guests at the Regional Assembly of the Christian Church in Indiana this fall. Rev. Ilumbe is the Principal Supervising Pastor (Regional Minister) of the Mbandaka District and Oscar Pekombe holds an administrative leadership position in the general offices of the Disciples Community in the Congo which are also located in Mbandaka.



Révérénd Ilumbe Ndjongo Bernard

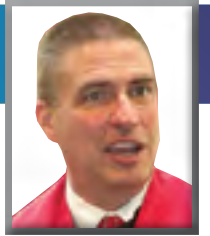
The Christian Church in Indiana formed a special partnership with the Mbandaka District in 2008. Since that time three delegations of Indiana Disciples have visited the

CONGO

Continued on page 6



# In The Spirit Richard L. Spleth, Indiana Regional Minister



## The Richness of Diversity in Church

I was sitting recently with David Ruffer, one of the Elders at a Zionsville Christian Church potluck dinner at his church. With a great sense of pride David pointed out various people in the room he wanted me to know—like his children and grandchildren for whom he has great pride. But he also pointed out a number of others too. “You see that family at the table over by the window,” he asked. “They live in a trailer court that our congregation has adopted. We take meals there on a regular basis to make sure that the children have something to eat. We got to know this family and they asked if they could come to our church. We said ‘sure’ and they have been a regular part of our life ever since. Someone has to go get them because they do not have transportation, but it is worth that effort, because they enhance our life.” David went on to point out a teenager and said, “That young lady was adopted by her mother, a single parent, when she was an infant in China. Just look at her now! How blessed we are to have her in our church.”

David was clearly proud of the diversity of his church, which includes a member without capacity to speak who uses an electronic device, similar to the one physicist Stephen Hawking uses, in order to teach Sunday School and lead the congregation in prayer. At the Zionsville church I have seen bikers in full leather sitting on the front row right in front of a retired Army general who

served in the Pentagon.

I told David that I had recently seen an article that said if you are to be a well rounded person who can function well in our world that you should have among your friends someone who is older than you, someone who is younger than you, someone whose first language is not your own, someone who was born in another country than you, and someone whose race and ethnicity is different than you, and a person whose sexual orientation is different from your own. The challenge, of course, is developing and maintaining all of those relationships to reap the benefit they bring. So much of the world we occupy—our neighborhoods, our places of work, our social circles—are segregated and sorted into similar people. We huddle in homogeneity. Except for one place. The church. The local congregation, in most cases, holds the promise of connecting us with persons we would not ever otherwise know. And that is a blessing.

Your local congregation may not have the obvious diversity of Zionsville Christian Church but your church does—the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). As part of this connected body your “church,” and David Ruffer’s, is even more diverse than what I have described above. Did you know that our fastest growing congregation is the Chin Christian Church in Indianapolis? This congregation gathers over

300 in worship each week and half of that group is under 18. There is a new baby born twice a month. Did you know that one of our newest congregations is nested in a homeless shelter in North Vernon (or the homeless shelter is nested in the church, we can’t really decide which it is)? Did you know that we have a predominantly white congregation with an African-American female pastor? When our 160 congregations gather on Sunday we worship in five different languages (English, Spanish, Korean, Chin, and Zo). At Allisonville Christian Church persons born in the Congo, Peru, and

Korea sit side by side week after week. And one of our congregations is “virtual” and count thousands of worshippers in Asia and the Middle East.

That diversity contributes to your health and well being, and that of your local congregation. You may or may not see it week to week but there is a time coming up soon when it will be clearly manifest. It is the Regional Assembly on October 1. That is the time when we all gather in one place, and it will be good.

