

The Indiana Christian



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Spring • 2022

Cheryl Russell Called as Associate Regional Minister

The Christian Church in Indiana is pleased to announce a new regional staff member. **Rev. Cheryl Russell** began serving as Associate Regional Minister on January 2022. Her primary responsibilities will be staffing the Region's Faith Formation Commission and Indiana Women's Council, working with children, youth, and adults to increase their faith and leadership development, especially through our summer camp program.

Cheryl has a Bachelor's degree in Elementary



Education, with a Spanish concentration, from Eureka College, and a Master of Divinity degree from Vanderbilt University Divinity School. Prior to seminary she served as a Middle School teacher. Cheryl was ordained by the Indiana Region in 2013 at her home congregation, Zionsville Christian Church.

She has been active in the life of the Region as a camp

counselor and director for seven years. She served on one of our Nurture and Certification Teams working with ministerial students and is a current participant in our FLOURISH! program on financial literacy. She has traveled on regionally sponsored pilgrimages to San Luis Potosí, Mexico and Mbandaka, Democratic Republic of Congo.

She most recently served as the Interim Minister at First Christian Church, Kokomo, and previously at First Christian Church, Noblesville, First Christian Church, Owensboro, Kentucky, and Geist Christian Church, Indianapolis and Fishers.

We welcome her to our Regional staff. †

Regional Assembly Set for November 5

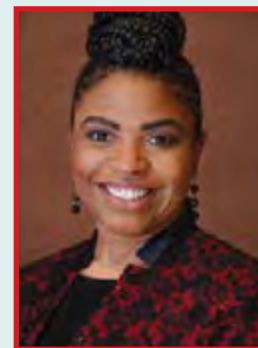
The Christian Church in Indiana will gather for our Regional Assembly on Saturday, November 5, 2022. This one-day event will be held at the Geist Christian Church—Promise Road campus, located at 12756 Promise Road, Fishers, Indiana. You are invited to gather beginning at 9:00 am for refreshments and exhibits, with the plenary beginning at 10:00 am. An afternoon worship service will conclude by 4:00 pm.



The theme for the Assembly will be "**On Promise Road.**" We are delighted that Disciples author and minister **Sandhya Rani Jha** will be our keynote speaker. Sandhya is the founder and former Executive Director of the Oakland Peace Center in California and is a widely sought-after anti-oppression trainer and consultant helping organizations get Diversity/Equity/Inclusion teams off the ground.

She is currently assisting the Indiana Region with our Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation training for clergy.

Her devotional book *Liberating Love: 365 Love Notes from God* is cherished by many in our church. She will have a new book released by Chalice Press in September 2022 whose title is *Rebels, Despots, and Saints: The Ancestors Who Free Us and the Ancestors We Need to Free*. You can read more about her on her website: sandhyajha.com



The preacher for our afternoon worship service will be **Janae Pitts-Murdock**. Janae is the recently installed Senior Pastor of Light of the World Christian Church, Indianapolis. She is the sixth Senior Pastor and the first female Senior Pastor in the 154 years history of this church. Janae has been featured in *The African American Pulpit*, a quarterly journal that has been a

repository for the best of African American preaching, and she is currently a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy in African American Preaching and Sacred Rhetoric at Christian Theological Seminary.

Both of our speakers will help us unpack the Emmaus text (Luke 24:13-35), which will serve as our theme scripture for the Assembly.

The Regional Assembly will be a "hybrid" event, meaning that you may register to attend in person for \$45, including lunch, or you can register to attend online for \$25. Registration information may be found on the Region's website: indianadisciples.org †



God's Love Endures Forever
Psalm 118

Your gift to the Easter Offering is part of God's enduring love...

Love that creates...

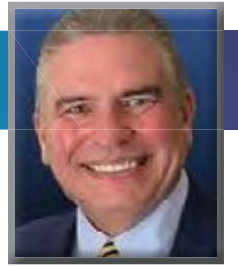
- Bible studies that challenge and inspire
- Opportunities for clergy to gather in prayer
- Spiritual care for those in prison
- Resources for mental health and trauma care

Love that inspires...

- Visionary leadership that calls on us to imagine new ways of being a church.
- New congregations that worship in a variety of languages and worship styles
- Ministries of compassion and care

EASTER SPECIAL OFFERING continued on page 4

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



Passing Along the Landmarks

In the early days of the war in Ukraine the civilian population took to the streets to prepare to defend themselves against an invading military force. Some created barriers of sandbags and used tires. Some made Molotov cocktails. But others employed a less traditional defensive technique—they removed the street signs. The thought was that if there were no directional signs posted at intersections then the invading army would find themselves confused about their location, which would hamper their progress. These self-appointed civilian

defenders were right. When familiar signs are missing, we can easily find ourselves lost. And that is really true if we find ourselves in a place we have never been before.

Many years ago, I visited Managua, Nicaragua, a city of over one million people. It was in the early days after their war, and things were in some disarray, but the most puzzling thing for me was that their roadways did not have street signs or names. Finding your way around was a challenge. The key was to learn a few central landmarks, commonly known to the populace, and then navigate from those points.

