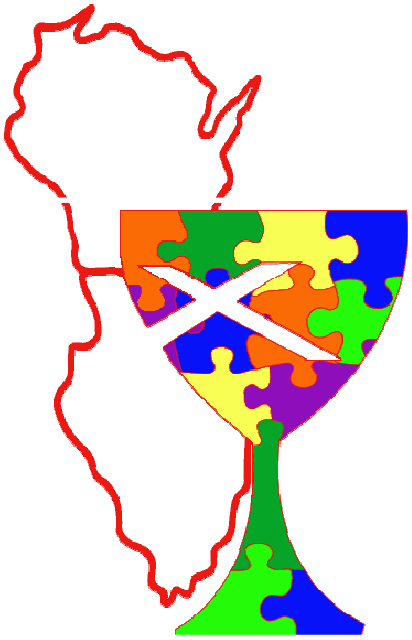


The Christian

Winter 2014 (Dec. Jan, Feb)

A Disciples of Christ (IL-WI Region) Quarterly Publication

"What Gifts Shall We Bring?"

2013 Christmas Offering
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in Illinois & Wisconsin



"On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." Matthew 2:11

Joining the journey with local congregations, Regional Ministers—Teresa Dulyea Parker, Scott Woolridge and Christal Williams walk along side congregations through the ups and downs of ministry.

As partners in ministry, the Regional church and local congregations work together through times of change and crisis as well as times of celebration. Some of these partnership opportunities include searching for a minister, providing leadership help and offering insight, counseling, learning opportunities, camps for children and events for women, men and youth.

So many more ministries are offered across our Region – leader development for clergy and laity, coaching for church leaders, training to address the unique challenges of the church today—ministries arising out of the gifts thousands of Disciples bring.

So many more names and faces and gifts make up the Regional church—there is a holy blending of those gifts that bring life-changing ministry to thousands of members and friends.

Thank you for giving as generously as you are able to the ministries we share through the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Illinois and Wisconsin. Your gifts sustain a ministry that is valuable, vital and visible. This offering will be received in most congregations on December 15 and 22.





Dear Friends in Christ,

"What Gifts Shall We Bring?"

We have everything we need. I came to understand the truth of that one year while on sabbatical. I asked God to help me use the sabbatical gift of time to expand the universe of meaning in which I lived. God loves expanding our vision, and awarded me lessons that changed my life for good.



As context, I was serving in one of the most affluent communities in America. The church community was highly educated, professional with executive leadership from Fortune 100 companies. We had it all, but we couldn't seem to find the Spirit to move us forward. This was a suburban community with lots of gates and high fences, built to protect the accumulation of wealth at hand. The drugs of choice were alcohol and valium. In many ways, it was its own ghetto, except the poverty was of a different kind.



The first lesson came in the heart of the city that most avoided, except when going back and forth to the high rise office buildings, or guarded parking lots of the symphony and world class art museums, or in great crowds to see their favorite sports teams play.



In a church, in the midst of urban decay, I heard a woman singing in the choir. Her voice was like no other. It lifted me up in spirit and if I hadn't made myself stay in my seat I would have levitated. Her voice was reaching to the depth of my soul. And the strangest thought entered my brain, "I want her to sing at my funeral." (I was mid-30's and very healthy.)



As we met after worship, I actually said that to her, and she laughed in response, "honey, I hope that won't be happening any time soon."

And then she asked me, "would I like to know how she got this voice?"

I was confused and puzzled by the question. I thought, "Is she talking about voice lessons?" Out loud I said, "yes."



She said, "I got this voice from the doctors at HF Hospital. My boyfriend stabbed me in the throat, and the doctors saved me and gave me this voice."

At this point, my chin is on the floor. And then she added these words, "You gotta use the gifts God gives you."

Life changed in that moment. "Quit looking at what you don't have and use what you do have. You have everything you need."

What gifts will you bring? Whatever they are, however you came by them, scars and all---"you gotta use them for the sake of God's mission in this world."



In other news:

Clergy Standing Forms are online!

