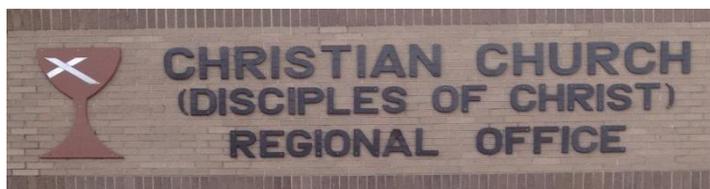




Currents

Great River Region Newsletter

September 11, 2015



9302 Geyer Springs Rd, Little Rock, AR 72209

501-562-6053, 501-562-7089 fax

Email: tina@grrdisciples.org, wendy@grrdisciples.org, and drnburton@grrdisciples.org

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

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

Interim Regional Minister



Greetings Great River Region! I see you in Arkansas! I see you in Louisiana, and I certainly see you in Mississippi!

I am excited to finally be in place in my new position as your Interim Executive Regional Minister for this next season in your journey. I am here; ALL my stuff - that's another story!

I thank God for the Regional Board and Search Committee who trusted in my leadership and credentials to serve in this role over the next year. God is always up to something and I trust that you will join me in a season of thankfulness. I make this transition with a grateful and willing heart to serve. My goal is to "Keep the Region Running," as one of the search committee members shared with me.

This past Sunday, I preached at First Christian Church, Monroe, LA. I reminded the congregation and now all of us together that "God is Greater Than Our Hearts" 1 John 3:16-23. The message is one of love that we hear over and over. I want to challenge us to move from an "inward-focused" to an "outward-focused" ministry. Get outside the walls of your church! Show some love to our neighbors, the communities we serve, and to each other. Although we are geographically spread out, we can connect by praying for each other (our churches, pastors, and members), and for a world in need of God's unconditional love. Let's pray that God would continue to show up mightily in our Region during this interim season.

We desire to do those things that are pleasing in his sight. *“And this is his commandment; that we should believe on the name of his son of Jesus Christ and love one another.”* I want to do what is pleasing in his sight. What about you?

Rev. Dr. Nadine Burton

GENERAL ASSEMBLY REFLECTIONS



GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JULY 18-22 2015 • COLUMBUS, OHIO

A number of ministers and lay persons from the Great River Region were able to attend the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) which was held July 18-22 in Columbus, Ohio. In order for everyone to benefit from the General Assembly, **we are inviting all who attended to write of your experience**, highlighting information that you believe would be helpful to share with the ministers and lay persons of our region. **If you attended the General Assembly and would be willing to write such a reflection**, please email to Tina Jones at tina@grrdisciples.org

These "reflections" will be emailed to each of you and will also be posted on Facebook at **GRR SOAR**. Look for the first one to be coming soon. We thank Rev. Ashley Sherard, Jerusalem Christian Church in Lafayette, LA, for setting up and making posts/pictures on this page connecting the Great River Region to the General Assembly.

JOYS and PRAYER CONCERNS

Please keep in your prayers:

Kenneth Kline (husband of Rev. Linda Kline), recent surgery on both eyes

Rev. Leroy and Mary Bryant, both of whom have been hospitalized recently

Rev. Robert Brown, hospitalized recently

Merle Phillips (father of Rev. Alison Robuck), health issues in Oklahoma

Rev. Donna Rountree who recently retired as minister of First Christian Church of Conway, Arkansas

NEWS and EVENTS

“ROSES” Interregional Leadership Training Event

September 11-13

Kings Highway Christian Church, Shreveport, LA

Pat Donahoo, Executive Director, Disciples Women
Chesla Nickelson, Program & Merger Staff, Disciples Women

Disciples Women RETREATS It's time to register!



*We Are On the Move!!!
Getting out of Our Comfort Zone...
In Search of God's Will
Joshua 1:9*

September 18-20 ~ Keynoter Rev. Sherry Horton

MS Retreat at Eagle Ridge, Raymond, MS

October 9-11 ~ Keynoter Rev. Ashley Sherard

LA Retreat at the Wesley Center, Woodworth, LA

REGISTRATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE:

www.grrdisciples.org under the 'Disciples Women' page.