I hope you will join us this October at Christian Theological Seminary. The schedule of the day will be

enriching and, I believe, will equip you for life in your congregation. Chances are good you can make some new friends to enrich the diversity of your life. And, if you are lucky, one of those might be David Ruffer. †

*Blessings on you and your congregation,*

Richard L. Spleth  
Regional Minister

## 2016

## Regional Calendar

### AUGUST

- 10** Finance Committee Meetings
- 15** Regional Board Meeting
- 24** Finance Committee Meetings
- 27** Clergy Continuing Education Event

### SEPTEMBER

- 13** Nurture & Certification Meetings
- 16-17** Commissioned Ministers Meetings
- 19** Moral Monday Event
- 30** Healthy Boundaries

### OCTOBER

- 1** Regional Assembly-Christian Theological Seminary
- 11** Nurture and Certification Meetings
- 14-15** FLOURISH! Financial Literacy Academy
- 29** Clergy Continuing Education Event

### NOVEMBER

- 8** Nurture and Certification Meeting
- 10** Regional Elders Meeting
- 14** Regional Board Meeting
- 15** Commission on Ministry Meeting
- 24-25** Office Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

### DECEMBER

- 13** Nurture and Certification Meeting
- 23** Office Closed through January 2 in observance of Christmas and New Year’s Holiday

*The Indiana Christian* will be published four times next year. Look for the next issue to come out in November, 2016. The deadline will be November 1.

Unless otherwise indicated, meetings will be held at the Indiana Interchurch Center. All times, unless otherwise indicated, are for the Eastern Time Zone. You can also view the regional calendar by visiting our website at: <http://indianadisciples.org/upcoming-events>.

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317.926.6051.

**FALL ISSUE  
DEADLINE**  
**November 1, 2016**





# First Christian Church, Fort Wayne Celebrates Five Years Together

By Judy Church, Stewardship Team Leader, First Christian Church

Anniversaries are important! Sunday afternoon April 24, 2016, First Christian Church, Fort Wayne celebrated a very special anniversary with the Zo Christian Church. That date marked the 5th anniversary of them nesting with us. Tammy Berry and the fellowship team did an outstanding job of providing a congratulatory cake and a meal after the Zo Christian worship service. Fellowship hall was decorated in their flag colors of red, green and white. Diane Mory made a beautiful banner that was presented at the beginning of their worship



service. It has been a few years since I have attended a worship service with the Zo Church. It is energetic and very moving.

As I enjoyed a piece of cake and talked with a few of the Zo members, it brought back memories of the first time they came to First Christian. It was late November of 2010 and winter darkness was upon us. It wasn't only winter that was dark, the building was soon to be dark because we were closing the

building to have a new heating system installed. The office remained open and the food bank continued to operate but our worship services were going to take place at Grace St. John's UCC for six weeks! I wasn't handling it well. As a member of the search team formed to find a new pastor after Pastor Neil Allen left in 2008, it was discouraging to realize that we were struggling financially to the point we could not afford a full time pastor and we



needed a new heating system. And then having to leave the familiar surroundings of our beautiful sanctuary during Christmas time, not presenting Walk to Bethlehem as we had done since 1995 all seemed a bit much. I was feeling more than a little disoriented and depressed.

Then Marlene Crouse and Kris Ohneck shared the news

of the Zo Christians who came to our door (10 people, I think) inquiring about worshipping in our building. It was as if God lit a candle in the darkness and said, "Everything is going to be all right. There is a reason for First Christian Church to be here at 4800 South Calhoun Street." Five years later it is good to reflect on all that has happened to both our congregation and the Zo congregation. Rarely do things go as I would have planned but thankfully God has a better plan. And thankfully God has given us resources to share. May we always be good stewards of those resources. †

## Chapel Hill Christian Church Celebrates 150 Years

The little country church with the big Christian heart—Chapel Hill Christian Church is celebrating their 150 year anniversary. Their celebration will commence on Sunday August 14.

Past ministers and families are invited to worship and fellowship.

If you have any historical records or photos to share please call 502-551-2143.

## Ministry Milestones

### CHANGES

**Linda Presley** began as Interim Minister at Beechwood Christian Church, French Lick on July 11.

**Tonja Gerardy** began as Interim Minister at North Christian Church, Columbus on July 11.

**Dale Suggs** began as Senior Minister at Avon Christian Church on July 10.

**Paula Neibert** began as Pastor of River of Life Christian Church, Logansport on July 5.

**Bob Riester** and **Sue Shadburne Call** concluded as Team Interim Ministers at River of Life Christian Church, Logansport on July 3.

