

The Indiana Christian



Volume 103 • Number 2

IndianaDisciples.org

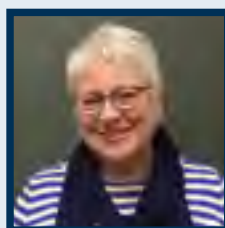
Summer • 2021

Carolyn Reed to Take Sabbatical and Dean Phelps is Coming Back, for a Time!

Associate Regional Minister Carolyn Reed will be on a sabbatical leave August through October of this year. Carolyn has been on the Regional staff since May 1999. A sabbatical leave of three months is provided to our ministerial staff every five years to assist them in renewing themselves and their leadership. Carolyn plans to equip herself to assist our churches in responding to the rapid and dynamic changes that are occurring in congregational life. Her article in this issue describes the “liminal space” she seeks to embrace.

We are thankful for her long service to our Region and look forward to her return, and being re-charged, in November.

Serving in her place for three months will be Dean Phelps, who is familiar to many across our Region. Dean served as an Associate Regional Minister with us from 2005-2013. Since that time, he has been the Interim Regional Minister in the Oklahoma, Central Rocky Mountain, and Kentucky Regions. Prior to his first time on our staff, Dean served on the Georgia Regional staff. There are few persons in our church with



Carolyn Reed



Dean Phelps

as much Regional experience as Dean. We are delighted to have him back, with his guitar, for three months.

Dean will be based in Versailles, Kentucky, where he and his spouse, Rev. Debbie Phelps, now live, and will connect with pastors and congregations both in person and via Zoom. You can reach him at dean@indianadisciples.org. †

Regional Board Begins Search for an Additional Associate Regional Minister

At their meeting on June 5, the Regional Board voted to begin a search process for a new, additional, Associate Regional Minister to begin in 2022. The person filling this position will give focused support to our Commission on Faith Formation and will assume responsibilities that are now overseen by part-time staff, including summer camp, youth ministry, and support for women’s ministry. The creation of the position was proposed by both the Pastoral-Personnel Relations Committee and our Finance Committee. The opportunity to add an additional full-time staff person has been made possible, in part, by the generous gift of \$100,000 which was received from the East Side Christian Church in Evansville at the time of their closing last year.

Moderator Julia Johnson has appointed the following persons to serve on the Search Committee: Luis Gierbolini, Chair, Linda Brown, Nathan Kibler, Belinda King, Linda McKiernan-Allen, Martin Tapia, and Kevin Toth. The committee was selected to reflect the diversity of the Region. They will follow the “Executive Search Model” procedures recommended by the General Assembly which will mean that the group will do anti-racism training together and will utilize the services of an outside independent screener to provide the initial evaluation of applicants.

The committee plans to present a job description to the Regional Board on September 11, and pending their approval, post the position on September 15. Applications will be due November 1 and the goal is to present a final candidate to the Board on December 5.

For information about the search process contact Luis Gierbolini, Chair, at gierboliniluis@gmail.com. †

Reconciliation Offering to be Received this Fall

Reconciliation Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was born out of the civil unrest that ensued following the martyrdom of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4, 1968. His murder brought to fore in the life of our church the dis-ease of our living in two separate societies—one which benefits one group of people and one which systemically marginalizes the poor and powerless.

Beginning with Resolution 29 of the International Convention of the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in 1968, our Church has persistently pursued ways to address the sin of racism through resolutions and direct action in our congregations, Regions, General Ministries and Recognized Ministry partnerships.

Your gift to the Reconciliation offering through your local congregation assists our church in providing resources and opportunities for the people of our church to address racial divisions, seeking to dismantle structures of inequity which persist among us. Many congregations receive this offering on the last Sunday in September or the first Sunday in October.

RECONCILIATION OFFERING continued on page 7



Region Launches Search for New Reconciliation Ministry Coordinator

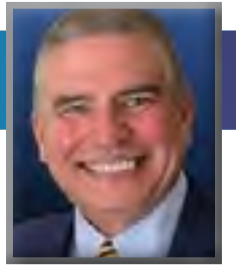
The Christian Church in Indiana is seeking a new Reconciliation Ministry Coordinator to assist our ministers and congregations in our mission to address systemic racism in our church and society. Building on the mandate for clergy education on racism issued

by the Regional Assembly in 2016, the Regional Board has expressed its own desire that the education and conversation be expanded to encompass the whole church.

