



The Buckeye Disciple Christian Church in Ohio

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

A covenant network of congregations in mission

November/December 2009

Volume 18, Number 6



O Come All You Faithful! 2009 Christmas Offering

To be faithful is to be filled with faith, and to be filled with faith means to possess an overwhelming feeling of what the Almighty can do in our lives right now. Here are some examples of Faithfulness currently happening throughout the Region:

- Our youth singing at camps and retreats about miracles that do happen, the Prodigal Son, a hippopotamus, and all of God's creations

- Lifting our voices to God together in prayer for all those in our lives who hurt and are burdened
- Gathering with hundreds of friends from all over Ohio to celebrate the lives of those who transformed us over the years
- Challenging our faith by considering what it means to be more open and affirming of all God's children
- Building networks of Churches through the work of the Transformation team
- Praying at the Regional Church Office with a pastor or congregation in need
- Ordaining new servants into the Christian Ministry
- Dreaming, planning, and working in various ministry teams at the Regional Church Office
- Coming together to create new places of worship
- Moving forward as established congregations create new beginnings with new pastors

Faithfulness happens when the Christian Church in Ohio stops and hears God's voice and realizes God's fingers are very busy molding us to be the church of the future. Please give to the Christmas Offering so these examples of Faithfulness can continue and many more can be shared in the years to come.

Get The Buckeye Online!

If you would like to replace your copy with an emailed copy, please send an email to ccio@ccinoh.org. Don't forget to include your name and the address to which it's being sent.

Ohio Disciples Outreach Census

2010 is the year for the US government to conduct the every 10-year census of the population of the US. 2010 is also the year the Ohio Disciple Outreach ministry will be conducting a census of the Ohio congregations. Be watching the monthly ministers mailings and the region's website for more information on this fact finding mission. Results of the survey will be unveiled at the 2010 Regional Assembly. Remember – it's important for you and your congregation to be counted!



Alternative Christmas Ideas

With an Alternative Christmas gift, you can honor your loved ones and make a difference in the lives of people around the world, all without a trip to the

mall. Alternative Christmas gifts are eco-friendly, ethically sound, and can change lives. They're perfect for the person who has "everything" and are sure to bring smiles to the gift recipient and to the faces of our global partners.

You can choose to make a gift to support any of the projects of our international partners, the work of a current or new missionary, or you may make a general gift to Global Ministries in honor of your friends, family, pastor, or just about anyone. See our list of suggested projects to support, or you are welcome to choose any of the programs described in the Special Projects section of each geographic Mission Area on our website.

Please indicate the name and address of your honoree(s) and the designation you have chosen. We will either send you a special Global Ministries Christmas card for each item that you order or, if you would prefer, we can send the Christmas card directly to the person(s) with a photo of the particular country your gift supports. You also will receive a receipt for your gift along with a letter of appreciation for your support.

If your gifts are designated for particular programs, they will go in their entirety for the designated purpose to our international partner. No administrative fees are taken from designated gifts to Global Ministries because of the faithful giving from our churches to Our Church's Wider Mission (UCC) and the Disciples Mission Fund.

For More Information contact Sarah Riester at (317)713-2564 or sriester@dom.disciples.org.



Spiritual Insights Rev. Dr. William H. Edwards

O Come all You Faithful
"Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." -- Luke 2:15

Have you ever been engaged in your normal routine when all of a sudden, the Lord stepped in and blessed the situation beyond your wildest dreams? I like to call those instances, times of *unexpected joy*.

Such as, the announcement of birth of a child; news from the doctor about the remission of cancer; a job offer that you have been waiting for finally comes through; - *unexpected joy*. Or maybe you were broke and just found \$20 in a pair of pants that you had not worn in a couple of weeks. - *unexpected joy*.

The Christmas story in the Gospel of Luke tells of the night that shepherds working in the fields experienced an *unexpected joy* when Jesus was born. Who would have thought that at this particular time and place in history, the God of the universe would have entered into human history in such an unexpected way? Who would have thought, that such an important point in time, on such a momentous occasion as the coming of the long awaited Messiah, would be announced in a shepherd's field? Who would have thought, that the small town of Bethlehem would have such a prominent role in the drama of salvation?

It is funny that at the time of Christ's birth, only a handful of people knew what had really happened. The fact of a poor girl name Mary having a baby in a Bethlehem stable seemed of little importance at the time. The irony of Jesus' birth was that he was looked for, hoped for, and prayed for, but wasn't expected when he came.