For instance, I saw an advertisement for a travel agency without a street address. Instead, their ad located their office “across from where the main entrance to the hospital used to be.” Another business indicated that they could be found “two blocks toward the lake from the little tree.”

It turned out that the “old hospital” and the “little tree” were commonly used points of reference that most persons understood, except they did not exist anymore. They were long gone due to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and the destruction of war. They were landmarks that were unseen, and until you learned them, until someone showed you where they used to be, you were lost, because you had no place from which to start.

The faith journey is similar. Unless you are shown the key landmarks of the faith, which are also unseen, you are most likely to wander aimlessly trying to find your direction. The responsibility of those of us who have responded to the Great Commission is to pass along the landmarks to all who are new so that they are not lost in their pilgrimage.

What are those landmarks? They include these things:

- God created all that there is, and it is intrinsically good
- God’s ultimate creation, humankind, tends to self-centeredness and is thus self-destructive
- Throughout time God has sought fellowship and covenant relationship with us
- In the person of Jesus Christ, God’s face and

personality is revealed in the most accessible way

- Through the witness of Jesus we are reminded that all persons have worth and dignity and are to be treated as neighbors and friends
- We are beckoned out of solitude into community, away from selfishness to service.

These may not be all the landmarks, but if you know these you can find your way around. Like the “old hospital,” they are unseen. They have to be taught, which is why Jesus made teaching a priority in the Great Commission.

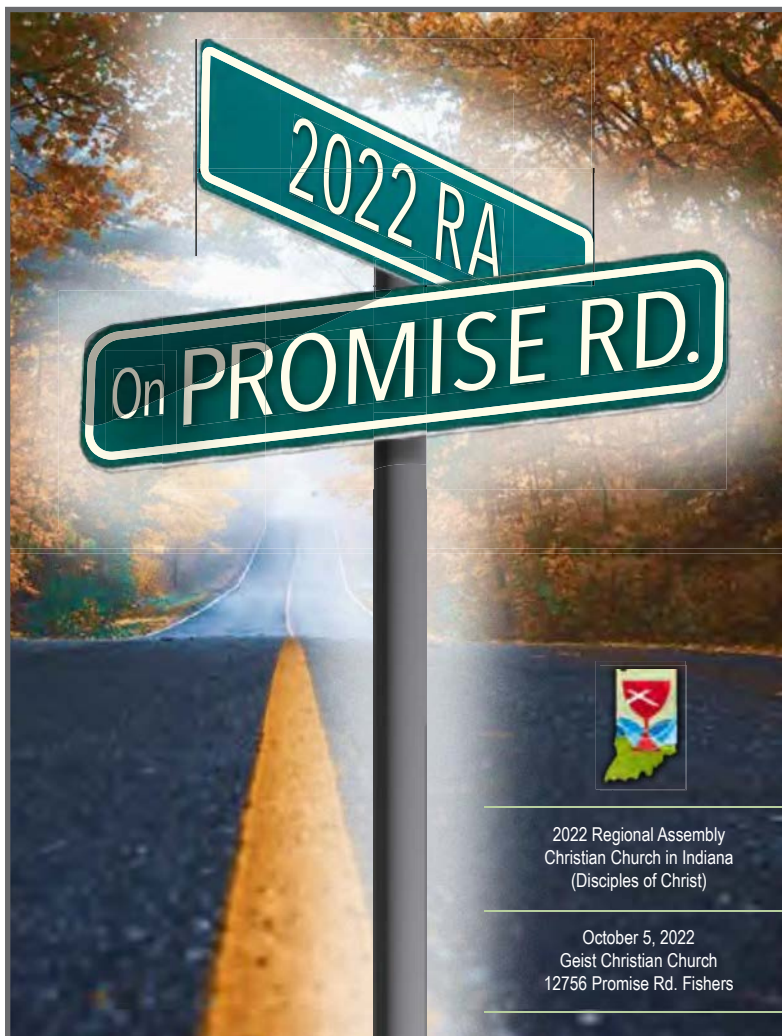
We will think about these things together when we gather this fall in Regional Assembly. Our keynoter and preacher will help us

remember the time when Jesus’ followers found themselves on a road that was an uncertain way. Things had not played out as they had hoped. We know that feeling. But a guide came along and joined their journey and with his help they began to put things back together.

The scripture calls this place the road to Emmaus. I think, though, it is the Promise Road. I look forward to meeting you there in November.

Blessings on you and your congregation.