The position is 40 hours a month and will include coordinating anti-racism training programs for clergy,

SEARCH continued on page 5

In The Spirit Richard L. Spleth, Indiana Regional Minister



Let's Work Together to Replenish Our Preacher Supply Chain

We have a supply chain problem. This may not sound like news. Coming out of the pandemic there have been all sorts of shortages. A shortage of computer chips has slowed the manufacturing of cars. And there has been a shortage this summer of lumber, chlorine, shipping containers, glass bottles, and chicken parts. Crazy. I am not writing about those assorted items though. I am writing about a shortage of preachers, and its cause is a disruption in our supply chain.

The shortage is real. Every single day Carolyn Reed and I pour over the limited number of profiles in our Search and Call system hoping to find a match for our congregations in transition. Interim ministers and those called to associate and youth ministry positions are in particularly short supply. The numbers of students entering and exiting seminary is at a trickle. Why so? It is a disruption in the supply chain. And the suppliers are the very congregations who are seeking new pastors.

People find themselves called to ministry within the context of a congregation, sometimes as a youth or young adult and sometimes in middle age. It typically begins when they hear God's voice amplified in the voices of mentors, teachers, and friends who encourage them to use their gifts and talents to serve the church. That was true for me. A whole host of Sunday School teachers, youth group leaders, and camp counselors unknowingly

conspired to draw me into ministry as my life's vocation. Calling persons into ministry is the essential work of the local congregation, and it is a critical task if the church is going to have the leadership needed for its future.

Forbes magazine just published five principles that businesses should put in place to address the current supply chain disruption. They suggested things like investing in technology for inventory control, diversifying suppliers, incorporating a risk management plan, automating purchasing processes, and monitoring cash flow. So, what five things might our church do to address our own preacher supply chain problem? I have some ideas.

1. Invite persons in whom you see gifts for leadership and service to think about ministry as their life's vocation. Plant a thought for them to ponder.
2. Give time to think about that yourself. Are there ways you might give leadership in your own congregation or another as a Commissioned minister? Contact Carolyn or me to discuss.
3. Mentor young people and persons of any age who are young in their faith. Let them know how your life of faith expressed in your church has shaped and nurtured you, and listen to their story.
4. Volunteer to be a camp counselor. Do you know how many persons point to church camp as the place they made the decision to become a minister? Tons!

5. Dedicate more babies. It is the typical practice in our congregations, shortly after the birth of a child, for the parents to present their baby to the congregation in worship and pledge to raise that child within the faith community. The members of church make a similar pledge to support those parents and that child in their growth and development. That is a serious commitment with specific responsibilities. Think about all the individuals you have pledged to support in that way. How have you kept up your assignment? Now, you may say, we do not have any new babies to dedicate—a supply chain issue within the larger supply chain issue. Then I say, go find some.

Years ago, I was teaching a Sunday School class at First Christian Church, Mishawaka. At that time, in partnership with Disciples Church Extension Fund, we had access to a demographic program called Percept. I was sharing with the Mishawaka folks the ways in which their community was like others and ways it was demographically distinctive. I noted that their neighborhood had a disproportionately high number of single mothers who were religiously receptive. While we were talking a young woman with a baby walked into our meeting. I stopped talking and asked if I could help her. She said that she was looking for a church for herself and her child. The Mishawaka folks thought that either I was a genius or that she was a plant. Neither were true. She was simply a woman

seeking community, and a child that needed dedicated mentoring. I suspect there is a mother and child like that near your church too.

Our current preacher supply chain interruption is real and concerning. The turn around will not be quick, but it can happen if we

address it together. I invite you to focus your energy on this important cause.

Blessings on you and your congregation.