Few people recognized the coming of the Christ. The social elite slept the night away in comfort and security. The innkeeper who had shown pity to Mary and Joseph failed to comprehend what was taking place in his own stable. King Herod heard the news but was angered by it. He saw Christ's coming as a threat to his power and authority.

For all their power, status and knowledge, none of these people found their way to the manger in Bethlehem. They didn't anticipate the Christ coming so inconspicuously and quietly, so they missed his birth. None of them thought to look for the miracle and joy of Christmas in the unlikely places. Yet this little baby, born in humble surroundings, now commands the allegiance of millions of people all over the world. It was an event that has shaped the course of history.

However, that's the way God works! When God intervenes into human history, God transforms simple events into significant accomplishments. God transformed dirty, dusty, little Bethlehem into the spiritual capital of the world. God transformed a crude wooden cross into the symbol of redemptive love. God transformed an empty tomb into the divine promise of eternal life. When God intervenes into human history, God transforms simple events into significant accomplishments.

Could it be that God is trying to tell you and me to look for meaning, mystery, and miracle right here inside the matter-of-

Continued in the next column

Spiritual Insights continued

fact problems, pains and potentials that make up our daily lives? Maybe what God is saying is that the miracle and the joy of Christmas that I need will not be found in far-off Bethlehem or even on the decorated altar of the church, but in the birth of hope, peace, love and joy deep in my ordinary heart. What an *unexpected joy*!

We need to look for *unexpected joy* in the common things of life, because joy can come in the midst of trials and tribulations that we so often take for granted. When God wakes us up in the morning, that is an *unexpected joy*. Every time the dawn of the morning comes to chase away the shadows of the night, it is an *unexpected joy*. Every time the stars come out to light up the midnight sky -- it's an *unexpected joy*. Every time a rainbow appears after the storm, it is an *unexpected joy* and the glory of God is revealed.

During the Advent/Christmas season, we are given another opportunity to realize our Lord Jesus Christ's presence; to celebrate the gift of his birth to this world; to keep alive the sense of wonder and mystery of Christmas; to appreciate the *unexpected joy* of the Christmas story.

Across the life of the Christian Church in Ohio, there are exciting stories of *unexpected joy* about new congregations being established, existing congregations being renewed and transformed, and leaders being equipped for ministry. Great things are taking place as we join God in God's mission for the sake of the world. In this holy season let us reach out to those broken lives that feel no joy. Let us be a beacon of light that will lead them to God's gift of new life. Together, we can answer God's call to be a "covenant network of congregations in mission" by supporting current and future ministries through the annual Christmas Offering.

Please allow me to also use this opportunity to express deep appreciation for all the ways you support God's work in the Regional Church, be it through prayer, leadership and attendance at regional events, or financial offerings. Many people's lives have been blessed with through your support of the Christian Church in Ohio.



Disciples Mission Fund
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Congratulations

to

Washington Avenue Christian Church, Elyria

&

First Christian Church, Wadsworth

For being listed in the Top 100 Congregations of the Christian Church (DOC) in the United States and Canada. Contributing to Disciples Mission Fund.

Disciples Mission Fund is the Disciples church-wide "one-fund" ministry that proclaims Christ presence within the United States and Canada, and around the world. DMF supports local, regional and general ministry efforts as Disciples reach out in shared mission "from our doorsteps to the ends of the Earth." Disciples Mission Fund today supports a wide array of ministries as Disciples reach out in witness and mission.

Message from Regional Associate Pastor, Rev. Dr. LaTaunya Bynum

Wherever we are, we are invited to be in good relationship with God and to show our relationship with God by being in good relationship with our neighbors and friends.

The General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada gathered in Indianapolis, Indiana this summer. It was very much like the Regional Assembly, only bigger with five to six thousand in attendance, while the Regional Assembly will gather five or six hundred at our Assembly next year.

Both events are about worship and tending to church business. They are both filled with hallway and mealtime conversations, some filled with laughter and others filled with serious talk. Assemblies of the church are about reunions with colleagues and friends and they are about meeting new colleagues and friends while we nurture and delight in a new generation of leaders.

Gatherings of God's people, in great assemblies or in worship, in spiritual and faith development, and in every other interaction are about relationships. It is these connections that bind us together and strengthen the church of Jesus Christ. We can be about the joy of knowing God and of knowing our neighbors, whether in the pews or in the wider community.