Richard L. Spleth
Regional Minister



2022

Regional Calendar

APRIL

- 17 Easter Sunday
- 20 Finance Committee
- 30 Women’s Spring Event

MAY

- 6/7 Financial Literacy Academy
- 19 Commission on Ministry

JUNE

- 4 Regional Board Meeting

JULY

- 7 Reconciliation Training “Justice Language”

SEPTEMBER

- 17 Regional Board Meeting
- 22 Reconciliation Training “Disruptive Theology”

OCTOBER

- 14 Reconciliation Training “Practical Application”
- 14/15 Financial Literacy Academy
- 28/30 Young Adult Retreat
- 25 Healthy Boundaries

NOVEMBER

- 5 Regional Assembly
- 17 Commission on Ministry

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**SUMMER ISSUE
DEADLINE
JUNE 30, 2022**



Geist Christian Hosts Afghan Family

Geist Christian Church (GCC), Indianapolis, has been blessed to partner with Exodus Refugee Resettlement as we work together to resettle a family of five from Afghanistan. Stationed at Indiana's Camp Atterbury for weeks, the Mohabat family moved into their own apartment on January 5, 2022. Exodus reached out to the Geist team a week later. And it's been a God-gifted whirlwind (despite COVID restrictions!) ever since.

It began for the congregation last fall, when the plea went out to help the thousands of evacuated Afghans who were brought to Camp Atterbury for processing. Like so many others in our state, GCC folks collected needed items: toiletries, baby items, money used to purchase warm coats and shoes, games for the children.

Then someone stepped forward, asking if the church could help to resettle a family. And a meeting was held of all who were interested in assisting with this new ministry. A fantastic team was formed and many generous gifts arose to the surface—gifts of time, money and gift cards for clothes and shoes, personal expertise

in any number of areas, furniture, and lots of creative ideas to help. God has been at work here!

Things are made so much easier because the father of this family speaks and understands English quite well. With that, we've been able to clarify transportation needs, school supplies for the children, needed furniture and more. Since the mother knows how to sew, a sewing

machine was given to her along with sewing notions to get her started.

A very successful trip to JoAnn Fabrics was planned, where gift cards from the congregation were spent on yards of fabric to be made into clothes for her and her three daughters.

We rented a U-Haul truck and took the last of some very large items (a used couch, an area rug, a men's

bicycle) to them, and some of us were treated to a delicious Afghan meal in return.

Meanwhile, the church continues to walk alongside Exodus Resettlement to assist with other needs. We are beginning to provide transportation to dentist and medical appointments, and are raising further funds to help with rent and utilities. We are working to establish internet service for them so that the children have access to online learning and so that the job search can begin.

There have also been some snags along the way, the greatest right now being at the federal level where social security cards are issued. Social security cards are needed to apply for a job, and so they wait patiently for those cards.

This is a tremendous ministry for the Geist Christian community, who have been lovingly and generously responsive to the need. †



Exodus Refugee, located in Indianapolis, has welcomed refugees and asylees from more than 50 different countries, cultures, languages, faiths, and political opinions since 1981. They help establish new lives in Indiana.

During months of the pandemic, Exodus welcomed 175 new refugees from seven different countries, while providing ongoing services to refugees who already call Indiana home.

Christian Church in Indiana has been a long-standing partner with Exodus since their inception.

Ministry Milestones

MINISTRY CHANGES

Rick Harting concluded his ministry at Corydon Christian Church, Corydon on November 14 and began serving as Senior Pastor at Franklin Central and Eastgate Christian Churches, Indianapolis on December 5

Steve Garrett concluded his ministry as Interim Minister at Franklin Central and Eastgate Christian Churches, Indianapolis on November 28

Greg Eberhard concluded his ministry at First Christian Church, Valparaiso on November 30

Tim Trussell-Smith began serving as Senior Pastor at First Christian Church, Valparaiso on December 1

Mike Srbljan concluded serving as Sunday pastor at Sheridan First Christian Church on December 26

Amanda Meade concluded her ministry as Senior Pastor at First Christian Church, Jeffersonville on December 30

Charissa Ramey concluded her ministry as Regional Coordinator for Camp Ministries on December 31

Cheryl Russell concluded her ministry as Interim Senior Pastor at First Christian Church, Kokomo on January 2, and began as Associate Regional Minister on January 4

Georgia Chambers began serving as Interim Minister at First Christian Church, Wadesville on January 2

Terry Minton began serving as Interim Senior Minister at First Christian Church, Jeffersonville on January 10

Rachel McLoughlin concluded her service as Associate Minister at West Street Christian Church, Tipton on January 23

Randy Miles began serving as the Interim Minister at Corydon Christian Church, Corydon on January 30

Diane Spleth concluded her ministry and retired from Allisonville Christian Church, Indianapolis on January 31

Maribeth Westerfield and **Joe Allison** concluded their interim ministry at Madison Christian Church, Frankton on January 31

John Williams began serving as Interim Minister at Allisonville Christian Church, Indianapolis on February 1

Peggy Hickman retired as the Interim Pastor of First Christian Church, Gas City on February 28

Karen Burkley closed her ministry as pastor of South Side Christian Church, Kokomo on March 13

Eric Brotheridge closed his ministry as Sunday pastor of First Christian Church, Bedford on March 13

Karen Fraser Moore concluded her transitional ministry at Bethany Christian Church, Evansville on March 15

Rex Kibler began serving as the Interim Minister at South Side Christian Church, Kokomo on March 16

BIRTHS

Piper Marie Eberhard was born to Stephen and Megan Eberhard on March 13. Stephen is the Pastor of Wabash Christian Church, Wabash

Iris Viola Ivey was born to Lee Ivey and Joi Crenshaw on March 15. Lee is a Disciples minister and mental health counselor †

Disaster and Grace

By Robert Harris, Retired Minister

It seems inevitable that as soon as a disaster strikes some well-known Christian spokesperson will say that it is God's judgement on the evils of the world. While God used the great flood during Noah's time to judge the wicked, every natural disaster isn't God's judgement.

