

The Indiana Christian

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Summer • 2022

Regional Board Approves \$100,000 Gift to The Bedford Camp for New Swimming Pool

The Regional Board of the Christian Church in Indiana voted on June 4 to invest \$100,000 in the Bedford Camp and Conference Center for the purchase of a new swimming pool. The Board met at the camp in March and were impressed by the dramatic improvements that have been made to the camp over the last two years including the construction of the new "Old Hearth Lodge." The current pool, installed in 1975, is one remaining "big item" that needed to be addressed.

The Board's action was taken after review by the



Finance Committee, with the encouragement of Regional Moderator, Julia Johnson, who said, "I urge you to look at the needs of a pool at Bedford camp not as an expense item but as an investment in the future. I strongly feel that when we find ourselves in good financial times, it is our duty to use those funds wisely but also as encouragement where we see the vision of our church being lived out daily in our churches and people. May you think of the possibility to share resources to do God's work in this place, to raise up new leaders in our Region."

Conversations are underway with a contractor for a potential fall 2022 start in order to have a new pool in place for the 2023 camping season. The new pool will be a "sport" pool, no more than five feet in depth, for the safety of swimmers and to facilitate volleyball and other games.

The Region had the opportunity to make this gift due to the generosity of our congregations over the last several years which has led to a substantial increase in "undesignated" financial

reserves. The Region itself was the beneficiary of a \$100,000 gift from the East Side Christian Church in Evansville. Those funds are being used to support the addition of a new Associate Regional Minister.

The Bedford Camp and Conference Center, a former YMCA camp, was purchased by the Region in 1952 and summer camps for children and youth have been held there continuously since then. The camp was sold to First Christian Church, Bedford, in 1972 who have been faithful partners and stewards of the property. The Region has continued to invest in the maintenance and development of the camp, most notably in 1992 when the Region contributed \$250,000 toward the construction of the Overlook Lodge. The Bedford Camp, along with the Geneva Camp and Conference Center in Rochester, Indiana, now receives an annual distribution of \$25,000 for capital needs from the Barbee Camp Endowment Fund. †

Two "Guides" Selected for The Regional Assembly on November 5

When two of Jesus' disciples found themselves in despair on the Emmaus road, as described in Luke 24, a "guide" came along who helped them re-assemble their faith in a challenging time. We, too, walk in a challenging time, so we have invited two guides to assist us: **Sandhya Rani Jha** and **Janae Pitts-Murdock**. These two powerful women will help us name and claim our mission in this moment.

The Regional Assembly this year is a one-day event on Saturday, November 5. We will come together under the theme "On Promise Road" and our gathering site will literally be on Promise Road—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 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. Online attendees will be active participants with an opportunity to interact with each other and our keynoter. Registration information may be found on the Region's website: indianadisciples.org



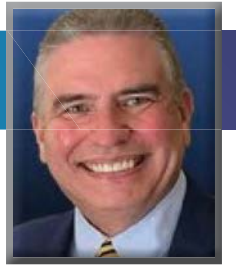
Sandhya Rani Jha will be our keynote speaker. An ordained Disciples minister, Sandhya is a widely sought-after anti-oppression trainer and consultant helping organizations get Diversity/Equity/Inclusion teams off the ground. She is currently assisting the Indiana Region with our Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation training for clergy. 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 Senior Pastor of Light of the World Christian Church, Indianapolis. She is currently a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy in African American Preaching and Sacred Rhetoric at Christian Theological Seminary. You can read more about her on her congregation's website: lovelwcc.org

Join us at Regional Assembly 2022! †

In The Spirit Richard L. Spleth, Indiana Regional Minister



It's Time for Conversation, Commitment and Change on Gun Violence

I spent a week earlier this summer at church camp. It was a wonderful time creating community with 31 fourth and fifth graders exploring the contours of our faith. I am ready to go again. One conversation at the end of the week saddened me though.

As we were making our good-byes the morning that camp ended, I had a moment to affirm one youth, let's call him Billy, who had shown great leadership and personal investment in the week. I thanked him for the positive way he had participated and asked him what he would tell his home congregation about his experience the following Sunday. "Well, we probably won't go this week," he said. I asked why not, and he said, "Our pastor is on a leave, and we are having substitute preachers and my parents think they talk too much about gun control." I asked if his family had guns, they did, and I asked if they were stored safely and securely, and he affirmed that they were. So I said, "You know a lot of people in the church are really concerned about the ways in which week after week somewhere in our country someone uses a gun to hurt others, often ending the lives of multiple people at the same time. So that is why you are hearing about this more frequently at your church, because this is a problem that we have not figured out how to address." He nodded that he understood, and I expressed

my hope that he would have the chance to tell his home congregation about his week at camp.