**David Clifford** concluded as Interim Minister at First Christian Church, Greencastle on July 3.

**Trey Flowers** began as Senior Minister at Downey Avenue Christian Church, Indianapolis on July 1.

**Bruce Ervin** began as Interim Minister at First Christian Church, Bedford on July 1.

**Jessica Singleton** began as Interim Minister at First Christian Church, Mishawaka on July 1.

**Nathan Kibler** began as Associate Minister at First Christian Church, Kokomo on July 1.

**Don DeWeese** began as Interim Minister at Main Street Christian Church, Winchester on July 1.

**Bruce Ervin** concluded as Interim Minister at First Christian Church, Martinsville on June 30.

**Jim Powell** concluded as Interim Minister at Avon Christian Church on June 26.

**Greg Timmons** retired as Pastor of First Christian Church, Mishawaka on June 26.

**Mike Srblijan** and **Haley Asberry** concluded their ministries at East Christian Church, Markleville on June 26.

**Lanny Lawler** concluded as Interim Minister at Downey Avenue Christian Church, Indianapolis on June 26.

**Becki Nunnally** began as Interim Minister at First Christian Church, Ft. Wayne on June 12.

**Tyler Thompson** began as Senior Minister and Chief Dreamer at Zionsville Christian Church on June 1.

**Ben Brandt** was installed as Pastor of Wadesville Christian Church.

**Paul DeHart** was installed as the pastor of Poseyville Christian Church on Sunday, April 3.

**Roslyn Harrison** was installed as Pastor of First Christian, Marion on Sunday April 24.

**Cecil Cook** retired as Pastor of Main Street Christian Church, Winchester on March 27.

**Julie Western** concluded as Pastor of First Christian Church, Fort Wayne on March 27.

### DEATHS

**Woody Slade**, Disciples minister died July 4, 2016.

**David Brown**, Disciples minister died June 27, 2016.

**Jane Stanley**, retired Disciples Minister died May 12, 2016.

**L. Eugene Brown**, retired Disciples minister and former executive of DHM, died on March 22, 2016.

### ORDINATIONS

**Haley Asberry** was ordained at East Christian Church, Markleville on Saturday, April 9.

**Rick Harting** was ordained at Speedway Christian Church, Indianapolis on Sunday, April 22.

**Paula Neibert** was ordained at Tabernacle Christian Church, Franklin on Sunday, April 22.

**Katie Griffin** was ordained at Allisonville Christian Church, Indianapolis on Saturday, June 4.

**Kyle Hunter** was ordained at Central Christian Church, Lebanon on Saturday, July 9.

### CLOSINGS

We hold in prayer the **Little Eagle Creek Christian Church**, Westfield, who held their closing worship service on Sunday, April 24.

We hold in prayer the **Olive Branch Christian Church**, Indianapolis, who held their closing worship service on Sunday, May 1. †





## You are Invited to ¡Missionworks!

¡Missionworks! is a unique experience for pastors, mission board members, and anyone interested in mission to connect with the global work of the church. Over the weekend of August 26-28 you will find out how to build on your congregation's existing passion for mission and receive tools for sharing about God's mission in the world.

**¡Missionworks!** will help you to:

**Pray:** Discover music, prayer, and worship resources that will connect your congregation to life-giving partner ministries.

**Engage:** Learn first-hand from international partners, missionaries, and Global Ministries staff about issues affecting communities around the world and how your congregation can work together to address these challenges.

**Celebrate:** Hear the Good News of how the global church is making a difference in the world through your support and efforts.

Global Ministries is also excited to be joined by:

**Bishop Munib Younan** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. Bishop Younan will be delivering a keynote Saturday morning on the importance of protecting Christian communities in the Holy Land, and sharing ideas on how American Christians can share in the important advocacy work being done.

**Rev. Johnson Mbillah** of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa will be presenting a keynote Saturday afternoon on the current situation of Christian-Muslim relationships in Africa and sharing how the Christian communities in Kenya and Nigeria have responded in the aftermath of violence to work towards reconciliation.

**¡Missionworks! will be held at the Marten House in Indianapolis, IN from Aug. 26-28. For more information and to register visit [globalministries.org/missionworks](http://globalministries.org/missionworks).**



## Coming Soon! Round Two Compensation Support Grant

Grow! Prosper! Do Well! That's the goal for every church in our Region. Enter...round two of the FLOURISH! Compensation Support Grant to help many of our churches do just that. The application process opens on August 1 and extends through August 22, 2016.