Guatemala Partners: World AIDS Day is Dec. 1. Please be in prayer with our partners for awareness, prevention and supportive care.



The Christian Church in Midwinter Youth Retreat

Jesus & Young People
"The Race, The Reason, The Revolution"
Hebrew 12:1-2

Bethany Park Christian Church
1401 East Grove Street
Rantoul, Illinois

February 1-2, 2014
Cost $20 per person
Grades 6-12

Deadline: January 17, 2014
(All Forms and Money are due-
Not postmarked!!!)

Today's youth are faced with many celebrations, challenges and different courses of actions that they must take. It is inevitable that they would need the love, support and encouragement of their families; both Biological, Church, and its leadership to help them Journey along the way. Friends, we do so without reservations. Please join the Regional Church in helping to prepare our youth spiritually for the race. This is a special invitation for all Youth Grades 6-12 and sponsors to meet us at the upcoming Midwinter Retreat as we take a look at Jesus & Youth "The Race, the Reason and the Revolution…"

Midwinter Youth Retreat Registration is now online.

Summit 2013 Photos





CCIW Regional Disciples Women's Ministry

In the Spirit of Advent and what is to come, I would like to greet all of our Region's Disciples Women. Remember, if you are participating in any of our churches, you are definitely, a "Disciples Woman." It is with great joy and anticipation that we share some important information as your 2014, calendar gets under way. Please share this information with your local Women's Groups, circles and cluster; always feeling free to contact your Regional Women's Cabinet, CCIW Website and the Office of Disciple Women for your needs. What is your Congregation's Disciples Women's Group doing? What ideas, programs and projects are you taking part in? We want to know? Do you have any good news stories to share? We welcome all Women in our Region to take part in Disciples Women's events. For more information please contact Linda Blakeman (President) and Rev. Dr. Christal Williams (Regional Staff Liaison).

THE SPRING RETREAT: "Jesus Calls, R.U. Listening?"

All Disciples Women are invited to join us on Saturday, April 12, 2014 at the Chiara Center in Springfield, Illinois for a wonderful time of Worship, Education, and Fellowship. Our guest speaker will be the Rev. Sheila Spencer, Director of Christian Education/Faith Formation and the Assistant to the President of Disciples Home Mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indianapolis, Indiana. Sheila is a native of Los Angeles, California, and has an extensive background in Christian Education, Women's Ministry, and is fluent in Spanish. Sheila is a gift to our denomination and we are thrilled to have her come and share her heart and experiences in our Region. We are asking all Women to join us at the Chiara Center for this great event.





Do you know any women who have never attended the retreat? Please invite them. More information about our spring retreat will follow in January 2014. Please be sure to check our Regional website.

www.cciwdisciples.org

CCIW Disciples Women's Cabinet: 2013 Officers
President: Linda Blakeman, llb48@comcast.net
Vice President: Kay Mahannah, kmahanna@illinois.edu
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Worship Director: Rev .Arlene Franks, seekingeden@yahoo.com

Regional Cluster Representatives:
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Wenois/West Central/Lakeland/Lincoln Douglas/ROCC: Vickie Nevius
New Hope: Susie Munson
Blackhawk/Rock River North: Joan Hull
Livingston McLean:
Illinois Valley: Beth Zumwalt
Decatur: Amanda Butterick
Southern: Nina Scattergood
East Prairie: Cathy Hagan
Urban Metro Area North: Carolyn Lewis
Urban Metro Area South: Burnadette Owens
At-Large: Cynthia Webber



QUADRENNIAL ASSEMBLY 2014

Sisters- It is that time again for the Disciples Women "Quadrennial Assembly." Are you going? Do you know someone who would like to attend? The theme for 2014 is "*I See You.*" Many women from around our Region attended the last "QA!" This time we would love to have 300 or more women journey with us from Illinois to Atlanta: Please plan to partner with cluster churches, other Disciples Women's groups for a fantastic time of Worship, Bible Studies, Educational Workshops, Women's Luncheon, and Phenomenal Preaching. The dates are June 25-29, 2014, at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis Hotel. For all costs and fees please see the Quadrennial Website: Hurry and register for and stay up to date by using the Quadrennial Website. www.quadrennial.org