Billy does not go to a Disciples congregation. Our camps gather children and youth from a variety of Protestant traditions, particularly the camps at Geneva which we host in partnership with the Presbyterian church. I am saddened, though, that raising the issue of gun violence in our society has caused his parents to lessen their participation in his church. I do not know if the "substitute preachers" Billy's family has experienced have been clumsy in their presentation, or artfully skillful. I do know that as a nation, and even within the church, we have become deeply polarized about this topic. We do so, though, at our peril.

And then, just days after my conversation as camp ended, seven lives were taken among parade goers in Highland Park, Illinois, including the parents of a two-year-old left wandering the street.

This tragedy follows so closely the loss of life in a Buffalo supermarket, a Tulsa medical center, and an Uvalde, Texas school. If you count a "mass shooting" as an incident in which four or more persons are killed or injured, there have been 300 such incidents in our nation only halfway through the year including most recently the shooting

at the Greenwood Park Mall in Indiana. Gun violence is now the number one cause of death for children and youth in the United States. Surely God weeps. I know that we are numb. When do we say, "Enough?"

A survivor of the shooting in Highland Park, Illinois said, "there is no place safe." And the mayor of that community, lamenting the carnage that had occurred on their streets, said, that "other countries have people who have mental challenges, anger issues, and violent tendencies, but do not have the ease of access to weapons that are designed for war."

We must change this pattern to save our nation and protect God's children. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), at our 2015 General Assembly, called for legislation to ban assault weapons and strengthen background checks, but we have made scant progress on either issue. In the same resolution we noted that there is a clear, racialized difference in the ways white Americans and Americans of color have been granted the right to bear arms, and communities of color are much more likely to become victims of gun violence, too often at the hands of law enforcement.

Illinois already has some of the strictest gun laws in the country, including universal background checks, red flag warnings and safe storage requirements, but their citizens are made vulnerable

by the relatively lax gun laws in Indiana. Last year the city of Chicago traced 850 guns used to commit a crime in the city to a single gun store in Gary. So we are compelled to ask, "What sort of neighbor are we?"

Raising this issue within our church family brings risk. It has caused Billy's family to suspend regular worship. Failing to address this issue, and other attendant ones, is an even greater risk. Nothing will change without conversation and commitment. I hope you will have the courage to talk with others in your church about

ways we can each use our voice and vote to impact the community we share for good. If we hope to walk together on the "Promise Road" let us make sure that it is safe in the end for all to do so.

Blessings on you and your congregation.

Richard L. Spleth
Regional Minister

2022

Regional Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- 13 Nurture and Certification
- 17 Regional Board Meeting
- 22 Reconciliation Training "Disruptive Theology"

OCTOBER

- 1 Commissioned Ministers
- 11 Nurture and Certification
- 14 Reconciliation Training "Practical Application"
- 14 & 15 Financial Literacy Academy
- 25 Healthy Boundaries
- 28-30 Young Adult Retreat

NOVEMBER

- 5 Regional Assembly
- 17 Commission on Ministry
- 17 Reconciliation Training "Confronting the Powers"
- 24 Thanksgiving, Regional Office closed

DECEMBER

- 3 Regional Board Meeting

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**FALL ISSUE
DEADLINE
OCTOBER 21, 2022**





Updates to Anti-Racism and Pro-Reconciliation Training

By Candace Boyd Simmons, Reconciliation Program Coordinator

In 1996, the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) approved the formation of a church-wide process to discern the nature of racism in North America and to develop ways of helping congregations address racism. Out of this process, an Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation initiative was put before the church. At the July 1998 meetings, the Administrative Committee and the General Board approved this initiative. That would tell you that The Disciples of Christ has been fighting for justice for many years.

In the almost 30 years that this initiative came to be, the Indiana region has participated actively in helping our clergy and lay members take an active role in breaking down barriers of racism. We developed training programs (ARPR) in partnership with Reconciliation Ministry of the General Church.

Regional Assembly (Resolution 1601) action in 2016, made the charge to all commissioned and ordained ministers who desire standing within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana to participate in regionally sponsored ARPR trainings every five years, in addition to the Healthy Boundaries training requirement.