Congregations may apply for a \$10,500 grant which may be used to bolster the compensation of their Sr. Minister or other staff clergy by \$7,000 per year, when matched with "laddered down" congregational funds of \$10,500. These combined granted and matched funds (\$21,000 over a three year period) may be used to increase salary base, fund healthcare, housing or boost retirement savings.

In becoming part of the FLOURISH! Project, congregations commit to invest in both their pastor and ministry by taking an active role equipping of its leadership. Benefits of the program include:

- Pastor and spouse receiving personal financial literacy training.
- Congregational leaders (Board chair & treasurer and designees) receiving training on congregational management and best practices, innovative fundraising, stewardship
- Pastoral coaching through the peer cohort process.

We're listening! We've heard the concern that congregations have in raising the matched funds (\$10,500) requisite to receiving the grant. Those funds may be raised over three years with the first year's disbursement at only \$2000 (\$3500 and \$5000 in years two and three.) During this time, congregations will be trained through the Financial Literacy Academy so that by the end of the three year program, they will feel confident in sustaining the compensation support provided through the grant.

We encourage all congregations to take advantage of this unique opportunity. For more information access our website at [www.indianadisciples.org/flourish](http://www.indianadisciples.org/flourish) or contact [cynthia@indianadisciples.org](mailto:cynthia@indianadisciples.org). †

## Parkinsons Move on to Serve Disciples Church in Virginia

Long-time members, Mark and Kendala Parkinson, were wished God's speed and were showered with prayers as they celebrated worship Sunday, April 10, 2016, with their home church, Yorktown Christian. The Parkinsons moved to Virginia to serve the Disciples church

in Martinsville. Pastor Mark has been serving the Virginia congregation since October of 2014, following his graduation from Christian Theological Seminary and subsequent ordination on July 7, 2013.

The Parkinsons have attended the Yorktown Christian Church since 1979 following their move

back to the Yorktown area from Indianapolis. Mark was the Yorktown church's first Timothy. A celebration party was held at the church following his graduation and prior to the church's first-ever ordination. Mark and Kendala have both served the church in so many ways throughout their years of attendance and served as leaders of the



Emmaus faith community in the Muncie area.

We wish them well and praise God for their

faithfulness to Him and to the churches they serve. We know the Disciples in Virginia are surely blessed! †



# Central Christian Church of Indianapolis Becomes a Green Chalice Congregation; Celebrates Earth Day with Fair

**R**aising chickens and gathering eggs; keeping bees; adding solar panels; starting a compost pile; exploring ways to recycle; using new, greener technologies and learning about volunteer opportunities for the church's garden were among topics featured at a fair, sponsored by the congregation's Creation Care Team. Thirteen exhibitors, sharing ideas and demonstrating ways of caring for God's creation, joined this April 24, Earth Day celebration. Fair visitors sampled locally produced cheese and artisan breads, as well as homemade breads. Equal Exchange coffee and hot chocolate from the DOC Coffee Project were served. Plans for Indianapolis CCC Fair began in January. The congregation received recognition as a Green Chalice Ministry in early March.



Their journey started last October when CCC hosted other Indianapolis-area congregations for a pilot workshop, developed and presented by Indiana Green Chalice. The workshop included worship, Bible study, small group discussions and resource-sharing. At morning's end, attendees from Central felt equipped with the necessary information, and immediately began

plans for joining Green Chalice. Participant Grace Gyori commented, "As a relatively new member of Central, I was very impressed with the church's wanting to explore and take action on global warming and Earth care issues because I had a growing concern about these topics, and, for me, these global issues have to be dealt with theologically."

A Creation Care Team was formed and began monthly discussions. They presented their ideas to CCC Church Board and Ministry Coordination Council, gave members an opportunity to sign the Green Chalice Covenant, and took inventory of the church's current creation care practices. Then the team chose three changes to put the congregation's commitment into actions for Green Chalice qualification.

## The three changes were:

1. Enhance recycling capabilities by adding containers to more meeting areas around the building and investigate onsite cardboard recycling.
2. Create, or facilitate, ongoing creation care displays and events for all age groups.
3. Investigate ways for having greener food and fellowship.