Richard L. Spleth
Regional Minister

2021

Regional Calendar

JULY

28

Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation Training*

AUGUST

7

Disciples Virtual Gathering*

18

Mexico Initiative Conversation with Neighbors*

SEPTEMBER

11

Regional Board Meeting

14

Nurture and Certification Meeting*

18

Women's Pray and Share*

25

Commissioned Ministers Interviews*

OCTOBER

8-9

Financial Literacy Academy*

12

Nurture and Certification Meeting*

21

DCEF Building Consultation Forum

NOVEMBER

6

Healthy Boundaries Training*

DECEMBER

4

Regional Board Meeting

11

Women's Pray and Share*

*online events

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The Indiana Christian
(ISSN 0279-179X)

Published four times a year by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana, 1100 W. 42nd St., #150, Indianapolis, IN 46208. This publication began in 1918. The present name, *The Indiana Christian*, dates to January 1891.

Website:
www.indianadisciples.org

POSTMASTER
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notices to:
Christian Church
in Indiana
1100 W. 42nd St., #150
Indianapolis, IN 46208
Periodical postage paid at
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Subscriber change of address or
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FALL ISSUE

DEADLINE

OCTOBER 21, 2021



Disciples Women Service Project 2021: Feeding the Hungry



While food insecurity is a reality every day, it has become a wider and broader issue during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Disciples Women's service project for 2021, Feeding the Hungry, is an opportunity to meet the needs of people who are experiencing food insecurity. We are asking all Indiana Disciples Women to work in their local communities to address these needs.

As always, we encourage you to directly contact organizations in your area to find out their specific requests as well as to begin building a relationship. Organizational suggestions include community and church food banks as well as Gleaners Food Bank. In addition, check out Feeding America's website at www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank, and an offering of letters with the help of Bread for the World Indiana at <https://ol.bread.org>.

We ask that you share with the Disciples Women office what you are doing so we can celebrate together at odw@dwm.disciples.org. If you have stories or pictures to share on Disciples Women's social media, please use #DWConnect. To notify the Region, please contact Sandy Kincaid at sandy@indianadisciples.org.

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' - Matthew 25:37-40 †

An Ecological Adaptation of Saint Francis' Prayer

By Elena Huegel, Global Ministries Mission co-worker, Mexico

Lord, make me an instrument of Your restoration and reconciliation.
Where there is deforestation and desertification, let me plant trees.
Where this is air pollution, let me ride a bike or walk.
Where there are chemicals that damage the atmosphere, let me refuse to purchase.
Where there is a lack of ecojustice, let me protest.
Where there are light bulbs, cellphones, and electronics, let me welcome the simplicity of silence and darkness.
Where there is drought, let me conserve water.

O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek
to consume but to be grateful,
to be settled but to be curious,
to be great but to bring dignity to all life.

For it is in recognizing fragility and vulnerability that we appreciate life.
It is in daring relationships that we overcome fear.
It is in dying to our greed that we will nurture hope. Amen.

This prayer was published in *Wellsprings of Hope: Prayers for a Prophetic New Vision for Disciples*, edited by Richard H. Lowery. This devotional book and hundreds of other publications and congregational resources are available through Chalice Press (chalicepress.com).

Ministry Milestones

MINISTY CHANGES

Allen Whitehurst retired as Pastor, Union Christian Church, Franklin on Sunday, March 14
Mark Parkinson began serving as the Transitional Minister at Union Christian Church, Franklin on March 28
Jason Jones concluded his ministry at Hazelwood Christian Church, Muncie on April 4
Dave Kovalow-St. John retired after serving as Senior Minister at First Christian Church, Valparaiso on April 11
Alan Small retired after serving as Minister at Russellville Community Church, Russellville on April 11
Keith Strain began serving as Interim Minister at Russellville Community Church, Russellville on April 18
Greg Eberhard began serving as Interim Minister at First Christian Church, Valparaiso on April 27
Nathan Wilson completed his interim ministry at First Christian Church, New Castle on May 2
Karen Fraser Moore concluded her Transitional Ministry at First Christian Church, Vincennes on May 5
Frank Everett retired from ministry at Greenfield Christian Church, Greenfield on May 23
Helen Hempfling retired from ministry at First Christian Church, Bloomington on May 31
Will Jewsbury began serving as Interim Senior Minister at First Christian Church, Bloomington on June 1