In the first five years of the ARPR Trainings, Indiana has trained over 300 clergy and lay persons.

Now, we are ready to go the next level.

This year's trainings will take place via ZOOM and will be facilitated by Sandhya Jha, Disciples minister and author. In this next round, we will focus on the following:

- The theology of the definition of racism
- What theologies are shaping our work for justice
- Applying the definition to our worship, our administration, and/or our public ministry

The training format is similar to Healthy Boundaries and will be a safe space for all clergy to explore today's pressing issues related to race and how we, as individuals and as the church, can be the change in the movement towards wholeness.

To register or learn more, visit indianadisciples.org/events. †

Reconciliation Offering Provides Education and Builds Community

Your gift to the Reconciliation offering, collected by most congregations on September 25 or October 2 this year, will help bridge the division of our society which continues to live in dis-ease, with some living with advantage and others systemically marginalized. Your gift will be used for educational training of pastors and lay leaders, and fund grants to congregations to address racism in their community.

Our Region, in partnership with Reconciliation Ministries, is offering regular educational forums for pastors and leaders in our church. We want our pastors to be well equipped to host conversations to help artificial divisions within the human



family. We have engaged, Sandhya Rani Jha, Disciples Minister and author, as our facilitator in this process. Information on these training events is available on our website, indianadisciples.org.

Through our Reconciliation ministry we also invite our congregations into this work. Your gift also supports our capacity to make grants to congregations who desire to reach beyond themselves and connect with others. That includes, most recently, Iglesia Christiana Hermandad in Indianapolis who are brokering mental health services for immigrant families in the Hispanic community, and First Christian Church, Noblesville and Bethel Christian Church who are collaborating to offer

language classes in Korean and English with the hope this effort will lead to a reduction in the xenophobic and racist rhetoric that too often targets Asian Americans.

Candace Boyd Simmons serves as our Regional Reconciliation Program Coordinator. In this role she

- Develops and identifies reconciliation education for youth and young adults, and trains counselors for regional programs
- Coordinates and helps develop clergy anti-racism training programs
- Identifies and organizes reconciliation resources for congregations
- Shares the vision and mission of Reconciliation Ministry through speaking and social media

You may contact Candace at candace@indianadisciples.org.

We invite your gift to support this ministry. †

Northwood Welcomes New Children's Ministry Coordinator

Tonya Woodard Ellis began serving as Children's Ministry Coordinator at Northwood Christian Church in Indianapolis in March. Tonya also is on staff at Apogee School for the Gifted which is housed at Northwood. Tonya is also a former member of Light of the World Christian Church. †



Allisonville Women's Ministry Donates Snack Bags for Horizon House

The Disciples Women's Ministry (DWM) at Allisonville Christian Church (ACC), Indianapolis, recently donated 100 "snack bags" to Horizon House Homeless Ministries in Indianapolis. Each Ziploc bag contained a bottle of water, granola bar, box of raisins, and a pack of tuna and crackers. Learn more about Horizon House at horizonhouse.cc/aboutus. †

Members of the Allisonville DWM Board Sherilee McClain, Linda Belding and Loveta Cain



Ministry Milestones

MINISTRY CHANGES

John Ray concluded his ministry at Light of the World Christian Church on March 25

William Brown began serving as Pastor of First Christian Church, Bedford on March 27

Jim Lawler began serving as Pastor of Madison Christian Church, Frankton on March 27

Tonja Gerardy concluded as Pastor of North Christian Church, Columbus on March 31

Karen Burkley began serving as Pastor of Pittsboro Christian Church, Pittsboro on April 1

Elizabeth "Lizzy" Wolf began serving as Pastor of First Christian Church, Gas City on April 1

Travis Hacker concluded his ministry at New Palestine Christian Church, New Palestine on April 24

Adam Bradley began serving as Associate Minister at Downey Avenue Christian Church, Indianapolis on May 1

William "Bill" Horner retired and closed his ministry at First Christian Church, Shelbyville on Sunday, May 15

Jim Norris retired and closed his ministry at Boone Grove Christian Church, Boone Grove on May 15

Gabe Pfefer began serving as pastor of Park Christian Church, New Albany on Sunday, May 15