The changes were begun by encouraging use of reusable tableware from home for the Thanksgiving dinner; hosting "Have a Greener Christmas" display for Advent; and creating a Green Chalice display, with interactive activities, for the fellowship area. New recycling cans were decorated by youth in the art room and a Friday night event featured an eco-justice film.

Julia Holloway and her grandson, Alexander, led

creation care activities for a children's retreat. They reported that the group was eager to participate in activities which explored the everyday practices of recycling and limiting water consumption. Julia said, "All agreed they should take care of God's earth by recycling daily and turning off water when not rinsing their toothbrushes while brushing teeth."

If you want to know more about becoming a Green Chalice Congregation visit [www.greenchalice.org](http://www.greenchalice.org). If you are interested in hosting a workshop event or engaging a creation care speaker at your church, contact [jbbgrnch15@gmail.com](mailto:jbbgrnch15@gmail.com). Learn more about Creation Care ministries at the Indiana Green Chalice booth and workshops at 2016 Regional Assembly on October 1. †



(left to right) Dr. Frank Thomas, Nettie Sweeney and Hugh Th. Miller

## Financial Literacy Academy Class is In Session!

Session two of the Financial Literacy Academy is coming this fall, October 14-15, and is planned to be as hot as the summer! The academy is offered as part of a Lilly Endowment, Inc. grant and presented in collaboration with the Pension Fund of the Christian Church (DOC).

Open to all clergy with standing, installment two will focus on Preaching and Teaching Generosity (fall day 1 for pastors) led by **Dr. Frank Thomas, Nettie Sweeney** and **Hugh Th. Miller** Professor of Homiletics, CTS. Topics include: Creating compelling sermons on tithing and giving, stewardship as a holistic approach to managing God's resources, pastoral ethics and integrity in stewardship, outreach and missional giving, and leaving a legacy for future generations.

Creating Cultures of Generosity (fall Day 2 for pastors and lay leaders) facilitated by Dr. David King and Melissa Spas, Lake Institute on Faith & Giving. Topics to be covered: Finding alternate sources of income, creating a culture of generosity, effective use of building resources as a stream of income, creating green by going green, programs that pay, and cultivating and managing estate gifts.

The Financial Literacy Academy will occur at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Indianapolis Airport, 2501 S. High School Rd., Indianapolis; IN. Registration will open in mid September. Cost is covered for those clergy and congregations who are grant recipients under the FLOURISH! Project. All others may attend for a nominal fee of \$25 per day.

Don't miss this opportunity to grow your congregation's capacity! For more information, access our website at [www.indianadisciples.org](http://www.indianadisciples.org) or contact Cynthia@[indianadisciples.org](http://indianadisciples.org). †



# Together

The Manna Process reiterated the need for our region to renew relationships and connections with one another. Staffing is now configured to intentionally nurture relationships throughout the region. Some of our congregations have already found ways to share ministry. Other congregations are seeking these opportunities. This "Together" column is a space to celebrate the bridges being built and the ministries being shared. It will feature stories of coming together to be the region. If you have something you would like to highlight, send to Carolyn Reed, Associate Regional Minister.

¡Mission First! is an opportunity for Disciples everywhere to tell their story of how they are engaged in mission. This initiative grew out of the 2015 General Assembly in Columbus, OH. ¡Mission First! addresses the need to find a new shared focus in what God is doing in the world through Disciples of Christ. The first step in this process is Mission Gatherings where people can share their congregation's particular passion within God's larger mission.

The Christian Church in Indiana is engaging persons across our region to host Mission Gatherings later this summer and early fall. Our hope is to have several locations so as many people as possible might participate in sharing their congregations' story. It is also hoped that people will be inspired by the stories they hear from other congregations.

The input and stories will then be shared with the larger church as a new shared focus where our whole church is identified.

Your voice and story is needed. The Mission Council will receive all of the stories, ideas and suggestions from the Mission Gatherings across the whole church. They will then meet in December 2016 and prayerfully seek to identify common areas of mission which are God's call for the Disciples for the next season of our life.

More specific information about dates, times and locations for Mission Gatherings will be shared electronically with Indiana Disciples. Questions may be addressed to Carolyn Reed (carolyn@indianadisciples.org) at the regional office.