Merlyn Winters began serving as the Interim Minister of Greenfield Christian Church, Greenfield on June 1
Jerry Zehr retired from ministry at Carmel Christian Church, Carmel on June 6
Stephen Eberhard began serving as Pastor of Wabash Christian Church, Wabash on June 6
Nathan Day Wilson concluded his service at Christian Theological Seminary June 11, and began serving the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland June 21
Larry Sharp concluded his position as Minister of Woodhaven Christian Church, Bloomington on June 27
Dusty Cowell began serving as the Senior Pastor of Federated Church, West Lafayette on June 27
Rick Abbott closed his ministry as the interim Pastor of Oak Grove Christian Church, Monticello on June 27 and began serving as Co-pastor of Southside Christian Church, South Bend on July 4
Laura Bernfield began serving as the Interim Pastor of Oak Grove Christian Church, Monticello on June 28
Bill Wassner concluded his position as Minister of Pittsboro Christian Church, Pittsboro on June 30
Shannon Sedgwick concluded her service as Associate Minister at Tapestry Church, Greenwood on June 30
Frank Everett began serving as the Interim Minister at First Christian Church, New Castle on July 11

Kyle Hunter concluded his position as Minister of Bethany Christian Church, Evansville on July 11
Lanny Lawler concluded his position as Interim Senior Minister at First Christian Church, Marion on July 11
Haley Asberry began serving as Senior Minister of First Christian Church, Marion on July 14

MARRIAGES

Jessica Singleton, Disciples Chaplain, married Angela Clark on Saturday, May 1

DEATHS

William Knight, retired Disciples minister, died on June 8
Clark Williamson, retired Disciples minister and Professor Emeritus of Christian Thought at Christian Theological Seminary, died on June 26
Larry Sharp, Pastor of Woodhaven Christian Church, Bloomington died on July 3

BIRTHS

Danielle Cox, Senior Minister of Avon Christian Church, and Samuel Bateman welcomed a son, David Walker Bateman, on May 28
Rachel McLoughlin, Associate Minister at West Street Christian Church, and Matt McLoughlin welcomed a daughter Aimee Gayle Mae McLoughlin on May 30 †



“Creating Space for Reflection, Creativity and Listening”

By Carolyn Reed, Associate Regional Minister

“Why can’t we just get back to the way things were?”

I’ve heard this great question voiced so often, especially lately.

So, why can’t we?

The simple answer is because there has been a seismic shift in the world. The church and its leaders are facing challenges for which there are not easy answers. There is not a conference, a webinar, a book or an “expert” that can fix what has been broken. And what is broken—or at the very least, breaking rapidly—is the way church has always been done. The church is in uncharted waters. What it needs now are adventurers, voyagers and people ready to launch without a charted course. It needs leaders willing to experiment, possibly fail, intentionally reflect on what happened, and then venture out again.

We are in what has been described as a “liminal space.” This is a time where something has ended and what is to come has not yet emerged. Author Susan Beaumont says, “Liminal seasons are challenging, disorienting, and unsettling. We strive to move forward with purpose and certainty. Instead, we feel as though we are trudging through mud, moving away from something comfortable and known, toward something that can’t yet be known. Liminal seasons are also exciting and innovative. God’s greatest work occurs in liminal space.”*

Many pastors and church leaders feel as though we are trudging through mud. And that’s because we are. We also need to be reminded

that this is a time filled with possibility and creativity. We need each other, both within congregations and within the region, to lean on in these murky times and encourage the best in one another as we listen to where God may be calling us.

One way I have engaged this is by sharing in conversations with clergy. A group of congregational pastors engaged an eight-week book study in the spring and another group began a six-week study this summer. The conversations were stimulating, encouraging and a very practical reminder that none of us is in this alone.

During my three-month sabbatical, beginning on August 1, my plan for this personal liminal space is to listen a little more closely to where God is calling, especially regarding my ministry with the Indiana Region. What is stirring? Where do I see God’s Spirit moving? What do I need to pay attention to and what do I need to let go? My gratitude for this season away from my day-in-day-out ministry is so deeply appreciated. I pray that congregations are also giving their pastors space to reflect, listen and dream. And I pray pastors take much needed time to engage their passion for ministry in creative ways. None of us are alone. We need to remember we have each other and we have our God, who is constantly at work in us and through us. †

* “How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You are Going” by Susan Beaumont

“Why can’t we just get back to the way things were?”