Martin Tapia was ordained on June 11 at Casa del Alfarero, Indianapolis

Daren Huber was ordained on May 15 at Downey Avenue Christian Church, Indianapolis and began serving as Interim Pastor at New Palestine Christian Church, Indianapolis on June 12

Sam Davenport retired and closed his ministry at New Lisbon Christian Church, Union City on June 26

Kyrmen Rea began serving as Senior Minister of First Christian Church, Bloomington on July 1

Deborah Niederer Saxon began serving as the Interim Minister at Trafalgar Christian Church, Trafalgar on July 4

DEATHS

Don McCord, retired Disciples minister, died on June 1 †



The Covenant Project is a conversation about how the structure and meeting patterns of the General Board and General Assembly might change. While there has not yet been a formal proposal for change, there are two key areas of change which have been discussed.

General Assembly

It is proposed that the General Assembly meet more often during a

three-year cycle. Every three years, there would be a hybrid meeting, with opportunities for participation in person and online; in the other two years of the cycle, the Assembly would meet in online-only gatherings. This change will allow more people to attend General Assembly while reducing costs as well as other barriers to attend.

Congregations would appoint three delegates to serve three-year terms representing their church at

the General Assembly. Delegates would provide feedback from their congregational and Regional circles about the priorities of the church. The new delegate model, along with different meeting formats, will increase the number of voices from across the church who will be engaged in this work, particularly including those who have not always had access to decision-making structures. While resolutions will still be a part of the General Assembly experience, dialogue, education, and discernment will be the primary foci of meetings.

General Board

In the new model, the General Board would become a working board that meets more often than once a year. Members would serve on one of three committees: Mission, Finance and Executive. Committees would meet and work together on an ongoing, regular basis. The General Board would be reduced in size and rather than the board having

representatives from regions and groups, board members would be mostly at-large and selected by the nominating committee for essential skills and experience, while also reflecting the diversity of the church.

Town Hall Meetings

Information about these proposed changes, which might be voted on at the 2023 General Assembly in Louisville, can be gleaned by participating in a virtual Town Hall meeting. You can register at www.disciples.org to attend. Town Hall meetings will be held on:

- Tuesday**
August 9, 2022 – 8pm EDT
- Sunday**
August 24, 2022 – 8pm EDT
- Sunday**
September 11, 2022 – 7pm EDT
- Thursday**
September 15, 2022 – 1pm EDT

Kokomo FCC Community Gardens:

Nurturing and Growing Healthy Spirits, Minds, and Bodies

How are we using the gifts, talents, and resources God has blessed us with to spread and magnify the love of Christ—to be instruments of healing, strengthening, and growing in the community God has placed us in?

Our response was to create three public community gardens: A Community Food Garden, a Community Play Garden, and a Community Spiritual Garden. FCC member Eric Heathers said, “We have all this space and all these bodies, and I think the result will be good. We can do some good with things literally in our own backyard that will help a lot of people.”

As this project grows (literally), excitement is building as well. On May Day (May 1st) we held a Community Gardens kickoff luncheon. When asked of senior pastor Dr. Al Adams, “What’s your vision?” the answer was, “I could tell you, but then that is my vision. This is ours. It’s not just ours as a church. It’s ours as a community, beyond the church. There’s enough division in this world. We don’t agree on a lot sometimes, but I think we can all agree that God wants every one of God’s children to have a healthy mind, body and spirit.”

The Food Garden started with three 4'x16' raised beds. The tomatoes, peppers, butternut squash, and green beans growing there are shared with the food pantry at South Side Christian Church Kokomo.

The Play Garden is a place where all children are invited and welcomed to play and exercise. There is a fenced area for preschool age children with a playhouse and play equipment and a larger area for older children. Future plans include adding outdoor musical instruments!

The Spiritual Garden is a peaceful shaded place which includes an inner space with benches and a large cross. All are welcome to come and experience God’s peace and love refilling their spirits in whatever life circumstances they find themselves in.

“Everyone is welcome here. They are part of this community. Sometimes, we think that community is just someone that looks or acts like us. But what if someone who is homeless and has no food travels through and sees this? Do we care if that person takes some food from the garden? Do we care if they eat three or four tomatoes? No. Give them a basket full. Everything here belongs to God, and we are the stewards of that,” reminds Pastor Al. †



Disciples Women Address Domestic Violence in New Service Project

By Catherine Carvey, President, Indiana Women's Council

In Indiana, about 40% of women and 26% of men will experience domestic violence at some point during their lifetime. In 2021, 73% of all the domestic violence homicides in the state of Indiana were committed with a gun, although there has been an increase in both lethal and non-lethal strangulation. Every day, there are almost 2,000 victims of domestic violence who seek support and services in Indiana.