To those of you who have registered for Retreat - If you would like a "Retreat Shirt", please be sure to let us know what kind (*short sleeve or long sleeve*) and size of t-shirt you would like to order. Email your preference to wendy@grrdisciples.org and she will invoice you.



This year your DW Cabinets wanted to do a fund raiser for the Disciples Women Activity Fund - sales of these shirts will go directly to that fund. Cost is \$15 for t-shirts and \$20 for long sleeve shirts. Shirts will say:

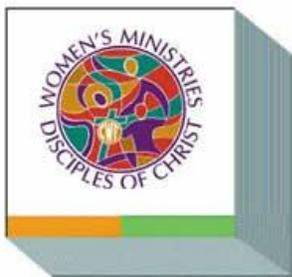
Front: GRR DW Retreat 2015

Back: Life Begins at the End of Your Comfort Zone

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27th

First Christian Church Conway, AR. 1620 N. Donaghey. 501-329-6142.

For 60 years, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has had a special way to express its gratitude to God for the blessings it has received – the Blessing Box.



The Blessing Box was created in 1953, the result of a dream of the women who founded Christian Women's Fellowship. Jessie Trout, who was CWF's co-founder and first executive secretary, developed the idea as an over – and – above way to help fund the wider mission of the church. Since that time, Blessing Boxes have been kept in the homes and offices across the church to enable members to express their gratitude for everyday blessings by giving to others. Our Blessing Box offerings will be collected the last Sunday,

September 27th.

Half of all Blessing Box giving goes to support the mission of the whole church through the Disciples Mission Fund. But what about the other half that supports Disciples Women's ministries? The following will give you some idea of a few of the ministries the Blessing Box offering supports and the far reaching effects of your over-and-above giving and how your blessings in turn bless others:

Leadership trainings for regional and constituency representatives; support of New Church, Start, develop-ing women's ministries; funding for women's participation with ecumenical entities such as Bread for the World, Church Women United, UCC/DOC partnership, Faith Trust Institute, and USA World Day of Prayer; development of materials and resources in support of social advocacy at the congregational level; and so much more.

2 POSITIONS AVAILABLE:

First Christian Church Disciples of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas, is searching for a paid part time **Contemporary Worship Leader** for our contemporary worship service. This position is and will combine with duties related to that ministry area. This person needs to have a strong faith in Jesus Christ and a passion for leading people in contemporary worship. A background in contemporary praise and worship music is essential. The ability to play an instrument (keyboard or guitar preferred) and put together arrangements to fit both vocalists and instrumentalists is vital. Knowledge of presentation software, Power Church and Power Point, is required. FCC has a well-established volunteer musicians and singers who make up the praise team. Send resume to 1500 N. Mississippi Street, Little Rock, AR 72207; or contact Rev. Leon Gray, phone 501-225-5656.

First Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, in Little Rock, Arkansas has an immediate opening for a paid part time **Director of Music Ministries** who is responsible for Traditional Worship Services weekly, a hand bell choir and an ensemble. This person needs to have a strong faith in Jesus Christ and a passion for leading people in traditional worship. All serious inquiries are welcomed. Send resume to 1500 N. Mississippi Street, Little Rock, AR 72207; or contact Rev. Leon Gray, phone 501-225-5656.

2015 Clergy Fall Retreat

September 21-23, 2015
Subiaco Abbey, Subiaco AR

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. Robert Lee Hill
Community Christian Church, Kansas City, Mo

Registration forms are available at www.grrdisciples.org.
Due by September 14th to the Regional Office



Central Christian Church Russellville, AR. P.O. Box 1963 - 224 South Independence. 479-264-6000 (Church) -- 479-968-1413 (Pastor), centralchristianchurchrsvl@yahoo.com.

