



Currents

Great River Region Newsletter December 5th, 2014 Rev. Barbara Jones, Regional Minister

NOTE ADDRESS CHANGE!!!

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JOYS and PRAYER CONCERNS

Joys

From Barbara Jones:

I am just home from the December meeting of the Regional Ministers and am glad to share that there are some visionary plans coming down the road for us. MISSION FIRST is exciting to me, and though I am not privy to all the details it reflects values dear to all of our congregations: finding a new way for mission throughout the CCDOC to be generated from the grassroots to the whole church through many perspectives. If my tenure in regional ministry concludes around the time this is in place, I will feel tremendous satisfaction. It is in the drafting stage by a task force across the church (not me) and will go to General Board and General Assembly. I am excited about the concept and gave input based on what I know to be valued in our region. There is also a new group of Regional Ministers entering regional ministry! Thank you again for your love and confidence in me. I pray that we continue to walk faithfully with God through these next stages of our ministry. Blessings!

Prayer Concerns

Rev. Holly Patton's brother, John, died recently.

Rev. Jim Farmer is at home under hospice care.

Regional Minister Rev. Barb Jones is waiting for answers for anemia and GI issues.

Rev. Kevin Robbins and Rev. Tom Haley have gone through treatments for prostate cancer.

Tina Jones, our regional administrative assistant, her husband, Cletis, diagnosed with kidney cancer, had surgery to remove one of his kidneys.

Allison Posey, DW President, in El Dorado, AR took a fall in Walmart and severed her leg.

Rev. Barbara Driscoll, Broadmoor CC in Shreveport, LA lost her nephew, who was suffering from MS.

Others among us are going through issues. Please remember them in your prayers.

All of the above reminds us that life is not always easy, but the same God is with us no matter what we face: the green pastures, the still waters, or the valley of the shadow of death. May we always remember and proclaim that truth, and no matter what our circumstances each day, may we give thanks to God who is ALWAYS with us through His Son and our Savior. May God richly bless you, your families and those you so faithfully serve in ministry.

NEWS and EVENTS

The Regional Office will be closed for the Holidays
beginning December 24th thru January 2nd

The Christmas Offering directly supports regions in their mission to extend the ministry of Christ in mission, teaching, witness, and service among the people and social structures of the region. Click this link to Give On Line: <https://docgeneralassembly.webconnex.com/dmf>



*The 2014 Christmas Offering
for Regional Ministry
Received in many congregations on
December 14 and 21*

Matthew's story of the Wise Men who come seeking the newborn King is a familiar one, re-enacted in countless Christmas pageants every year. Amidst the costumes, animals, shepherds and mangers crowded into

most depictions of the Nativity, the gifts they bring often are seen as just props for the Magi to carry. Yet they are far more than that.

Scholars believe the Wise Men came from ancient Persia (modern day Iran), and early Christian art often depicts them in Persian clothing. If so, their journey was long and arduous—and even as it neared its end finding “the one who has been born king” was not easy. He was not to be found in Jerusalem, the Holy City, as they expected, but in the tiny village of Bethlehem; even there they had to search for him.

Yet when they found the Child, they were prepared. Bowing down, they worshiped him. “Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense [frankincense] and of myrrh” (Matthew 2:11), gifts that they had carried with them all the way from Persia, extravagant gifts fit for a King.

We may think ourselves incapable of giving such gifts until we remember that the good news of Jesus' birth also came to common folk like the shepherds, and that extravagance comes in many forms. For the shepherds, it came in the form of praising God. For you, maybe it will be in doing mission together in response to a disaster or on an immersion trip to learn about another culture. Your extravagant gift to the Christmas offering, whether large or small, supports the many ways Disciples across your region discover and share their gifts of ministry. Whatever gift you bring, give it joyfully; that's the kind of giving that makes God smile, and therein lies the secret of its extravagance.

As we celebrate anew the Good News of God-with-us, the coming of our Lord, what gifts shall we bring? Whatever it is, may we present them in humble thanksgiving and with joyful

extravagance!

Real Faith Christian Church, Clarksdale, Mississippi. 600 Yazoo Avenue, 662-624-5911
Rev. Zedric Clayton, Pastor.