A Difference in the Air

By Amanda Meade



As a pastor who asks people to serve on a regular basis you would think I would know better than to tell the regional minister “I LOVE stewardship.” That’s how you get nominated and considered for the regional board.

I served on the board seven years ago, at a time when we met in person, once a quarter in Indianapolis. At that time, the region was going through a long discernment process and exploring what it means to be in the wilderness.

In the meetings we learned that giving was a struggle and the region was having to make important but difficult decisions about Camp Barbee and staffing. Congregations like my own didn’t feel “connected” to the region as much as we wanted. The meetings were always meaningful but difficult. I was grateful to have served and gotten to know so many faithful pastors and leaders in the process.

As I logged into the first Board meeting of 2021 on Zoom from my home, there was clearly a difference in the air. The Board was even more reflective of the diversity of our region than the first time around. This added a richness, but also an accountability to the meeting that invited us into deeper discussions and challenged me in faithful ways.

Since my last time serving, the region had experienced the sale of Camp Barbee. That sale led to a blessing of funds to share with congregations across the region. We also heard the excitement about new renovations at Bedford Camp and Conference Center and a camp season this year with new Camp Sunday services.

When it came to the financial report, I was prepared for the reality of COVID and was met with the news that the region had experienced a surplus of generosity, a reflection of many of the churches across the state.

The past year and a half, with all of its challenges, provided an opportunity for Rick and Carolyn, along with the amazing regional staff, to provide care and resources to the church in abundance—from Zoom book studies and retreats for pastors, to online sermon and worship resources, to the latest COVID suggestions and guidelines, and a powerful regional assembly online. The region reached us in ways they never have before. I have never felt more supported by my regional staff than this past year.

When you are in the middle of the wilderness you can’t always see where you are going. The discerning, deep listening and faithfulness has produced amazing fruit over the last seven years.

I am excited to see where God is leading the region of Indiana next! †



October is CROP Hunger Walk Month in Indiana

You are invited to organize your own walk at your church, walk with other churches, or as a personal challenge in 2021.

Materials will soon be available.

Click on the website to organize a team and make pledges.

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/event/indianapolisin>

For further details contact Rev. Dr. Brooks Barrick at Reved2@hotmail.com

\$1,146,000



What is the significance of \$1,146,000? That's how much the FLOURISH! Program will have distributed to Indiana Disciples pastors by the end of 2022! We're excited about the impact of this program in the lives of our pastors and our congregations... and yet... lots of Indiana Disciples are unfamiliar with FLOURISH! and how it impacts our region! If you aren't familiar with the importance of FLOURISH! and how you can participate, keep reading!

Since 2015, the Christian Church in Indiana has been in partnership with Lilly Endowment and Pension Fund of the Christian Church, providing financial literacy education and financial grants to Indiana Disciples pastors and congregations for debt relief, retirement planning, and compensation support. This is all possible with the grant funds from Lilly Endowment and with the support of generous congregations and individuals providing matching funds.

WHY? Lilly Endowment recognized that there is a connection between strong congregations and strong communities. Clergy can better provide confident leadership for our churches when their own financial burdens are eased. Forty percent of Indiana clergy who

responded to a survey from Pension Fund of the Christian Church categorized themselves as "financially challenged." It is not uncommon for someone leaving seminary to have amassed \$74,000 to \$100,000 in educational loans. With an average annual salary of \$50,000-\$60,000, Indiana Disciples ministers often do not have sufficient funds for loan repayment. The cycle of debt and shame can take their toll on pastors and can make it challenging to lead on matters of stewardship.

WHAT ELSE? The FLOURISH! Program offers financial literacy education for pastors and congregational leaders and is available to ALL Disciples congregations in Indiana, regardless of participation in the grant program. Topics for congregational leaders and pastors include congregational finance, best practices in congregational governance, and stewardship. Sessions on preaching and teaching stewardship as well as personal finance are provided specifically for pastors (and spouses).