On December 10, 2021, the local Louisville television stations reported tornadoes that had hit Arkansas, Kentucky, and the corner of Tennessee. Damages stretched 163 miles. In Kentucky alone, Mayfield lost the entire downtown, and over 340 homes were destroyed or damaged so badly they would need to be rebuilt. Hundreds of families lost their jobs and for some, their lives. We sat with tears in our eyes, speechless, in our comfortable home thinking of the thousands of people who were affected by the damaging weather just weeks before Christmas.

What I witnessed while working with relief assistance in Kentucky was people from all over traveling to help feed, clothe, and offer shelter to those who lost everything they had. Even in the midst of disaster, God gives us the ability to rebuild and help us improve our quality of life.

Volunteers from Central Christian Church, New Albany, Indiana put together a plan to assist families in Kentucky affected by the tornadoes. Our faith community raised over \$10,000 in aid. They traveled each month to Dawson Springs, Princeton, and Bowling Green to deliver tarps, storage containers, water, Pepsi products, clothing, shoes, children's toys, and hundreds of dollars of gift cards.

Caroline Hamilton-Arnold, coordinator at Week of Compassion, shared with us ways we could get involved. Our plan is to have a mobile kitchen unit readied to serve hot meals to the volunteers who come to help in Dawson Springs and



Central Christian Church members Mary Harris, Robert Harris, George McKinney, Carol McKinney



Princeton. We were delighted to have this opportunity to be a symbol of hope.

In traveling to these areas, we see not only the work done by our congregation but also that done through Week of Compassion offerings. †

EASTER SPECIAL OFFERING

Continued from page 1

Love that makes a difference...

- Global ministry partners who work for justice, reconciliation and peace
- Colleges, universities and theological institutions that nurture Christian leaders who are transforming church, society and the world
- Collaborative response in the wake of disaster
- Support for congregational service ministries that serve hungry neighbors

Your gift to the Easter Special Offering benefits general ministries, allowing us to do more together than we can alone. More ministry. More impact. More of God's love in the world. Please give generously to this year's Easter Offering through your congregation or online at disciplesmissionfund.org †



Eastgate Christian Steps Out in Faith in Opening an Adult Day Care Center

How does a congregation discern the plans that God has for them? Eastgate Christian Church, Indianapolis, has been asking this question for a number of years.

But in 2016, an opportunity presented itself when the congregation was invited to partner with a United Methodist Church (also in Indianapolis) to provide the space for an adult day center. Through the financial assistance of Disciples Building Fund, they renovated what was once their Sunday School wing into a space that would provide care and support for older adults and adults with disabilities.

Eastgate began to lease that 3,000 square foot space, using the rent provided by the Methodist Church to repay the building loan. For the next six years the partnership thrived. The adult day center provided wonderful care to the seniors who attended. Eastgate members volunteered, donated meals, and generally benefitted from the activity that took place in their facility Monday through Friday. Several families also used the services provided there, allowing their elders to remain at home and offering needed respite to the caregivers.

Enter 2020 and COVID. Both churches experienced changes in church leadership and staff as well as financial challenges. For a time, the adult day center was forced to close its doors. Eastgate, fearing that the adult day ministry might be a victim of the times, began to ask the question, "Is God calling us to transition from being a landlord, to making the adult day center our own ministry?" A series of meetings was held among their board, clergy, Regional Minister Rick Spleth and other community members. By late 2021, Eastgate Christian came to the decision to develop a timeline to end their lease with the Methodist Church, raise funds, and re-start the adult day center with a new name, as their own ministry. "God was calling us to step out in faith again," said Phyllis Coward, Board Treasurer and volunteer at the adult day center.

On January 1, 2022, Autumn Leaves of Eastgate Adult Day Center opened. To the clients who attend, things weren't much different. The space is the same and so are the staff members. The changes are mostly behind the scenes. But, to Eastgate, everything is new.

"This is our ministry now and we are the ones who have to make it successful," said Jeanette Moody, Moderator. "The adult day center is a great fit for our congregation. There are many families in this community who are caring for an elderly person in their home. This ministry makes a huge difference in the quality of their lives," she added.

Autumn Leaves of Eastgate Adult Day Center has benefitted in many ways from the support of the Indiana Region of the Christian Church. Regional staff members have worked with Eastgate Christian, guiding them through some administrative processes, and provided marketing, design, and printing services.