An invitation to Disciple students coming to Arkansas Tech

With the new semester about to begin at Arkansas Tech University, many young adults will be coming to Russellville, some for the first time. If you have a member of your church or someone you know who plans to attend Tech, we want to welcome them to Russellville and to our congregation and be available for them.

We would welcome students who stay in Russellville on week-ends to come and worship with us at Central Christian Church. We would be happy to provide transportation to church services for students who don't have a vehicle.

Our worship begins at 11 a.m. each Sunday and we will begin a Prayer and Praise service on Monday evenings at 6 p.m. beginning in September. The Prayer and Praise service will provide people an opportunity to come and worship who might not be able to attend Sunday morning services.

Please pass the word to Tech students from your congregation or your community that we would love to be their church home away from home.

To find out more about our congregation, call the church at 479-264-6000 or the pastor, Rev. Rita Richardson, at 479-968-1413. There's also information about our congregation at www.centralchristianchurchrsvl.weebly.com and we are on face book.

Items needed for Pacific Islands Christian Church, Rogers, AR. 479-306-8344.

Our newest congregation, being nested at First Christian Church in Rogers, AR, needs the following equipment. Please contact Pastor Sealast Relech, srelech@yahoo.com or Miles Cook, milescook@outlook.com, if you are able to help.

- 1: KEYBOARD - PSR 950 (YAMAHA BRAND)
- 2: BEHRINGER EUROPOWER PMP4000 POWERED MIXER -16 CHANNELS, 1600 WATTS WITH MULTI-FX PROCESSOR AND FBQ FEEDBACK DETECTION SYSTEM
- 3: 2 SPEAKERS (PEAVEY PV-115 SPEAKERS)
- 4: SPEAKER CABLES (2 PYLE PPJJ-30 1/4 INCH (30FT)
- 5: MICROPHONE (BEHRINGER ULTRA VOICE XM1800S DYNAMIC CARDIO ID VOCAL MICROPHONE) 3 MICROPHONES WITH MIC CABLES CBI MLC20 LOW Z XLR MICROPHONE

Senior Citizens Beware ...

An aggressive and sophisticated phone scam targeting taxpayers, including recent immigrants, has been making the rounds throughout the country. Callers claim to be employees of the IRS, but are not. These con artists can sound convincing when they call. They use fake names and bogus IRS identification badge numbers. They may know a lot about their targets, and they usually alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling. Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer. If the victim refuses to cooperate, they are then threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting.

Or, victims may be told they have a refund due to try to trick them into sharing private information. If the phone isn't answered, the scammers often leave an "urgent" callback request.

NOTE THAT THE IRS WILL NEVER: 1) call to demand immediate payment, nor will the agency call about taxes owed without first having mailed you a bill; 2) demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe; 3) require you to use a specific payment method for your taxes, such as a prepaid debit card; 4) ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone; or 5) threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

YOUTH NEWS

(Alisha Gourley, Youth Coordinator, youth@qrrdisciples.org)

Fall Fandango dates are October 9-11, 2015

(registration forms are on the way)

Snoasis dates are February 26-28, 2016

DISCIPLES WOMEN!

Calling All Our Friends, Old and New

Highland Drive Christian Church Annual Salad Supper

501 West Highland Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401

Rev. Dr. Debra A. Matthews, Pastor

Monday, September 21, 2015 at 6:00 pm

Featuring our Special Guest Speaker

Ellen Marie Burns

Ellen is a talented 25 year old daughter of Highland Drive who sings beautifully, plays the violin, dances ballet, attends retreat, and travels the world pursuing her dreams. She received a B.A. in English and Creative Writing from Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She is currently pursuing an M.F.A. in Film Production at New York University Tisch School of the Arts Asia in Singapore.

CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION

Congregations in Pastoral Search and Call:

FCC Stuttgart, AR: part/full time pastor
FCC Blytheville, AR: assoc. pastor with potential to become senior pastor
FCC McComb, MS: full time interim / pastor
FCC Hammond, LA
Pulaski Heights CC, Little Rock, AR
FCC Mountain Home, AR

Please send all inquiries to drnburton@grrdisciples.org who will forward them to the committee.