How can you get involved right away? Pray for the FLOURISH! Program and for Indiana clergy and congregations. Want to learn more, participate, or give? Visit indianadisciples.org/flourish or contact Sarah Riester, FLOURISH! Program Administrator (sarah@indianadisciples.org). †



Domestic Violence Resources and Training



Domestic and intimate partner violence are painful parts of our collective culture. One in 3 women, 1 in 4 men, and 1 in 3 teens experience this type of destructive control in their lifetime. Learn more and be prepared to create sanctuary space by deepening your own education around the complexities of domestic

and intimate partner violence. The region offers information on shelters, counseling, education, response, plus other resources and webinars at <http://indianadisciples.org/commissions/commission-on-unity-witness>. †

Bread for the World Webinar Draws 300 Participants



Indiana Senator Mike Braun told nearly 300 Bread for the World (BFTW) advocates that he supports investing in good nutrition as a means to not just end hunger, but to prevent the costly consequences of poor health. "Remediation is so much more costly than

preventing (poor nutrition) in the first place."

Sen. Braun addressed an audience of 300 on April 20 during the "Feeding our Economy" webinar hosted by Bread for the World, Indiana.

As the ranking member of the Nutrition Subcommittee, the senator said he was keenly interested in proper nutrition for children in Indiana, noting a need to improve their diet and nutrition. The subcommittee anticipates hearings on local farms providing food resources for school lunches.

"Currently the nutrition part of our budget will be renewed at levels that have had a good track record" with attention to making access to existing services like WIC easier, Braun said.

Find a recording of the full event here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gy6Ifjf2KE4

Bread Indiana will continue to encourage the senator to take tangible action consistent with these views, according to Disciples of Christ member Dave Miner, lead team chair. A mid-June face-to-face meeting between faith leaders and the Senator in Jasper, IN, was designed to deepen an understanding of Bread perspectives on hunger and legislation to end it. Sen. Braun has asked for a follow-up conversation later in 2021 in Indianapolis with Bread organizers.

To learn how you or your congregation can be involved with Bread for the World, contact Rev. Patricia Case, state organizer at pcase@bread.org †

SEARCH

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identifying resources for congregational studies, creating educational modules for youth and young adults, and preaching and teaching across the Region.

A full job description is available on the Region's website at this address: <http://indianadisciples.org/commissions/commission-on-unity-witness>

Interested persons should send a letter of interest with



resume and references via email to Rick Spleth, Regional Minister, at rick@indianadisciples.org by September 1, 2021. †

New IDWM Executive Director Called

Rev. Angéle Saunders Johnson has been called as the new Executive Director of Disciples Women. As an ordained Minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), she brings experience, passion, and expertise to this role. Most recently, Rev. Johnson served as the Minister of Discipleship and Outreach for Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis, Tennessee. Her prior experience includes faith-based community organizing, executive pastoral leadership, and Serving as Director of Christian Education for New Covenant Christian Church in Nashville, Tennessee.



The International Disciples Women's Ministries (IDWM) Search Committee Chair, Claretta Witherspoon, shares that the team prayed and deliberated for months to find the woman that God had ordained to fill the position of IDWM Executive Director. "We unanimously and joyfully selected Rev. Angéle Saunders Johnson. With great excitement we welcome her as the new leader for Disciples Women's Ministries in the United States and Canada. We look forward to working with her and her vision for the women in our denomination."

Rev. Angéle Saunders Johnson will officially begin her call on August 16, 2021. Rev. Sheila P. Spencer, Interim President of Disciples Home Missions shares, "We are grateful that Rev. Johnson has answered this call and we are thankful for the multiple gifts and talents that she will be able to share with Disciples Women and the Body of Christ." †

We're Building a House!

First Christian Church, Madison, discovered it had a budget surplus. After much conversation and prayer, the congregation approved sponsoring a new home build for a local family by creating a partnership with the Jefferson County Habitat for Humanity. Materials for a new house are approximately \$70,000, which determined our funding goal. Half of the funds will come from the surplus; the other half is being raised through fundraising projects. As of this writing, FCC has funds and pledges for \$61,000 leaving 9,000 to meet our goal.