For more information about Autumn Leaves of Eastgate or to learn more about adult day services, call 317 820 3233 or visit www.autumnleavesofeastgate.org. †

Candace Boyd Simmons Called as Reconciliation Program Coordinator

Phase Two of Anti-Racism & Pro-Reconciliation Training rolls out this summer

In November of 2021, the Indiana Region called Candace Boyd Simmons, current Ministry Associate to the additional role of Reconciliation Program Coordinator. In her role, she will:



- Develop/identify reconciliation education for youth and young adults, and train counselors for regional programs
- Coordinate and help develop clergy anti-racism training programs
- Identify and organize reconciliation resources for congregations
- Share the vision and mission of Reconciliation Ministry through speaking and social media

Currently, her time is spent developing training programs for the next phase of racial reconciliation and anti-racism efforts that our church is committed to. †



This summer, Sandhya Jha, in partnership with Reconciliation Ministry, will lead four training modules that will engage clergy in exciting new ways, assist them in building relationships with other clergy across our region and continue the work of becoming an anti-racist church.

Clergy will need to take at least one course but are encouraged to take others.

PROGRAMMING OUTLINE

The four 3-hour training modules to cover 2022 and 2023 are:

- Justice Language
- Disruptive Theology
- Practical Application
- Confronting the Powers

2022 Program Dates:

- Thursday July 7, 2022, 1-4 pm EST - Justice Language
- Thursday September 22, 12-3 pm EST - Disruptive Theology
- Friday October 14, 2022, 12-3 pm EST - Practical Application
- Thursday November 17, 2022, 3-6 pm EST - Confronting the Powers



Join us on Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 5:00 pm (Eastern) as the Mexico Initiative of the Indiana Region engages in dialogue with Jerri Handy, an ordained Disciples of Christ minister who is working for Global Ministries of our church at Las Memorias Hostel, in Tijuana, Mexico.

The Hostel seeks to support adults and minors living with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, as well as their family members. Las Memorias Hostel provides housing assistance, food, medicine, transportation, self-help sessions, and educational activities to prevent HIV/AIDS. Read more about our conversation neighbors at indianadisciples.org/mexico-initiative. †



A Cyberattack and What We Learned

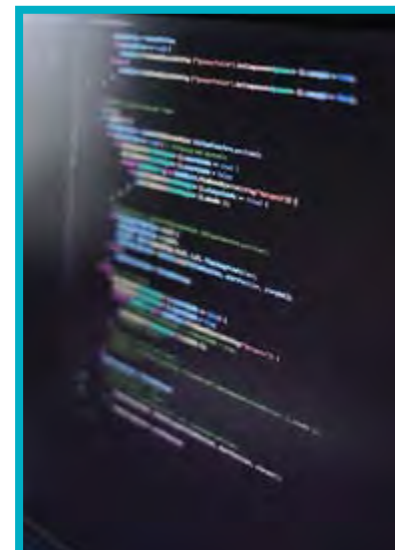
By Rev. Roxie McNelly, Senior Pastor
First Christian Church, Martinsville

On a Sunday morning in December, I arrived early and opened the sanctuary computer to find a strange message appear on the monitor. I tried a “control-alt-delete” and rebooted the computer, but still couldn’t get around the error message. I took a picture of it and texted it to our technology chair. He said the message looked strange and told me he was on his way to church. He tried to work through the issue, but at five minutes before worship he broke the news that we had been hacked. No access to the computer. No screens. No livestreaming for that morning.

Our server was encrypted and locked, as was our backup server. EVERYTHING was gone! First Christian Church Martinsville had become victim of a cyberattack.

We notified the congregation and reported the attack to the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center and the Indiana Attorney General through their websites.

It was a bad time of year to lose our electronic data, as we were about to send out year-end giving statements and provide staff with year-end tax documentation. Because we had paper documentation, our finance secretary and volunteers were able to re-create our QuickBooks files and got everything out as scheduled. We also offered a year of credit monitoring for current and former church staff, as their social security numbers were possibly compromised.



We were very blessed to have IT staff, a financial secretary, and an office manager. Not every church has an expanded staff. If you are such a church and find yourself in this situation, you will have to reach out for help.

Currently, we are still gathering data from our congregants and planning to do some cyber safety training. We now have an insurance rider that allows monies for investigative work and replacing of systems if/when we get hit again. Additionally, we are looking to add a policy that will help prepare a future team for such attacks. You may want to begin such a process at your church.

If you are a smaller congregation with limited tech resources, we offer these suggestions:

- Ask a trusted IT company to do an evaluation of your system.
- Nonprofit businesses like TechSoup.org can offer discounted equipment, software and advice.
- There are also grants you can apply for to help with costs.
- If you have a computer system hosted on site, you need to have a backup system. In our case, we were hit with a newer computer virus that also targeted our local backup server.
- If your church is cyberattacked, remember that it is going to take time to recover.

A View from the Office of the General Minister & President

By Shannon Pope

Executive Assistant to the General Minister and President
(of the Disciples of Christ)

Author Leila Summers said, "Sometimes the only reason for us to be somewhere else is to see things from a different perspective." I have been a Disciple my entire life and a life-long member of Light of the World Christian Church in Indianapolis.