Disciples Volunteering is currently partnered with Disciples Church Extension Fund, Disciples Home Missions, Disciples Women, Reconciliation Ministry, Week of Compassion, National Convocation, Disciples Great River Region, and Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation to assist Real Faith Christian Church in Clarksdale, MS with the construction of a new facility.

Registration is now open for the Special Project with Real Faith Christian Church in Clarksdale, Mississippi. The church has been reinvigorated and is experiencing new growth. They have outgrown the limits of their old facility. They are eager to turn the incomplete facility into a center for worship and ministry with the Clarksdale community.

Mission teams are needed now to come to Clarksdale and assist with the construction at Real Faith Christian Church.



Dates open: November 2014 January—March of 2015.

Cost: \$100/person for a week

Click this link to Register you Mission Team:

<https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/dhm/dhm-ministries/disciples-volunteering/sending-teams-in-mission/special-projects/registration-form-real-faith/>

First Christian Church Harrison, AR. Operation Christmas Child, Dr. David Artman, Minister.
915 S. Maple, 870-741-5757, fccharrison@windstream.net



We appreciate your support of Operation Christmas Child by bringing items for the boxes, by helping pack boxes and by your monetary gifts to help buy items and ship the boxes. Together we are sending 400 boxes from our church.



Please pray for our boxes as they ship out this week carrying the love of Christ to millions of children all over the world. Pray for the safety of O.C.C. volunteers who are serving in areas of the world that may be hostile toward Christians. Pray that every boy and girl who receives a shoebox will experience God's unconditional love through this gift. THANK YOU!



2014 Annual Christmas Caravan & Outreach



Bringing gifts and services to people in our community who are homeless or near homeless

Saturday, December 20, Clinton Presidential Center parking lot
Santa Claus and the Caravan distributing gifts at 10:00 AM
Outreach services: flu shots, job assistance, and more at 10:00 AM.
Lunch served at 11:30 AM

Toys for homeless and low income children
Sleeping bags, blankets, backpacks, gloves, scarves, coats,
and much more for homeless adults and children
Email: admin@christascaravan.org, or register at
ChristmasCaravan.org

Great River Region Disciples Men Fellowship. I, Stan McDougal, am serving as your Regional Disciple Men's Coordinator. I am Pastor of Parkview Christian Church in Little Rock, AR. I would like to know if your congregation has a Disciples Men Fellowship and if so please send me the name of a contact person to stan.mcdougal@att.net.

CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION & STAFF UPDATES

Congregations in Pastoral Search and Call:

FCC Hot Springs, AR: full time pastor

FCC Pine Bluff, AR: part/full time pastor

FCC Stuttgart, AR: part/full time pastor

Park Hill CC, N Little Rock, AR: Actively searching for a full time Associate minister with emphasis in Christian Education and Youth. Please send [all inquiries](mailto:all_inquiries) to barb@grrdisciples.org who will forward them to the committee.

From Regional Minister Barbara Jones: Barb@grrdisciples.Org:

I've been in Lexington, Kentucky all week at the December meeting of the Regional Ministers as noted above. I should be able to catch up this week with the requests that await my attention. I hope that no crises emerge and all are able to have a wonderful remainder of the Advent Season and Christmas!

REGIONAL ELDERS

Your Regional Elders continue to be at work. Our purpose is "to serve the Great River Region as pastoral leaders, supporting the Executive Regional Minister and offering support and friendship to all ministers and their families in the region."

We have 10 regional elders serving, with each one shepherding a group of ministers within a geographical area of where each lives:

Rev. Vance Moore: Hattiesburg, Mississippi; Rev. Lewis Godby: Mountain Home, Arkansas; Rev. Sherry Horton: Tupelo, Mississippi; Rev. Randy Jay: Ft. Smith, Arkansas; Rev. Frank Johnson: Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Rev. Russell Myers: Jackson, Mississippi; Rev. Patricia Parker: Itta Bena, Mississippi; Rev. Ann Pickett-Parker: Moss Point, Mississippi; Rev. Graham Riggs: Shreveport, Louisiana; Rev. Miles Cook: Sherwood, Arkansas

We are honored to be serving our region in this way, and we thank you for your prayerful support. In Christ's service, Miles Cook, Regional Elders Coordinator

From Alisha Pettigrew Gourley, Youth Coordinator: youth@grrdisciples.org:



We're very pleased and excited to announce that Alisha Gourley is the new Regional Youth Coordinator.