In April, Pastor Bill Johnson stopped by the Habitat office to offer this partnership. "I was sitting with the Executive Director, Samantha Pierce, and Habitat's building manager who explained what our congregation was proposing. I said, we were interested in partnering to build a house." They were pleasant and thanked me. As I said we are planning to raise the entire \$70,000, the room went silent. After a moment, Samantha had tears in her eyes asking if this was really true? Assuring Samantha, it really is true, the room was no longer silent!"

Habitat and FCC partnership was officially launched during a worship service on Sunday, June 13th. Habitat's Executive Director and FCC leaders signed a covenant stating our intentions. Samantha expressed her overwhelming gratitude that FCC is the first church in Madison to fully fund a home build. "We cannot thank you enough for your generous gift. You are now an integral part of changing the lives of a local family for generations to come. [FCC is] furthering our mission of putting God's love into action, bringing people together to build a home." This partnership helped Habitat to urge the city to complete the infrastructure needed for the lot.



From the beginning, FCC had a desire to extend God's love from the steps of our church building to the ends of the world. That DNA is a sincere desire to create a better world. Founding member, David C. Branham, said it this way in a letter to his wife in 1871, "I only want to leave this world better than I found it." For example, FCC sent four members as missionaries to Japan in the late 19th Century. More recently, in 2013, FCC led the founding of a community-based food pantry named "House of Hope" which is housed in the same building as a Clearinghouse where several workforce agencies and support agencies aid those in need. This is a model in smaller counties.

Along with fundraising, FCC will have members work actively on Habitat's family selection committee, the financial coaching committee, as well as assist in building and providing refreshments for workers. FCC Elder Carol Sargent said, "This project is such a great opportunity to help our community by helping to put a family in a safe, affordable house. And it gives our congregation a chance to serve in many ways." We hoped to break ground in August with completion in the Spring of 2022.

For more information, contact Bill Johnson at (812) 365-3945, or by email at wljthree@gmail.com. †

Mexico Initiative Continues as "Conversations with Neighbors" are Planned

At the 2018 Regional Assembly our Region committed to a focus on understanding with greater depth the immigration challenge on our nation's southern border, the work of our Disciples community on the border and in Mexico, and to forging closer ties to immigrant populations in our own communities. Two trips of Indiana Disciples to Mexico occurred prior to the suspension of travel due to the COVID pandemic. More trips are anticipated when travel can resume. Meanwhile, we plan to use virtual tools to advance our understanding and connection.

Beginning in August we will offer a monthly Zoom "Conversation with Neighbors" forum to connect members of our church with a Global Ministries partner or someone working with immigrant communities in Indiana. These will be held at 5:00 p.m. EDT on the third Wednesday of the month. You can find the link on the Region's website, www.indianadisciples.org



The first of these conversations will be held on August 18 and our guest will be Kimber Nicoletti-Martinez. Kimber is the Director of the Multicultural Efforts to end Sexual Assault (MESA) program. MESA is a statewide effort focused on preventing sexual violence across the lifespan and promoting healthy communities in underserved and marginalized populations. MESA specializes in engaging and advocating for farm worker communities across the United States. Kimber is a lifelong member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and is currently active in the Federated Church of West Lafayette.

Watch the eNews for the announcement of future guests, and join us for these "Conversations with Neighbors." †

Supporting "The Indiana Christian"

The Indiana Christian has been in continuous publication since 1891 connecting Disciples of Christ congregations in Indiana with each other and with our mission to the world. Today the publication reaches over 5,200 households, including yours, with news about our church. The paper is supported by a portion of Disciples Mission Fund and by the annual gifts of readers who value this publication for the way it connects and energizes our congregations consistent with our mission as the Regional church. You are invited to use the enclosed envelope to make a gift, of whatever size, to undergird this communication ministry. Or go online at www.indianadisciples.org and hit the donate button to make a secure electronic gift. Thank you for your support. †

Camp PERFECT

By Kate Myers, 2021 Disciples Peace Fellowship Intern



It had been 7 years since I was last at camp. I've gone to camp since I was very young, but I stopped going after my first year of CYF camp (Christian Youth Fellowship). I didn't stop going because I wanted to. I got really depressed. I decided not to go my second year at the last minute. I immediately felt awful about the decision. But I was so terrified! I knew if I went, I wouldn't be able to keep it together. I wouldn't be able to hide the fact that I was unwell. And I felt out of control. And I didn't know how to deal with what was happening to me. I wasn't ready to be that vulnerable in front of all those people. If I could go back, I don't know that I would change it. I like where my life has ended up. But my premature departure from camp is something I had regrets about, so I was nervous about coming back to camp this summer.