As a child, my congregation provided a spiritual foundation and my first view of "church." But as an adult that view changed. I learned to see things through a wider lens. I began to understand the role of our local churches and their combined impact in a region.

In 2020, I accepted a position in the Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP) where I currently serve as Executive Assistant to the General Minister and President. This was not a move that I had planned, yet the opportunity was there. I found comfort in this call to expand my connection to persons, institutions, communities, and communication styles and vocabularies across the United States and Canada.

Socrates said, "You don't know what you don't know." As I began my journey in the OGMP, this quote resonated with me. Initially, I was excited to be learning about all the things I didn't think I knew. Every religious concept, principle, and acronym seemed brand new to me, as I now view it from a different perspective.

I notice now what discipleship looks like across the span of the wider church. It is a privilege to witness covenant relationships at work on a daily basis.

The General Minister and President (GMP) and the Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP) work with the General Assembly and global ecumenical partners across the world to share God's limitless love.

I knew General Assembly to be an amazing spiritual event. But it is not just an event. It is the actual entity that includes the whole church—a wider view. My understanding of the moderator team and the way they partner with the general board in the service of our church has grown.

It has been a joy to see the magnitude of the work that is done by regional ministers in service to 31 regions to support and grow the Church. Disciples are actively making a difference in general ministries, congregations, colleges, universities, theological schools, and other settings throughout the world.

A wider view can expose available resources and support that we may not know are available to assist us. My new perspective has shown a view of all the people and components needed to maintain our position as a world denomination.

General Minister and President Terri Hord Owens challenges us to imagine God's limitless love at work, in our ministries and in the world. Imagining God's limitless love challenges us to look at our ministries from a new perspective and to try to imagine how God sees our work together. †



FLOURISH! Program Offers Support to Pastors Impacted by COVID-19 Financial Challenges

By Sarah Riester, FLOURISH! Program Coordinator

The Indiana Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has entered the seventh year of the FLOURISH! Program and the need for the program continues. We offered our first Financial Relief Grants and Compensation Support Grants in 2016. The program was designed to address results from a 2015 survey by Pension Fund and the Christian Church in Indiana that found:

- It was not uncommon for persons to leave seminary with \$75,000 to \$100,000 in education loans.
- Meanwhile, Indiana Disciples ministers, on average, had an annual salary of \$50,000 to \$60,000 which is often not sufficient for loan repayment.
- 40% of respondents in the survey categorized themselves as "financially challenged."

Education costs and student debt are at crisis levels across our society, but the issue is far more acute for many pastors. With college and seminary often taking eight or more years to complete, debts mount but salaries after graduation are not proportional to the debt accrued. While an Indiana Disciples minister, on average, earns \$50-\$60 thousand a year, many new to ministry or serving under-resourced communities make significantly less.

Our charge when we began FLOURISH! was to address these financial challenges and others facing pastoral leaders. In some instances, the challenge is not educational debt but instead, having very little left after current expenses to be able to save for emergencies or retirement. Some pastors carry medical debts for themselves and other family members. For others, moving to a different community to begin a new ministry or time in transition has lasting financial implications.

In the summer of 2021, Lilly Endowment offered an opportunity to apply for supplemental

funds to further address clergy economic challenges with focus on the impact of COVID-19 on clergy compensation and to address the inequality between communities, particularly communities of color. The Indiana Region was awarded an additional \$250,000 in late 2021 plus the possibility of receiving up to \$75,000 more in 2023, dependent upon additional matching funds raised. The first priority for these funds is to provide supplemental grants for former FLOURISH! grantees who have been most impacted by COVID-19 with emphasis on those pastors serving under-resourced congregations. The financial literacy education and initial grant dollars have made a significant impact on individual pastor's financial situations prior to the pandemic. We do not want the financial setbacks of COVID, exacerbated by systemic inequality, to undo the progress made thus far.

FLOURISH! is also entering a new phase of partnership with Pension Fund in their program for new pastors across the U.S. The FLOURISH! Program is providing grant and support funds for five Indiana pastors in their first five years of ministry. Grantees will participate in financial literacy and peer groups similar to those provided up until now by FLOURISH!

The agreement with Lilly Endowment when accepting each phase of funding to address clergy economic problems was that the Indiana Region raise matching funds. To date, the Indiana Region has matched funds totaling almost \$712,000. We are required to raise an additional \$25,000 to complete our Phase II commitment. Up to an additional \$75,000 will be matched dollar for dollar in 2023 based on additional gifts received and formally pledged by the end of September 2023.