Blessings to you as you continue to develop and nurture relationships wherever you are.

Message from Regional Associate Pastor, Rev. Stephen Bentley

"Come!" Such a simple invitation. I often hear this invitation as I pass by a wilderness not yet explored. My son lives in South Carolina, which means as I travel back and forth, I pass through the mountains of West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina. Each time I travel through there, I have this tug on my heart, "Come, explore! Come, find me in the gentle brook of the deep valley. Come, enjoy me in the vast lookouts of the mountain tops. Come, partake in the joy of my creation. Come, share in me!" I am not often able to accept the invitation but when I do I am never disappointed.

The Bible is full of such invitations: "Come, behold the works of the LORD!" (Psalm 46:8), "Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!" (Psalm 100:2), "Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed." (Proverbs 9:5), "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." (Luke 2:15), etc. Our theme for the Christmas Offering this year is the invitation "Come, All Ye Faithful!" Come, share in the ministry of Jesus Christ as together we strengthen relationships and build networks. Come, share in the hope of transformed communities, churches, and individuals as we build the Kingdom of God. Come, share in the reality of living in a reconciled world where color, age, gender or class are no longer considered. Come, share in the mission that begins right here at our doorstep and continues to the ends of the earth. "O Come, all ye faithful" and share in our common ministry.

Message from Regional Program Minister, Rev. Dr. Brenda Webster

O Come All Ye Faithful!

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him." Hebrews 11:6

The time is rapidly approaching when the sights and sounds of the Christmas season will fill the air. It is a time like no other ... family gatherings, worship services, gift exchanging and a general feeling of goodwill ... to name a few.

Even music takes on the characteristic sounds of happiness and great expectation. The Christmas carol, "O Come All Ye Faithful", is no exception. The "Faithful ..." in this great hymn of the season, are invited to commemorate the birth of the baby Jesus a baby unique in all of history by virtue of His heavenly pre-existence. The faithful are encouraged in the Christmas carol to approach the commemoration of this blessed event in a way that is both "joyful and triumphant."

Yet, people of faith (and many others) face an unprecedented set of concerns today. Somehow, it can be quite difficult to maintain one's faith under such negative circumstances. Holidays such as Christmas tend to compound any problems we may have. However, the simple message of this carol reminds us of who we are ... the "faithful", those who believe in the existence of God and know that God sent Jesus as proof of God's love and concern for humankind. Though we never doubt God's love for us, we are often overcome by adversities, hardships and unexpected trials and tribulations.

Even in light of the most disappointing circumstances, we must open our eyes to the invisible world of our own personal faith, for we know that this pleases God and disarms doubt, which imprisons our faith and renders us helpless in the face of challenging situations.

Through the genuine exercise of our faith we will find strength, no matter the situation, and will be able to participate joyfully and triumphantly in the blessed season to come.

Mark your calendars now for the CYF Mid-Winters!!

February

5 - 7

Phyo CYF Mid-Winter
Community Christian Church, North Canton

19 - 21

Wilmington CYF Mid-Winter
Mount Healthy Christian Church, Cincinnati

March

5 - 7

Hiram CYF Mid-Winter
Westlake Christian Church, Westlake

19 - 21

Lakeside CYF Mid-Winter
First Christian Church, Paulding

Thank You!

The Christian Church in Ohio would like to extend profound thanks to Jayne Hilvers who served as the CYF Conference Director at Camp Christian during summer 2009. It was an extremely busy summer as Camp Christian submitted to the rigors of American Camp Association accreditation. It was a successful undertaking, but could not have been achieved without Jayne's dedicated leadership during this time of transformation.

**Treasurer's Corner,
Duncan Draper**

At the time you are reading this many of you are aware that my last day with the Region was September 28 and that I began my new duties with the Disciples Pension Fund the next day. It is with a certain sadness that I offer this last Treasurer's Corner while at the same time I am filled with excitement about the new opportunity that awaits both Tina and I as we transition our lives by moving to Indianapolis.

Frankly I am at a bit of a loss for words, not a typical position for me as many of you will affirm. What should I share and how do I ensure that all of you that have meant so much to me and to Tina are properly acknowledged? The last few days have seen my email inbox fill with supportive messages and I have also received a good number of voicemail congratulatory messages as well. I have tried to respond in kind to each, but once again, let me say thanks to each of you who have sent notes.