2014 Quadrennial Assembly (View Details)
Wednesday, June 25, 2014 - Sunday, June 29, 2014
Atlanta Marriott Marquis Hotel
265 Peachtree Center Ave NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
2014 Quadrennial
Phone: 317-713-2660
E-mail: qa@dhm.disciples.org
Web: www.discipleshomemissions.org/dhm/dhm-ministries/disciples-women/quadrennial-assembly-home-page/

The Christian 2013 Contributors

The Christian is a quarterly publication that provides insight in to the events and news in the Illinois-Wisconsin Region. Published in both print and electronic formats, it is also available for free on the website. Subscribers, listed below, help defray the costs of publication:

Samuel R Syfert
T.R. and Vickie Ackers
James and Donelle Mackey
Wyman P. Deck
Paul W. Jury
Bob Deck
Arvil and Jennifer Bass, Jr.
Duane and Janet Christensen
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Wanda Jean Litherland
Shirley Ginos Trust
Judith M. Chipman
James and Carol Pinson
William Edwin and Maria Jacobs
Frances Anderson
Fred and Barbara Bell
June Moll and Joyce Guymon
Harvey and Linda Meyer
Lois Janssen



PRAR Offers Advent Resource

By Rev. Beth Rupe

In 1999, CCIW formed the Pro-Reconciliation Team for the purpose of coordinating a long-range program within Illinois and Wisconsin as a part of the larger community of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to challenge racism and to create an anti-racism agenda for the Region. To do this the Team's vision is to respond to God's call to be a fully transformed, anti-racist, multi-cultural church that serves as an agent of healing and transformation within the broader society. The Team coordinates with the Pro-Reconciliation Antiracism Committee of CCIW that in turn is engaged in all levels of leadership of the region including the Regional Council, Ministry Leadership Team. Major programs have included training of clergy through the Clergy Ethics Seminars, leadership at workshops at the bi-annual Regional Assemblies, the One Book One Region Program and past sponsorship of the CCIW's Bridgebuilder Camp.

In 2014, the primary initiative of the Team will be to facilitate opportunities to engage in open conversation about the ongoing and destructive nature of racism in society today. To begin to focus our attention for these conversations, the Pro- Reconciliation- Anti-Racism Team has prepared an Advent devotional. Individuals from the Team and around the Region were invited to submit a reflection relating to their experiences of Racism based on Isaiah 11. Here the prophet holds the hope of God's "kin-dom" ushering in a time when all fragmentation is mended and all of God's creation will live in peace.

We invite you to read these reflections. We invite you to consider how they are similar and dissimilar from your own experiences. Primarily, we invite you to consider how racism is an obstacle to God's peaceable "kin-dom" and to share your insights with others as you consider how you are being called to help dismantle racism in our churches and our society.

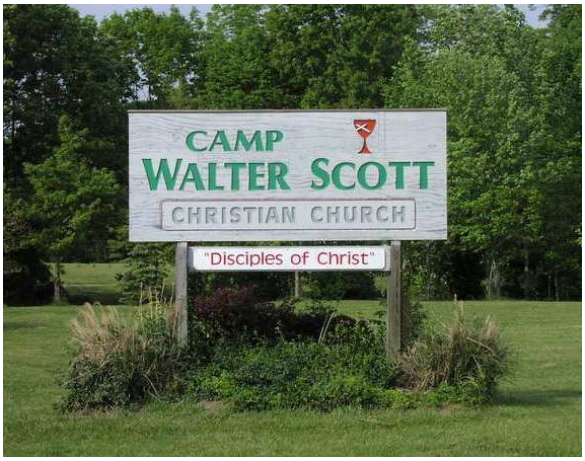
Advent Resource



In partnership with Week of Compassion, we have been able to give solidarity grants to a number of our congregations who are helping with tornado relief for their families and in their communities: Metropolis, Peoria First and Glen Oak, Sunnyland, Rantoul, Eureka, Lexington, Pekin, Barney's Prairie. In December we will host Week of Compassion's Brandon Gilvin and Disciples Volunteering Coordinator Josh Baird with the prospect of setting up a mission station for volunteers in the long term recovery process. Watch for more information on our website or in the eNews.