Want to learn more, participate, or give? Visit indianadisciples.org/flourish or contact Sarah Riester, FLOURISH! Program Administrator (sarah@indianadisciples.org). †

Pastors invest significant resources to answer the call to ministry. The investment of funds from Lilly Endowment, Disciples donors, and the Indiana Region provides some relief for pastors. A recent FLOURISH! graduate summed it up by saying:

I am so incredibly grateful to the Indiana Region, and the Lilly Endowment who have taken an interest in empowering me to become not just financially secure, but to feel hopeful about my future. When people ask me about my call to ministry, I often share that I couldn't imagine myself doing anything else with my life. As part of that call, prior to the FLOURISH! Program, I had always just assumed that meant that I would be in a bad financial state and that this was simply a burden that I would need to accept as part of the deal. This program has opened my world and given me the breathing room necessary to begin thinking not just about the health of my congregation (which is very important), but also about my own financial health. I can't fully express on paper what all this has meant to me.

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.



Indiana Disciples Invited to March in Washington with the Poor People's Campaign

You are invited to join Disciples and other people of faith in a march on Washington, Saturday, June 18, 2022. Thousands are expected to gather on the National Mall that day as part of the Poor People's Campaign.

At the Disciples General Assembly held in Indianapolis in 2017, delegates called upon all expressions of our church to lend support to the Poor People's Campaign, a national call for moral revival led by Dr. William Barber, Disciples minister from North Carolina. Dr. Barber has sought to continue the unfinished work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to summon our nation's effort and energy to bring justice to the poor. Details of this mobilization and organization among people of faith are documented on the website: www.poorpeoplescampaign.org.

Dr. Barber's plea, echoing the preaching of Dr. King, is to challenge the evils of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, ecological devastation and the nation's distorted morality of religious nationalism.

Disciples minister Alvin O'Neal Jackson is serving as the National Executive Director of the June 20th march. Busses have been arranged from 337 departure points across the nation to bring people to Washington for this event. Disciples in our Region can sign up to ride one of these busses at the website: <https://rally.co/poor-peoples-assembly>. There are departure points in Bloomington, Elkhart, Evansville, Fort Wayne, Gary, Indianapolis, Portage, and South Bend. Louisville, Kentucky is also a departure point.

These restroom-equipped motor coaches will depart on Friday evening, June 17, in time for the rally on the National Mall, and then return to each departure city by early Sunday morning, June 19. The cost, in the range of \$140, varies by departure location and increases closer to the event. You are encouraged to book your seat soon and invite others to join you on this historic trip.

You can request a full refund of your registration seven days prior to the event if you are unable to attend. †



Disciples Women Host Spring Event

Disciples Women from across Indiana will gather on Saturday, April 30, from 11 am to 3 pm (Eastern). The event, the first in-person since August 2019, will take place at Avon Christian Church (ACC) in Avon. All are welcome to connect with Disciples Women in Indiana as we restore, expand, and thrive with the theme "Family Tree."

Maribeth Westerfield, retired Regional Coordinator for Women's Ministries, will be recognized for her service. Associate Regional Minister Cheryl Russell will be welcomed as she now fills this new role and will offer the keynote address for this gathering.

Morning check-in begins at 10:30 am (ET) with programming at 11 am (ET). Boxed lunches will be served with seating in ACC's picnic pavilion. Following lunch is small group discussions to connect the scripture with our own lives. We will end our day around the communion table.

For many decades our women's events have concluded with bringing forth Blessing Box Offerings. The Blessing Box has generated millions of dollars in mission support. Since 2007, 50% of the donations go directly to the ministries of the International Disciples Women and 50% go to the Disciples Mission Fund. Please make checks payable to Disciples Mission Fund.

Our event mission project will be in support of Family Promise of Hendricks County. Your donations for men, women and children's toiletry items are welcome. Suggestions are full-sized hair products, toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, soap, body lotion, razors, shaving cream, feminine hygiene products, hairbrushes and combs.

Registration for those attending in-person is \$20. An option for attending virtually is also available (\$10). Registration is required for both in-person and virtual. Virtual attendees will receive an email with a link to join the morning and closing sessions electronically. If childcare is needed, provide names and ages at registration. Lunch will be provided for children in childcare. Register here: <http://indianadisciples.org/upcoming-events>.

We look forward to seeing you at Avon Christian Church (7236 E County Rd 100 S, Avon) on April 30. If you have any questions, contact Catherine Carvey, President of the Indiana Women's Council at ccarvey1@indy.rr.com or 317-847-1615; or Cheryl Russell at cheryl@indianadisciples.org. †

Willing to Respond

By Caroline Hamilton-Arnold, Week of Compassion

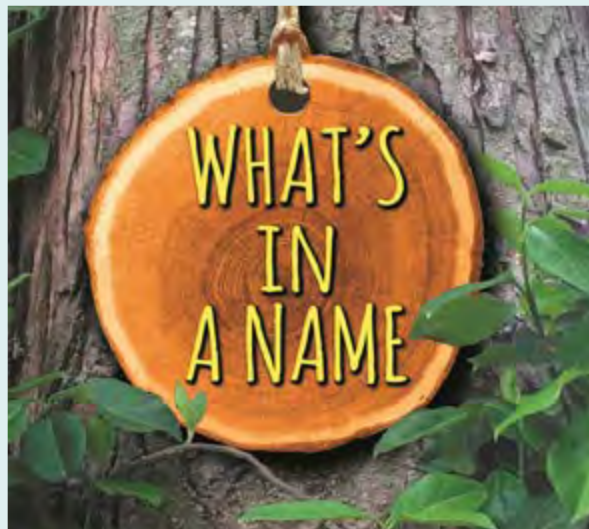
After disasters, Disciples are often eager to help—in their communities and in places multiple states away, but we don't always know the best ways to serve. Week of Compassion is part of the launch of a new tool to network congregations for disaster preparedness and response: Willing to Respond!