The International Disciples Women's Ministries (IDWM) has announced their service project will focus on supporting those helping victims of domestic violence. This project for Disciples Women will run through December 2023. The IDWM Executive Committee is calling all DWM and Christian Women's Fellowship (CWF) groups to partner with a local domestic violence shelter in your area. Here are some ways to help:

- Contact a local domestic violence shelter in your area to determine how you can best serve their needs
- Have a program on domestic violence
- Work with your DWM/CWF to provide tangible donations of requested items or volunteer time
- Make your time together sorting and delivering an opportunity for fellowship
- Write an article about your partnership and send it to Disciples Women's Ministries at dwmcommunications@dwm.disciples.org and to The Indiana Christian at sandy@indianadisciples.org

As you work with your local shelter, remember to maintain the safety and privacy of clients, please do not photograph clients. Instead, photograph your group sorting items and in programs you might have in connection with the collection of items.

The Indiana Women's Council looks forward to seeing how your group implements this new Disciples Women's Service Project. †



Three Things a Strong Endowment Policy Can Do for Your Church

By Matt Rosine, Great Lakes Zone Vice President
Christian Church Foundation

Does your congregation have an endowment policy? If not, now is a great time to put one in place. Here are some reasons why a strong endowment policy is important to your church:

1. It will enable a steady stream of income for your congregation. An endowment, by definition, is a fund that protects the original amount of a donor's gift from being spent but allows the church to spend the income earned from the gift. For example, if a donor leaves the church \$100,000 and the church has a policy to spend 4% of that gift annually, it would provide \$4,000 annually to the church. With the disciplined investment support of the Christian Church Foundation, the amount of original gift grows, which also increases the annual payout to the church. Over time, the amount of income provided to the church far exceeds the value of the original gift, making it a lasting testimony to the donor's Christian stewardship.
2. It will reduce the number of meetings you need to have. Who wants more church meetings? A good endowment policy outlines exactly what the church will do when an unrestricted end-of-life (or "estate") gift is received. Without such a policy, you can be sure everyone will show up to your next board meeting with opinions on how to use the newly-gifted funds! When you have a strong endowment policy, your church has already made important decisions about what to do with the gift and how it can have the greatest impact for your congregation's ministry.
3. It invites people to make a lasting witness to their faith. Most importantly, a strong endowment policy will signal to your members that the church is a trustworthy steward of their legacy. Just as we want to see wise uses of the gifts we make during our lifetime; we also want to know the gift we make after our life will also be managed with care to make the greatest impact. A strong endowment policy shows people how their gift will carry on their legacy of faithful generosity.

If you would like to learn more about designing an endowment policy for your congregation and how they can help your church flourish, feel free to reach out by email (mrosine@ccf.disciples.org) or phone (317-713-2420). I work with congregations throughout the Christian Church in Indiana and would welcome a conversation with you and/or your church leaders. †



Bethel Christian Church Now Nested at First Christian Church, Noblesville

Bethel Christian Church, our Region's only Korean congregation, is now nested at First Christian Church, Noblesville. Bethel's building on the eastside of Indianapolis was severely vandalized in October 2021 and is now being prepared for sale. The congregation has long desired to relocate to Hamilton County where most of their members live. First Christian Noblesville offered their chapel for Bethel's new worship space.

This relationship is blossoming for both congregations. Together they hosted an Easter Egg Hunt in the spring with 2,000 in attendance. The Bethel congregation provided a Korean barbecue dinner for their hosts recently, and together they have applied for and received a Regional Reconciliation grant to offer language classes in Korean and English for their members. We celebrate the coming together of these two Disciples families. †

Beginnings and Endings Among Our Congregations

We welcome our second Congolese church, the Rehoboth Christian Church, who are nested at Avon Christian Church. This congregation in formation is composed of Congolese immigrants primarily from Eastern Congo and worship in Swahili. Congolese Christian Church, who worship in French, is now nested at Central Christian Church in Indianapolis.