Alisha is currently serving as youth pastor for Millwood Christian Church in Rogers Arkansas.

Alisha grew up in the camping program and very active in the region. She looks forward to growing young disciples in our rich traditions while establishing other new and powerful traditions. Her first event is regional assembly.

If you see her smiling face stop and say hello.

News from our Partners in Ministry

Great River Region. <http://www.grrdisciples.org>

National Disciples of Christ. <http://www.disciples.org/>

Lexington Theological Seminary. <http://www.lextheo.edu/>

Missouri School of Religion courses. <http://midamericacenterforministry.wordpress.com/>.

Global Ministries. <http://globalministries.org/>

Week of Compassion. <http://www.weekofcompassion.org/>. Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee and development mission fund of the Christian Church (DOC) in the United States and Canada. We seek to equip and empower disciples to alleviate the suffering of others through disaster response, humanitarian aid, sustainable development and the promotion of mission opportunities.

Disciples Home Missions. <https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/>

Disciples Mission Fund is the common fund of the Christian Church (DOC). DMF supports 72 ministries of wholeness as close as your local congregation and reaching around the globe. As a Global Mission church, we understand that equipping congregations for mission includes learning from, learning with and offering support to our partners beyond the borders of the United States and Canada.

Juliette Fowler Communities has been named one of the best nursing and rehab centers in [U.S. News and World Report](#). Since 1903, Fowler has been a member institution of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and is located in Dallas at 1234 Abrams in close proximity to major medical centers. An intergenerational community, Fowler serves children, elders and families. To learn more, call 214.827.0813 or go to www.fowlercommunities.org or connect with us at www.facebook.com/juliettofowlerhomes.

US News and World Report: <http://health.usnews.com/best-nursing-homes/area/tx/juliette-fowler-communities-675952>

National Benevolent Association: XPLOR Residency:

NBA XPLOR is a faith-based, 10-month, congregationally-hosted residency program designed for 21 to 30 year olds looking to explore lives of care and service — giving them the opportunity to unleash their own potential, while positively impacting their community. We encourage you to check it out! <http://www.nbacares.org/xplor>

hey,

If you are dreaming of a lazy summer on the beach or by the pool, or you can't wait to baptize your feet in fast food grease or commune in discount chain store customer service...

DO THAT.

If you're looking for something more meaningful, something that will take you places, how about a **DHM Summer Internship**

Yeah, we know...Your field is art therapy and this isn't that. Or you think mission internships are just for people thinking of going into ministry.

We get that a lot. Besides, all the internships you've heard about lately are free, and you need money, so you're going to spend the summer in mindless retail or food service for minimum wage.

hoaxes, myths, legends Actually, folks find lots of reasons not to consider a DHM Summer Internship. Let us tell you the real story. ***MAYBE WE CAN CHANGE YOUR MIND.***

First, you get paid. That's right. Not a lot, but actual money.

Second, we've had interns who go on to study law, education, music, communications, business, psychology, real estate, political science, speech pathology, and yes, art therapy. Plus some folks who have gone into ministry.

This is a **leadership** internship. You'll learn conflict resolution, group dynamics, facilitation, personality types, confronting bias & privilege, stress reduction, systems and justice. And that's just in the first week.

Then you'll spend the summer **discovering** yourself, your place in the world, **reflecting** on your values and your growing edges, **learning** to be an effective leader and a strong team member. You'll be a more mature you and a better job applicant.

Potential employers will notice. really. *You'll also experience some things that may make you change your plans.*

The world is full of people, and problems; you may kindle passions, discover gifts you didn't know you have. You could change your mind. **Find yourself.** Or you could re-emerge totally committed to the plan you already had, but with new eyes, a renewed spirit, a sense that you are part of something way bigger than you knew. Either way, you win. **And so does the world.**

If you are at least 20 yrs old by May 23, available from May 23 to Aug 7 and willing to be challenged:

apply!...or explore other service opportunities:

<https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/mission-internships>

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS? give us a call...

Disciples Volunteering

Josh Baird, Director (985) 778-6915

Brenda Tyler, Ministry Associate (888) 346-2631

Deb Conrad, Intern Coordinator (502) 550-1236

Application deadline is Feb 5.

Want to know sooner? Apply by Jan 7 for early placement news.