In trying to formulate some thoughts about what to share in this space I looked backward by reading previous articles that I shared here. Obviously I had a few favorite topics such as Congregational networks, Camp Christian, and Volunteerism. I was a bit surprised that I did not share as many details regarding the dollars and cents of the Region. I suppose this is mainly due to the fact of how difficult it can be to share a story with numbers in such a limited space. I hope you understand. So perhaps the best thing I can close with is this----My deepest thanks and appreciation to all of you who have served the Region during the past four plus years. That includes those who serve on the Regional Church Council and the Regional Elders. Thank you to all who serve as volunteers, on Committees, Councils, and Commissions. Thank you to all who serve as Camp Counselors, Assistant Directors, and Directors. Thank you to those who serve as volunteers when called upon to work in our Regional Offices, to repair Camp Christian, and help with Regional Assemblies. Thank you to all our Ministers, Treasurers, and Financial Secretaries of our nearly 200 congregations who serve with honor and who provided input and suggestions that improved our Region.

My last words of thanks go to those who I have had the honor to serve with, the Regional Staff. Each of you will hold a special place in my heart, now and forever. And finally to Bill Edwards, thank you for making the call, for your leadership, your support, and for being a good friend.

To borrow from Art Long, "Shalom."

Regional Calendar**November**

- 4 RCO Staff Meeting
- 5 Regional Assembly Planning Team Conf. Call @ 11am
- 11-12 Regional Church Office Staff Retreat
- *13-14 Men's Spiritual Life Retreat @ Camp Christian
- *13-14 Transy & T.E.A.M. @ Transylvania University
- 17 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest C.C.
- 18 Personnel Committee Meeting @ RCO 10am - 2pm
- 20-22 CYF Leadership Training @ The Hocking Valley Parish
- 26-27 Thanksgiving, RCO Closed**

December

- 1 **Deadline for entries into The Buckeye Disciple**
- 2 RCO Staff Meeting and Christmas Celebration
- 5 Disciples Men's Officers Meeting @ RCO 10am - 2pm
- *11-12 Women's Advent Retreat @ Camp Christian
- 16 Ohio Disciples Extension Corp. Conf. Call @ 10am
- 24 Christmas Eve, RCO Closed**
- 25 Christmas Day, RCO Closed**

January 2010

- 1 **New Year's Day, RCO Closed**
- *1-3 Advance Ministries Winter Retreat @ Camp Christian
- 10 Anti-Racism Commission @ RCO
- 12 Interim Ministers Working Group @ RCO 10am
- 18 Martin Luther King Day, RCO Closed**
- 19 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest C.C.
- 20 Ohio Disciples Extension Corporation @ RCO 10am
- 25-26 Ohio Ministries Convocation @ Univ. Plaza Hotel

February

- 5-7 Phyto CYF Mid-Winter @ Community C.C., N Canton
- 16 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest C.C.
- 19-21 Wilmington CYF Mid-Winter @ Mt Healthy C.C., Cincinnati
- 23-25 Spiritual Life Retreat for Ministers & Spouses @ Camp

March

- 1 **Deadline for entries into The Buckeye Disciple**
- 2 Executive Committee Meeting @ RCO
- 5-7 Hiram CYF Mid-Winter @ Westlake C.C., Cleveland
- 6 Equipping the Saints @ N. Congregational, Columbus
- 12-14 Advance Ministries Spring Retreat @ Camp Christian
- 13 Ohio Women's Ministries Commission @ RCO
- 16 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest C.C.
- 18-19 DOC/UCC Partnership Standing Workshop @ RCO
- 19-21 Lakeside CYF Mid-Winter @ F.C.C., Paulding
- 23 New Ministers Orientation @ RCO
- 24 Anti Racism Training for New Ministers @ Camp
- 25 Sexual Ethics Training for New Ministers @ Camp
- 27 Regional Church Council Meeting @ Camp Christian

April

- 2 **Good Friday, RCO Closed**
- 4 **Easter**
- 9-10 Youth Council Meeting @ Camp Christian
- 17 Ohio Women's Ministries Convocation
- 17 Advance Scholarship Fundraiser @ Camp 7pm

RCO = Regional Church Office

* Online Registration is now available

Advent Retreat for Women

“Breath of Heaven Pour Over Me”



**Saturday December 12, 2009
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM**

In the Herald B. Monroe Lodge at Camp Christian
10299 Maple Dell Rd, Marysville, Oh 43040

A day of reflection, prayer, conversation and crafts.