On July 16, North Christian Church, Columbus, held their final worship service. We give thanks for 67 years of faithful ministry and deep commitment to ecumenism, racial reconciliation, and gender equality. Their iconic building will be repurposed for the community's benefit. We welcome our second Congolese church, the Rehoboth Christian Church, who are nested at Avon Christian Church. This congregation in formation is composed of Congolese immigrants primarily from Eastern Congo and worship in Swahili. Congolese Christian Church, who worship in French, is now nested at Central Christian Church in Indianapolis.

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Sparking a Mission at West Street

By Rev. V.J.Stover

At the height of the pandemic, I was an Interim Pastor at West Street Christian Church in Tipton. While I was serving there, the Missions Committee had discussions about how to accomplish their mission of compassion and aid in a time of voluntary closings and lockdowns.

Those discussions ignited a spark. I knew that the Region's C.R.O.S.S. Camp (Christian Recreation and Outdoor Sports Skills) was in need of funding to replace worn and broken sports equipment for their summer camp. As their church's interim Pastor and an advocate of the camping program, I suggested what I thought might be a good match between their mission and the camp's need. They made the decision to fund that mission.

This year C.R.O.S.S. Camp has new equipment to replace the old equipment, which increases the camp's range of outdoor sports skills and games. The access to working equipment helped counselors and directors amplify the crossover between faith, leadership, and activity at that camp. Amen and Alleluia!

This story is simple. The congregation had a mission. The regional outdoor ministry had a need. I had a voice. These all came together for the benefit of Middle and High School youth in our region this year, and in the years to come.

Does your congregation have a mission team with a spark of unmet dreams and ministry? Maybe you have a voice which could spark encouragement and action to partner with one of many Regional ministries. †



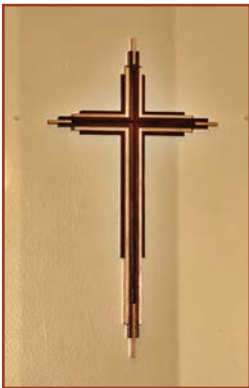
Westview Christian Blesses New Store Opening

Westview Christian Church, Indianapolis, celebrated with members Victor and Florence Adesanmi on the Grand Opening of their "Royal African Grocery" store. Several members shared in a blessing ceremony prior to the public's arrival for the Grand Opening. Florence and Victor are active members who both serve in leadership roles on Westview's Board. They have four lovely children and are serving the community in opening a grocery store that focuses on African cuisine and traditional African clothing. The couple see their grocery store as a ministry to those families who have come to the area seeking a fresh start, but who still long for a "taste" of home. The store is located at 30th Street and High School Road in Indianapolis. †

South Side Kokomo Dedicates Art

By Darrell Sherrod

Sunday, April 3 was a perfect day for "Celebration Sunday" at Kokomo South Side Christian. Carolyn Reed, Associate Regional Minister and former associate minister at South Side brought the message. Worship was followed by a reception.



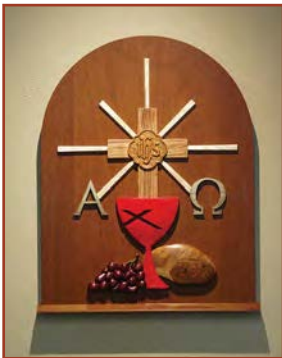
The celebration marked several significant events: installation of Interim Minister Rev. Rex Kibler; our newly painted and deep-cleaned facility, the remodeled Fellowship Hall, much-needed electrical repairs, energy-efficient lighting upgrades,

and the unveiling of two original art pieces crafted by two very talented members. Jeff Plough constructed a beautiful wooden cross for the narthex using several

different varieties of wood, each with a special meaning to his family.

The second piece, handcrafted by Tim Gasaway, is a relief "intarsia" plaque depicting the chalice, Alpha and Omega symbols, cross and communion elements. The cross was made of olivewood imported from Jerusalem for this project. Other woods used are poplar, curly white aspen, garapa, blue pine, purple heart, and cherry. It is interesting to note that, except for the red chalice, all the wood was unpainted, using its natural colors.

God has certainly gifted these artists with extraordinary talent. We are blessed to have the fruits of their talents on permanent display at South Side. †



Avon Church Wins Chopped Challenge

A team from Avon Christian Church won a cooking competition in their community that benefited Family Promise of Hendricks County and the Hendricks County Food Pantry Coalition. Despite being sabotaged by other participants, adding odd ingredients to their basket of food, they prevailed with their chicken stir-fry with spicy peanuts and a peach Brown Betty cake with pop tart crumble. Congratulations!