PINNACLE OUTREACH MINISTRY

One of the goals of Pinnacle Outreach Ministry is to do something annually to help the ministers of the Great River Region who are actively serving in ministry. Last year we were privileged to provide our ministers a copy of Dr. M. Eugene Boring's book, **An Introduction to the New Testament: History, Literature, Theology**. We were also able to sponsor Dr. Boring's visit in conjunction with our Regional Assembly which took place November 7-9 in central Arkansas. To view Dr. Boring's pre-assembly seminar as well as his presentations during the Regional Assembly, you may access the following link, and please share this with others: <https://vimeo/user37364414>

This year we are providing our active serving ministers a copy of **The People's New Testament Commentary** by Dr. M. Eugene Boring and Dr. Fred B. Craddock. If you are a minister and have not already received a copy of this commentary, please contact me at milescook@outlook.com.

Yours in Christ's service,
Miles Cook, Director, Pinnacle Outreach Ministry

REGIONAL ELDERS

Rev. Glen Schory: Metairie, LA	Rev. Sherry Horton: Tupelo, MS
Rev. Randy Jay: Ft. Smith, AR	Rev. Russell Myers: Jackson, MS
	Rev. Patricia Parker: Itta Bena, MS

Rev. Susan Miller: Hot Springs, AR	Rev. Ann Pickett-Parker: Moss Point, MS
Rev. Ryan Pfeiffer: Fayetteville, AR	Rev. Alison Robuck: N. Little Rock, AR
Rev. Graham Riggs: Shreveport, LA	Rev. Miles Cook: Sherwood, AR

In Christ's service,

Miles Cook, Regional Elders Coordinator, milescook@outlook.com.



Support Your Regional Annual Fund Drive

donations can be sent to:

Great River Region
9302 Geyer Springs Rd
Little Rock, AR 72209

OUR MINISTRIES AND INSTITUTIONS

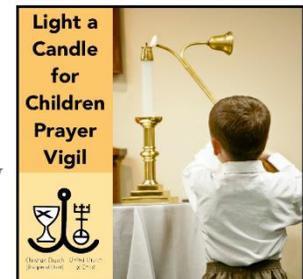
Light a Candle for Children: Sept. 13 - Oct. 18, 2015

Written by Children & Youth

Light a Candle for Children is an advocacy & prayer vigil project that invites congregations to join in Days of Prayer for Children [leading up to Children's Sabbath on Sunday, October 18th](#). It is a project of Family & Children's Ministries and features writing submitted by both Disciples and UCC members.

This year's vigil will be observed online **September 13-October 18** and will feature devotionals **written by children and youth** from around the country. A new devotional will be posted each day during the vigil. Subscribe below and [get tips on our website for observing Light a Candle and Children's Sabbath](#) in your own congregation or family.

lightacandle.blogspot.com (Includes option to subscribe via email)



As of today we are still **accepting submissions** for this year's vigil. [See details on our website.](#)

The Center for Faith and Giving and the Office of Stewardship and Philanthropy of the United Church of Christ are pleased to announce a partnership effort in generosity - "Stepping Into Stewardship" featuring J. Clif Christopher in Orlando, March 30 - April 1, 2016. Save the dates. centerforfaithandgiving.org



700 Prospect Ave, 5th Floor
Cleveland OH, 44115
www.InsuranceBoard.org

As a reminder the following services are available to **all churches and related ministries in the denominations we serve and include:**