You can register your congregation today to show that you are willing to respond after a disaster. Week of Compassion and Willing to Respond will help connect you with tools, resources, and other congregations to reduce your risk from disaster and to be ready to help your neighbors when disaster strikes.

Week of Compassion staff can also help guide your congregation through risk assessments, asset mapping, and planning for how you can best respond. Responding to disasters—and preparing in advance—is faithful, essential, and transformational.

You can learn more at www.willingtorespond.org and at www.weekofcompassion.org/how-to-prepare-for-a-disaster.html.





Hi Camp Friends!

I have been known by many names in my life. Of course, most frequently I use the name my parents gave me when I was born.

But over the years friends have used various forms of my given name as nicknames. Once in college someone tried calling me Rusty as a play on my last name but luckily that didn't stick. When my mom is mad at me she uses my full name.

In 2013, I was ordained and began using the title "Reverend." I'm pretty proud of that one because I worked really hard for it and it reflects God's call in my life and honors those who saw that call in me even before I could.

Thirteen years ago, I was given a name that I did not earn but probably means that most to me: Aunt.

Names are important. They reflect who we are, where we have come from, the journey that we've taken to get where we are. Throughout the Bible, there are stories that reflect the importance of names. Some names are bestowed by angelic decree. Some names are accompanied by a list of those who have come before. Sometimes names are changed because of a profound experience with the divine.

Even as we continue to shape our identity through our names and titles throughout our lives, there is a name we all share, a name that does not change. God calls us each beloved. God calls us each child. And we are invited to claim our identity as those named by God.

This summer at camp, campers and staff will consider the question: What's in a Name? They will go up the mountain with Moses and be assured that God knows us each by name. They will climb a tree with Zacchaeus and learn that our identity in Christ transcends the labels others may assign to us. They will wrestle with God, like Jacob, and see how important moments can change us and reroute our path. And all of this amid swimming, singing, roasting marshmallows, leading skits, worshipping, and making friends.

Camp is a wonderful opportunity to be part of a community of fun, friendship, and faith. Whether it is at Bedford Camp and Conference Center or Geneva Camp and Conference Center, there is a place for everyone at camp. Registration is open for campers and scholarships are available. There are also opportunities for adults to join in the fun as counselors and directors. You can find information on the Christian Church in Indiana website (www.indianadisciples.org) or by contacting me at cheryl@indianadisciples.org.

I am always excited to visit churches to promote camp, so don't hesitate to invite me. I hope to see your face and learn your name as I visit camps this summer!

Cheryl

Cheryl Russell
Associate Regional Minister



2022 Summer Camps

Christian Church in Indiana (Disciples of Christ)

	GENEVA	BEDFORD	
You and Me 1 (3 days)	June 13-15		(age 5+ and an adult)
New Beginnings (3 days)	June 13-15	June 27-29	(completed gr. 1-3)
Explorers	June 13-18	June 20-25	(completed gr. 4-5)
You and Me 2 (3 days)	June 20-22		(age 5+ and an adult)
M.A.D (Music Art Drama)	June 20-25		(completed gr. 6-8 & 9-12)
Middle School	June 27-July 2	July 11-16	(completed gr. 6-8)
High School	June 27-July 2	July 4-9	(completed gr. 9-12)
CROSS (Recreation/Sports)	June 27-July 2		(completed gr. 6-8 & 9-12)

Early Bird Fees: 6-day camps: **\$415**; 3-day camps: **\$235** (add \$25 after May 15th registrations)
Visit genevacenter.org for Geneva camp registration/info. Visit indianadisciples.org for Bedford camp registration/info.
Scholarships for Disciples campers at Bedford and Geneva camps are available. Visit indianadisciples.org to download.



Come & See Camp!

All are welcome to participate in this opportunity to "Come & See" what church camp is like! There will be games, activities, a chance to meet some of the camp staff and—S'mores! This is a great opportunity for first-time campers to experience what camp will be like—and a time for families to see what their camper will be doing. Join us for a fun afternoon at camp with the family. We hope you will take some time to "Come & See" camp!

Geneva Camp and Conference Center

5282 N Old US Hwy 31, Rochester, IN 46975

Sunday, April 24; 2-5 pm (Eastern)

Bedford Camp and Conference Center

33 Church Camp Road, Bedford, IN 47421

Sunday, May 1; 2-5 pm (Eastern)

Got questions?

Contact Rev. Cheryl Russell
at cheryl@indianadisciples.org.