New Leaders Called to DHM and DOC Historical Society

The Board of Directors of Disciples Home Missions announces the call of **Rev. B. Chris Dorsey** to serve as its new President and CEO.



Rev. Dorsey is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciple of Christ) and has most recently served as President of Higher Education and Leadership Ministries (HELM). He has also served as a Professor of Theology and Preaching at Western Theological Seminary and as the Vice President of Development and Marketing at Chicago Theological Seminary. Rev. Dorsey has also served as Chaplain and Director of Religious Life at Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA and as Senior Pastor at Woodlawn United Methodist Church, Chicago.

He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Texas in 1991 and a Master of Divinity degree from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in 2001, followed by a Graduate Certificate from Northwestern University in African Studies in 2002. Rev. Dorsey is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Chicago. Rev. Dorsey resides in Indianapolis. He began his work on August 1, 2022.



The Board of Trustees of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society (DCHS) announced the call of **Dr. Joel Brown** to serve as its new President.

Through an extensive search process, the Society sought a visionary leader to work alongside the Board of Trustees to lead DCHS into a future that lives into the vision illustrated at the March 2022 Kirkpatrick Lectures with the theme: "Systemic Racism, Antiracism, and Reconciliation in Our Shared History and Tradition." The ability to make significant gains in digitization, fundraising, and infrastructure improvements were also named as priorities in the search for a new President.

Dr. Brown recently earned his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago with a dissertation titled: "Preparing the Way: African American Women and Social Christianity in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago." He holds a Master of Theology (Th.M.) from Texas Christian University, Brite Divinity School, where his thesis was titled: "White Evangelicals and the Civil Rights Movement" and a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) from Abilene Christian University, Graduate School of Theology. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts from Abilene Christian University. Dr. Brown begins his service on September 1, 2022. †



Here We GROW Again!

The FLOURISH! Program continues to support Indiana Disciples pastors as they address economic challenges. Lilly Endowment has invested in building stronger churches and stronger communities through multiple initiatives including the National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders. It is through this initiative that the Christian Church in Indiana received grants in 2016, 2019, and 2021. Along with the generous support of Lilly Endowment, matching funds have been given by individuals, congregations, and family foundations also making an investment in our Disciples clergy. We see the importance of helping support Indiana Disciples pastors as they address economic challenges that too often go hand in hand with a career in ministry. We also recognize that churches are best led by pastors not weighed down by financial concerns.

Now in its seventh year, the FLOURISH! Program has supported Indiana Disciples pastors and congregations by awarding 60 Financial Relief Grants, 14 Compensation Support Grants, 3 Stewardship Mini-Grants, 8 Supplemental COVID Grants, and sponsoring 3 Excellence in Ministry Grants in partnership with Pension Fund. We sponsored 28 Indiana Disciples who participated in the Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising program and have hosted 26 days (and counting) of Financial Literacy Academy sessions. Congregations have had educational opportunities based in congregational financial best practices and to examine congregational generosity, stewardship, and mission.

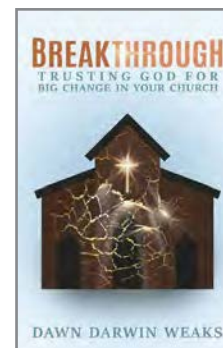
This summer, we're launching two new initiatives aimed at encouraging congregational pastors to use the resources provided to Pension Fund members. These initiatives each focus on an aspect of life central to financial well-being—saving and mental health. The Savings Initiative and the Mental Health Initiative encourage use of Your Money Line, Pension Fund's Benefit Accumulation Account, and Learn to Live. Your Money Line is Pete the Planner's personal finance resource providing learning modules, calculators, and financial guides. Learn to Live offers online support for pastors' mental and emotional well-being.

With these new initiatives, supplemental COVID financial grants, and an increased partnership with Pension Fund for pastors early in their careers, the FLOURISH! Program is growing. We're also measuring the growth experienced by our pastors, our churches, and our region. Here are a few ways see this growth...