For more information on the Mission First! process, go to: [www.missionfirst.disciples.org](http://www.missionfirst.disciples.org). †

## CONGO

*continued from page 1*

Congo and with the arrival of our guests this fall we will have received three delegations. The partnership was renewed at the 2012 Regional Assembly when Rev. Ilumbe was last with us.

As a result of the partnership our congregations have increased awareness of the global church. We have been able to fund some significant projects addressing health and nutrition and undergirding the church's worship life and engagement

with youth. Our partners follow our life closely and are in regular prayer for our churches and our society. They now receive the Week of Compassion offering as a sign of solidarity and partnership with our congregations.

Both leaders will be in Indiana for three weeks beginning September 15 to visit our congregations. If your church is interested in hosting Rev. Ilumbe or Oscar Pekombe while they are in Indiana please contact the Regional office at 317-926-6051. †



## The RECONciliation Mission Tours

*By Lee Yates, Minister of Faith formation*

The RECONciliation Mission Tours were born out of the common desire to do more in addressing systemic racism. In recent years, the Indiana Youth Council, Outdoor Ministry Team and others discussed how they could do more to make us an anti-racism/pro-reconciliation Church. One of the common outcomes of these conversations was curiosity. "What are others doing?" or "What is working in other places?" were common questions. Along the way, someone asked, "What might God be up to among us already?" The only way to answer such great questions is to go and find out.

Our "Recon Teams" are made up for two youth and two adults who meet for common study and orientation before traveling to a destination where we see evidence of God at work. Some of these God sightings are within the Disciples of Christ community and some are ecumenical. Each team has two common questions and learning goal specific to their site. For example, Team L.A. traveled in July and explored the core questions of "What is God up to?" and "What can we learn from it?" They also studied incarceration. Future learning goals include immigration, refugees, food stability, civil rights, politics,

community partnerships, small town dynamics, multi-cultural congregations, and Church structures.

Over the next couple of years we plan to send teams to San Antonio, TX; Atlanta, GA; Washington DC; Evansville, IN; Indianapolis, IN; and Hammond, IN. Other sites may be added as we see potential learning opportunities. Web links from [www.IndianaDisciples.org](http://www.IndianaDisciples.org) will take you to the application to travel on one of these trips, or allow you to see reports from previous travelers. You can also download free curriculum for your congregation to use for topics like understanding and confronting racism.

Congregations who send travelers are asked to have at least 10 people use "Many Cultures—One World," a curriculum created in partnership between Disciples' Reconciliation Ministry and Disney's Youth Education Series. It was piloted here in Indiana at the 2014 Regional Assembly and we are excited to make it available as part of the RECONciliation Mission Tours.

This project was originally funded through offerings from Spring Youth Assembly and summer camps. Generous support from the Oreon E. Scott Foundation and the Indiana's Regional Reconciliation Ministry have allowed this big

idea to grow into something more. With over half the trips funded, the RECONciliation Mission Tours will be sending out more teams soon.

As teams return we will invite them to "reunion" events with Regional leaders to discuss their experiences with each other. Each team that comes back will add new insight and perspectives to the ongoing conversation. We hope to grow from the experience of our travelers, the study of our congregations, and the continued leadership of the Holy Spirit. Our prayer is that God will open our eyes to what can be done and give us the courage to be the Church in new ways that will heal hurts, connect lives, and confront racism.

If you would like your congregation to be involved, you can request a speaker or use the curriculum in Sunday School or Bible Study. You can get one of your adults or youth to travel on a tour. You can take a Church mission trip to one of the locations we have visited. You can attend Regional events where the impact of the tours is being shared, or you can simply call your congregation to prayer around this ministry and about the way's racism impacts their community. What might God be up to in your Church? †

## ASSEMBLY

*continued from page 1*

articles and Bible lessons for scholarly and popular publications, including *The Chalice Introduction to the Old Testament* and journals of preaching and stewardship. He has written and produced Bible study lessons and videos for a variety of church

projects and programs. His lessons and videos on stewardship are posted on the Center for Faith and Giving website.