Camp Dates for 2014

Summer Camping Program



CCIW Church Family Reunion Weekends			
MAY 23-26 (MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND)			
AUGUST 29-SEPTEMBER 1 (LABOR DAY WEEKEND)			
Camp Acts 20:35 (Work Week)	June 8—14	JYF #1	July 6—12
CYF	June 15—June 21	Chi Rho #1	July 6—12
Grandparents & Me	June 22—June 25	Clergy Family Camp	July 13—16
Beginners	June 25—June 28	Post-High Weekend Retreat	July 18—20
		JYF #2	July 20—26
		Chi Rho #2	July 20—26

NOTE: Post-High registration similar to CCIW Church Family Reunion.



JYF	June 22-28	Beginners	June 29-July 2
		Chi Rho	June 29-July 5
		CYF	June 29-July 5
		Grandparents & Me	July 2—July 5

Campers!

Keep an eye on the CCIW Summer Camping webpage for updates and information - soon!

2014 Clergy Ethics Seminars

These educational events provide opportunities to refresh your knowledge on continuing ethical issues and learn new information about hot topics such as social media ethics, financial ethics and other 21st century issues. You may also learn self-care tips to prevent burn-out and keep the minister and congregation healthy. For clergy entering the Search and Call system, completion of at least one course every three years is required to obtain a letter of reference or verify good standing from the any of the Regional Ministers.

2014 Course Options

"Health Boundaries:" Monday, February 3, 2014, @ Christian Church of Arlington Heights

"Ethics:" Wednesday, February 19, 2014, @ Marshall Avenue Christian Church, Mattoon

"Clergy Self Care:" Thursday, September 4, 2014, @ First Christian Church, Springfield

"Pro-Reconciliation, Anti-Racism:" Saturday, September 6, 2014, @ Christian Church of Abingdon

Pastor Changes

Grant Wade was ordained 10/20, and is now Sr. Minister at Sullivan

Sandra Brown was ordained 9/22

Dennis Pendleton is retired active and new to the region

Terry Brace started 11/18 and is serving at DuQuoin First Christian

Cheryl Jackson started 10/1 serving at UCC, Country Club Hills

Jan Harris started 11/3 serving at Casey First Christian

Rebecca Ingram resigned from Sullivan First Christian

Phil Price is new to the region

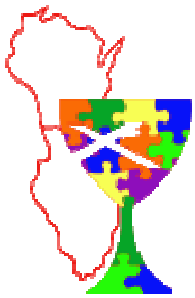
Patrick Chandler started serving as Interim at Grace Christian, Aurora

Larry Colvin leaving region moving to Farmington, MO on 11/30

Prayer Concerns

Please be in prayer for the the following families who are grieving the loss of loved ones: Rev. Jim and Lois Whitaker, Rev. June Shorter, Rev. Mike Roberts, Rev. Pat Meyer, Rev. Dr. Bill Crowl, Rev. Sam Fuson, Rev. Denny Whiteside, and for Pastor Jim Fyke's family.

Please continue to use the Regional Prayer Calendar for weekly prayers for our congregations and their Pastors.



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Camp Contacts

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Regional Moderator

Cheryl Jackson	cpjackson77@att.net

Global Mission Partners

Rev. Dr. Vitalina Similox and Gloria Vincente,
Ecumenical Council of Churches in Guatemala

Rev. Dr. Felix Ortiz, Executive Director

Christian Church Foundation Representative

W. Darwin Collins—Phone: 800-668-8016	dcollins@ccf.disciples.org

For Information or Assistance Call:

Regional Office, Bloomington **309-828-6293**

Fax **309-829-4612**

Camp Walter Scott, Dietrich **217-739-2332**

Fax **217-739-2298**



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(April, May, June)

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