It was perfect! Honestly perfect. It just felt right. I was so dang happy all week. The campers were wonderful, my fellow staff members were amazing. I know peace interns probably aren't supposed to say this, but my home camp really IS the best! It's not that other camps aren't amazing, they are! and it's SO obvious to me that everyone LOVES their home camps. For me, there's no place like Bedford. It just feels like home. There's just the right mixture of absurdity, hilarity, chaos, structure, love, and holy space. Camp Bedford is the perfect storm—in a good way!

The renovations are FANTABULOUS!!! The cabins are air-conditioned (and heated now too). The new craft lodge is really nice! They kept the old fireplace, which is beautiful, and added a nice gas insert to it, so there can be actual fire!!!

And the cottage! WOW! It looks like it should be in a "tiny home" magazine. So nice! If you want a nice weekend getaway spot, that cottage is the place! (I think it sleeps six, and is disabled-accessible).

I've really enjoyed being a Peace Intern, but I'm not sure what I'm going to end up taking away from it, long-term. So far though, I think it's helped me become more confident in myself. The unexpected is expected at camp and staff adapt well to many situations. You never really know what a week of camp might bring. Yet, I was able to handle it all, with the support of many amazing people along the way. With each challenge I feel more and more reassured that I can take on the world.

If you'd like to follow my summer adventures, check out the Peace Interns' blog at <https://www.disciplespeace.org/follow-the-interns>. †

OFFERING

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The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) remains vigilant and faithful in pursuing God's call to reconciliation, "breaking

down the dividing walls" that separate us from one another and God and building up God's realm on earth. †

Haven Youth Center

On May 31, 2021 the Haven Youth Center opened its doors for the 23rd year of summer programming for Martinsville youth entering 5th through 8th grades. Parents have trusted the Haven Youth Center to provide a safe place for the youth of Martinsville to drop in and hang out with friends at no cost to them. This summer we have 13 youth who have registered. One of those youth is a second-generation Haven participant.



This free drop-in program includes character development activities, guest speakers, computer and table games, arts and crafts, movies, snacks, outdoor games and weekly field trips.

The program is sponsored by grants and donations through the Morgan County Substance Abuse Council, The Byrum Trust, Rotary, The Greater Martinsville Chamber of Commerce, Lions, Kiwanis, Ladies Auxiliary of American Legion, First Christian Church and Eastview Christian

Church. Additionally, we have been blessed with donations from many faithful individuals through the years. A trained professional staff and volunteers continue to help youth feel at home at The Haven. †

Christian Theological Seminary to Install David M. Mellott as Seventh President



Christian Theological Seminary (CTS) will officially install David M. Mellott, PhD, as its seventh president in a special ceremony on Sunday, September 19, 2021, in Sweeney Chapel on CTS's campus. The theme of the installation is "How to Love a City," which celebrates Mellott's vision for the institution as it enters into a dynamic new chapter of its 150+ year history. The sermon for the event will be delivered by Rev. Dr. Willie James Jennings, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Africana Studies at Yale Divinity School. Find more information about the installation, including how to register to attend in person and where to stream the event online, at www.cts.edu/installation.

Addressing Post Pandemic Issues



What is driving your ministry? Building or mission? What should you do with your building? What does stewardship post-pandemic look like? How do we build community in a hybrid world? Answer these questions and more at the **Building Reimagining Conference**. Join Disciples Church Extension Fund and Bruce Barkhauer at the Indiana Interchurch Center, 1100 W. 42nd Street, Indianapolis on **October 21st from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Registration info coming soon! †**



CAMP

2021