Regional Minister **Rick Spleth** will address the Assembly in the Saturday

morning plenary to be held at 10:00am, October 1 in Shelton Auditorium at CTS. Spleth will offer his sense of the "state of the church" as he begins his 16th year in leadership this fall. †



## Holy Spirit Moving at Glendale Christian Church

**G**lendale Christian Church (GCC) serves as a light of hope to the Ravenswood neighborhood in Indianapolis. In the fall of 2015, someone broke in and robbed GCC, but God used that theft to draw the attention of Ravenswood people to the church so that people realized God was in their midst. Neighbors helped fix broken doors. One is loaning GCC his LCD projector for worship. Northside Baptist Church, in a nearby neighborhood, is loaning GCC some sound equipment.

Many people in Ravenswood are poor and unchurched. Alcohol abuse has been a continuing problem, but over the last few years drug abuse has become an increasing blight. Neighborhood people dread hearing the weekly death toll from heroin; consequently, they asked GCC for help.

God is working in the hearts of GCC members and neighborhood people. Over the past three months, GCC has worked with various new groups and allows them to use the church for their weekly meetings. Ravenswood Hope provides counselor-directed support for drug abusers and their families. A 12-step program meets to help those addicted to alcohol. Family Night offers fun activities for both kids and adults.

In the past three years neighborhood people have begun to realize they need God in their lives. Some now attend GCC, and 21 have become members. Rev. Christina Dougherty has been privileged to baptize a total of 16 youth and adults. Since GCC doesn't have its own baptistery, one of the newest members asked to be baptized in the White River which is only a few blocks from the church. When told that there weren't any safe sections of the river with at least waist deep water, he gasped, "Wait! You have to get in the river?" Rev. Dougherty had forgotten to explain immersion. The new members agreed that they should be baptized at Allisonville Christian Church.

Recently new members, who had never experienced church before GCC, have requested Bible study. They know nothing about God or Jesus, and they are hungry for the Word! Since May, GCC now offers a weeknight kids' Bible study group and Sunday Bible study groups for all ages following worship.

**...They know nothing about God or Jesus, and they are hungry for the word!**

Rev. Dougherty exclaimed, "We may have limited financial resources, but the Holy Spirit is really moving in the Ravenswood neighborhood and at Glendale Christian! As amazed and excited members and leaders, we continue to seek God's guidance in serving the Ravenswood neighborhood." †



Over several weeks, Family Night kids decorated their own Pine Box Derby cars and then raced them.



Rev. Christina Dougherty and Associate Cathy Clark baptize 3 of the newest GCC members on June 12, 2016 at Allisonville Christian Church.

GCC has struggled to provide a food pantry to meet the needs of the hungry in Ravenswood. Members of Northside Baptist Church have offered workers, guidance, and money so that GCC can more fully meet these needs. The GCC Food Pantry will open two nights a month starting in July. Their goal is to be open weekly.

## Stewards of Children Workshop

**Saturday, September 10, 2016 from 2 -5pm**

Child sexual abuse is one of the most prevalent health problems children face with a wide array of consequences.

Even with greater attention to prevention, still it is estimated at least 1 in 10 children will experience sexual abuse by their 18th birthday. While it's easy to feel powerless, there are tools to help create safer communities for children.

Saturday, September 10, 2016 from 2 -5pm, Join Sarah Haas and Rev. Jill Cameron Michel, Minister of Children, Youth and Families at Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in a child sexual abuse prevention workshop called "Stewards of Children."

This workshop is designed for parents, other caregivers of children, and anyone who wants to help make a difference in the lives of children.

The cost of the workshop is \$10/participant for a workbook. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Sarah Haas at [atpastorsarah@friedensucc.org](mailto:atpastorsarah@friedensucc.org) or 317-709-5857 by August 26.



## Region Welcomes New Staff Members



**Maggie Archibald** has been called to the position of Minister of Faith Formation by the Christian Church in Indiana which began July 1, 2016. Maggie graduated from Christian Theological Seminary in May of this year receiving a Masters of Divinity degree and a Masters of Arts in Multicultural Christian

Education. She will succeed Lee Yates, who will continue until August 1, in providing staff support to our Outdoor Ministry Team, to Indiana Youth, and to the Commission on Faith Formation as they seek to equip congregations for nurturing faith in men, women and youth across the arc of life.

Maggie is also the Interim Associate Minister at the Avon Christian Church, Avon, IN. She and her husband Matthew are expecting their first child. You can get to know her at her website: [www.redheadreverend.com](http://www.redheadreverend.com) and send her a note of welcome at [maggie@indianadisciples.org](mailto:maggie@indianadisciples.org).