- **SafeConduct™ Workbench**-Abuse Prevention ministry offered by the Insurance Board focusing on conduct in support of children and preserving sacred space. Additionally, offers fundamentals applicable to broader concerns including ethical relationships, sexual harassment, protection of vulnerable adults, bullying and tolerance around race, religion and sexual orientation.
- **Policy Template**-A **complete abuse prevention policy template is provided**. This Word document template will save you many, many hours of debate and drafting. It includes guidance and essential content missing from many policies.
- **Online Self-Assessment Tool**-Interactive, private space to evaluate your abuse prevention policies and plan for improvements.
- **Free Online Abuse Prevention Training**-This service is offered through our partnership with Praesidium, a national leader in abuse risk management using their Armatus program.
- **Discounted Background Screening Services**-This service is also offered through Praesidium and the Insurance Board further subsidizes discounted rates for participants of our package program.
- **Webinars**-Interactive for those attending the live webinar, current schedule includes subject matter relating to Adult/Child Interaction; Convicted Sex Offenders as Congregants; Financial Controls; Property Valuation and Facebook. A library of previously recorded webinars is also available for viewing at any time.
- **The Steward**-Quarterly newsletter offered by the Insurance Board
- **Loss Control Manuals**-Five volume manual set authored by focusing on People, Safety and Liability; Church Property; Transportation; Youth Activity and Church Management.
- **Your Church: Employer and Small Business**-Provides the basic guidance regarding your church's obligations as an employer and business. It includes information about employment and governance along with valuable links to resources on taxes and labor law. Many additional resources, such as an **Employee Handbook Template** are available as well.

[Insurance Board Turns 30! Call to Celebrate Services for Insurance Board Churches from Praesidium](#)

Jennifer R. Perri CIC, CISR, Director - Member Services, jperri@insuranceboard.org,
Phone: 216.736.3273, 800.437.8830 ext. 3273 or 877.597.8247 ~ Fax: 216.736.3239

Theological Institutions. Seven Disciples theological institutions educate ministers for thousands of Disciples congregations as well as for other denominations. Located in large metropolitan areas, these schools serve as theological, spiritual, and intellectual centers.

- [Brite Divinity School](#)
- [Christian Theological Seminary](#)
- [Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago](#)
- [Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt University](#)
- [Disciples Seminary Foundation](#)
- [Lexington Theological Seminary](#)
- [Phillips Theological Seminary](#)



The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) contains many ministries that work in covenant to resource congregations for mission and ministry.

Please use the links below to explore their web sites.

- - [Center for Faith & Giving](#)
 - [Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries](#)
 - [Christian Board of Publication](#)
 - [Christian Church Foundation](#)
 - [Council on Christian Unity](#)
 - [Disciples Church Extension Fund](#)
 - [Disciples of Christ Historical Society](#)
 - [Disciples Home Missions](#)
 - [Disciples Men](#)
 - [Disciples Women](#)
 - [Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries](#)
 - [Family and Children](#)
- - [Higher Education and Leadership Ministries](#)
 - [HOPE Partnership for Missional Transformation](#)
 - [National Benevolent Association](#)
 - [National Convocation](#)
 - [New Church Ministry](#)
 - [North American Pacific/Asian Disciples](#)
 - [Pension Fund](#)
 - [Reconciliation Ministry](#)
 - [Week of Compassion](#)
 - [Year Book and Directory](#)
 - [Young Adults](#)
 - [Youth](#)

Pension Fund of the Christian Church

Dear Clergy,

Jim Hamlett, President of the Pension Fund, is collecting information on the amount of debt that clergy are carrying as part of a study to know how best to serve our colleagues. He has asked that we send this link to you and encourage you to participate if you have not already: The link is as follows: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VD6ZDBK>

Juliette Fowler Communities is a neighborhood of choice and connection, of caring and service, of faith and fulfillment. Founded more than 120 years ago as an intergenerational community, Fowler serves children, youth and seniors, as well as their families, at our East Dallas location. Please browse our website <https://www.fowlercommunities.org/> to learn more about living, serving and sharing at Fowler. Better yet, come visit! To schedule your visit or learn more about Juliette Fowler Communities, call 214.827.0813 or [email](#) us now.

NOTE: Great River Region Churches, be sure to email your News, Conventions, Church Anniversary, or Special Events to: tina@grrdisciples.org. Thank you.