- pastors telling us that they no longer feel alone in their economic challenges
- pastors paying off student loans, medical or consumer debt, or getting better prepared for retirement
- congregations making healthy changes in the handling of church offerings
- pastors and their partners talking more openly about money
- when stewardship is seen as being about the mission of the church and not just keeping the lights on



Indiana Disciples are invited to participate in the **Fall 2022 Financial Literacy Academy**. On October 14, clergy will spend several hours in conversation with **Rev. Dr. Dawn Weaks**, co-pastor of Connections Christian Church in Odessa, Texas, and author of the new book *Breakthrough: Trusting God for Big Changes in Your Church* published by Chalice Press. Congregations living into a new vision and ministries will be the topic of the day.

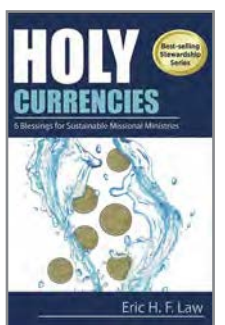


All Indiana Disciples clergy and lay leaders

are invited to join on October 15 when **Rev. Dr. Eric Law** and **Linda Young**, both of Kaleidoscope Institute, will lead our session on a model for stewardship and vitality that helps create missional and sustainable ministries. Eric is author of *Holy Currencies* and companion books. Both sessions will be virtual and are free to Indiana Disciples.

We have recently moved into a new phase in fundraising. Between now and the fall of 2023, each new dollar given (up to \$75,000) will be matched by new funds from Lilly Endowment. These funds help us continue support Indiana clergy, helping them to FLOURISH!

To sign up for the October Financial Literacy Academy or to support the program, go to indianadisciples.org/flourish. †



Spleth Begins Mini-sabbatical

Regional Minister Rick Spleth will be on sabbatical leave August 1 through September 5. Rick completes 21 years tenure at the end of August. The Region's Personnel Policy offers a sabbatical leave of up to three months after each five years of service for our ministerial staff. We encourage our congregations to do the same. Associate Regional Minister Carolyn Reed, with 23 years tenure, will serve as Acting Regional Minister during this sabbatical period. †



I want to say a heartfelt THANK YOU to every church who helped get campers to camp by facilitating registration, paying some or all their fees, getting campers transported to Bedford or Geneva, sending mail to campers, and praying for campers and camp staff. I want to thank families for making church camp a priority in their child's summer. I want to thank every director, counselor, and camp nurse who volunteered their time to make camp happen. I want to thank the campers for being open to learning and talking about their faith, deepening their relationship with Christ, and making new friends.

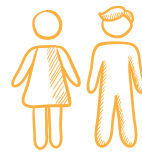
While we haven't tallied up all the offering yet, I can tell you that through the generosity of the campers and staff, offering was collected at Geneva for The Society of St. Andrew; while the offering collected at Bedford will go to First Christian Church in Bedford for their Camp Revitalization Projects.

As my first summer as Church Camp Coordinator came to a close, my heart was so full of gratitude. I can't wait until next summer!

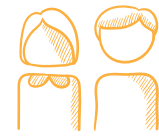
Cheryl

Rev. Cheryl Russell
Associate Regional Minister

Camp by the Numbers



300
Campers



81
Directors and
Counselors

12
Camps



5
Weeks



450
T-Shirts
Tie-Dyed



Hundreds
Of Songs



Thousands
Of Pieces of Mail



400
Marshmallows



Countless
Friendships
Forged and Memories Made



A Camp Reflection

By Hugh Smith, Countryside Christian Church, Winchester

When Pastor Melissa Kleinschmidt asked me to be a camp counselor for New Beginning Camp (1st through 3rd graders), I wondered if I would be good enough or have energy enough to keep up with them. I found out I could keep up with the kids and I had a good time.

Geneva Camp is a nice facility with woods, a pond with paddle boats, a swimming pool, pavilions, a labyrinth, and a slip-n-slide on the slope by the pool.

A slip-n-slide session was scheduled for 6:30 am our first morning there. We wondered if the boys would settle down to get much sleep the first night, but I had 5 of the 6 boys in my room who got up to go with me. Pastor Melissa brought the girls, and we had a good time sliding down on a small stream of water.

It was hot the days we were there, but the cafeteria and cabins were air-conditioned. The other counselor in my cabin was musically talented, leading songs, telling stories, and guiding the boys in prayer and appreciating nature. The days were full of activities and crafts, singing, worship and learning about "What's in a Name." The other counselors were wonderful, and the meals were nutritious and delicious.

I remember the scripture that says children are a gift from God (especially to grandparents), so I prayed each morning, thanking God for my 6 boys and asking him to bless that day's activities. That helped my attitude and I believe God blessed our time at camp. †