We welcomed **Joel Cooper** to the Regional staff as a Ministry Associate in April of 2016. In his role as a concierge and support staff, Joel brings many talents and gifts to our office. Known by many in our region, Joel is a member of First Christian Church, Bloomington, IN. and currently resides in

Indianapolis. He will truly be an asset to us as he handles camp registration, having been a long time counselor at our camps at Barbee and Bedford. He also serves part-time as the Administrative Assistant for Week of Compassion, a role he will continue alongside his work with the Region. Feel free to send him a note of welcome at [joel@indianadisciples.org](mailto:joel@indianadisciples.org). †



# Disciples Helped Shape Indiana's Beginnings

By Bruce D. Ervin

It is well known that Barton W. Stone played a crucial role in the founding of the movement now known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) through his leadership at the Cane Ridge Revival in Kentucky in 1801. Less well known is the role he played in Indiana during the early years of the Stone-Campbell movement on the Hoosier frontier. For example, Stone led a revival at the Monroe County Courthouse in 1826 that contributed to the founding of First Christian Church in Bloomington, Ind. Stone was also present at the first State Convention held in Indianapolis in 1839. Alexander Campbell was the acknowledged leader of the movement by 1839, but he did not make his first trip to Indiana until 1850. Stone's followers, on the other hand, began establishing their New Light congregations in Indiana Territory in the decade following Cane Ridge.

The two leaders were very different men, with different approaches to both salvation and social reform. Salvation for Stone began with the work of the Holy Spirit. One could only be saved because the Spirit planted the gift of faith in the human heart. But one had to accept the gift and respond with belief that God is love as revealed in Jesus Christ. Stone believed that the Spirit's gift was offered to all, but only some choose to accept it. Sometimes that acceptance came with a struggle. Thus the mourner's bench, where penitent converts could pray, was a standard feature in Stone's congregations.

Salvation for Campbell was a more head-oriented enterprise. It was ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit, but Campbell argued that the Spirit must be mediated through the words of scripture. These words had to be presented to the mind

so that the reasonable truth of the Bible could be grasped. But Campbell was sure that all people were inherently reasonable. Therefore, all had an equal opportunity for salvation through his method of preaching and learning.

The mourner's bench disappeared from New Light churches in Indiana as Campbell's influence spread, beginning in the second half of the 1820's. But Stone's influence on another issue—slavery—could still be found in Indiana as late as the 1850's. Stone was an abolitionist. Campbell was

a moderate, trying to curry favor with both pro-slavery and anti-slavery advocates. This did not sit well with Hoosier Disciples such as lawyer Ovid Butler. He headed a group that founded North Western Christian University (now Butler University) in Indianapolis as an anti-slavery alternative to Campbell's Bethany College in Virginia. When several students were expelled from Bethany for speaking out against slavery, North Western accepted the students. Campbell was not amused by either the founding of North Western or by its acceptance of the men whom he had tried to silence.

Neither was Campbell amused when Hoosier Disciples formed the North Western Christian Missionary Society (NCMS). The NCMS was formed to protest Campbell's American Christian Missionary Society's (ACMS) refusal to provide financial support to evangelist Pardee Butler (no relation to

Ovid). Pardee Butler had gone west to plant new Disciples churches and organize citizens to vote Kansas into the union as a free state. When it became clear that the ACMS would not be supporting such social reformers, the NCMS was formed in Indianapolis in 1859 at Central Christian Church. But the Civil War soon began, the ACMS took a pro-Union, pro-war, anti-slavery stand, and by 1863 the NCMS had disbanded.

Barton W. Stone was a passionate advocate for saving souls and freeing slaves. In his mind, both were crucial components of the gospel liberty that he and his followers proclaimed on the Indiana frontier in the early decades of statehood. Hoosier Disciples follow in his footsteps today as we seek both the salvation of sinners and the establishment of social justice in Indiana. †



## - Camp Recap -

**Over 360 campers attended camp at Barbee Christian Camp and Bedford Christian Camp this past summer. Here are a few pictures of their time. Thank you to all of the directors, counselors, camp staff and families for a wonderful camp season.**