Leaders: Margot Connor and Kay McGlinchey
Cost \$35.00 by Nov 29th (\$40.00 after Nov 29th) Come for a
slumber party the night before (Dec 11) for an additional \$25

Register: www.ccio.org

Questions? Contact Ministry Leader Rev. Stephen Bentley
(614)433-0343 or sbentley@ccinoh.org.

Men's Spiritual Life Mini-Retreat

“And the Disciples said, ‘Teach Us to Pray.’”



Friday & Saturday, November 13 and 14
Camp Christian 10299 Maple Dell Rd, Marysville, Oh 43040
The Reverends Harry Bolen & Nik Donges, Leaders

Register: www.ccio.org

Questions? Contact Ministry Leader Rev. Stephen Bentley
(614)433-0343 or sbentley@ccinoh.org.



Advance Ministries

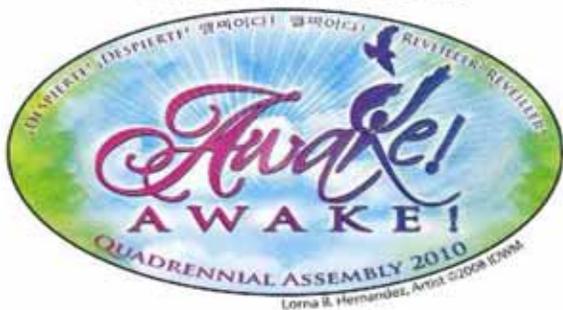
The 2009-2010 year for Advance Ministry kicked off to an amazing start. The weekend of September 18-20, thirteen members of Advance participated in a mission trip to Hiram Farm Living and Learning Community. Rev. Roger McKinney was our fearless leader as we demolished an old building in order to salvage wood for new buildings to be erected. We also assisted in constructing wooden frames for the greenhouses, created produce signs, and fed some of the animals on the farm, all while being in fellowship with one another. The weekend was a successful one, and strong ties have been made between Advance Ministry and Hiram Farm. We look forward to assisting them more in the future.

Our next event is Winter Retreat, which is quickly approaching. This year's theme is “Get Personal With Each Other: Diving Into Personal Relationships.” As young adults, we are in the midst of questioning our identities. We feel pressure from society to find that special someone, get married, have children, and to be successful. But what if God has different plans for some of us? Does our happiness depend on whether or not we find a significant other? And if we do find ourselves in a relationship, how can we still be the individuals God created us to be? As we gather together at Camp Christian for another incredible retreat, we will be tackling these questions as we discuss love relationships, living the single life, and explore how God is present in both.

Register online at www.ccinoh.org!

Questions? Contact the Advance Ministry Officers at advance-conference@yahoo.com

SAVE THE DATE!!



**QUADRENNIAL ASSEMBLY
JUNE 23-27, 2010
GREENSBORO, NC**

*“Awake! Awake Deborah! Awake! Awake,
break out in song!” - Judges 5:12*

*THOUSANDS OF WOMEN WORSHIPPING AND
LEARNING TOGETHER!!*

YOU WANT TO BE THERE!!

Check out www.quadrennial.org for more information



Celebrating Congregations



170th Anniversary Celebration

The members and friends of the Mt. Healthy Christian Church, Cincinnati, celebrated a most special event in the 170-year history of the Mt. Healthy congregation.

On Sunday, October 11, 2009, the Mt. Healthy congregation dedicated an Ohio Historical marker celebrating a legacy of ministry and mission, honoring the founders and early leaders who established that legacy. In 1839, founding Pastor David S. Burnet established the church at Mt. Healthy (known as Mt. Pleasant at that time) with the collaboration of Restoration Movement leaders, including legendary Restoration Movement Evangelist Walter Scott. Pastor Burnet was the son of Isaac Burnet, who served as the first mayor of the city of Cincinnati. The Reverend Amy Gopp, Executive Director of the Week of Compassion, addressed the congregation at two services in commemoration of the 170th Anniversary of the Mt. Healthy Christian Church, founded on October 10, 1839. The Church has served as a model for global ministry and missions since Pastor Burnet first organized the church's mission of Christian service. There was a Dinner in the Fellowship Hall to honor of all those who presently serve as volunteers in the Mt. Healthy church, followed promptly by a program of dedication for the marker in the sanctuary. For more information about Mt. Healthy Christian Church go to www.mthealthychristian.org.



O.W.L.S.

Is it an alien invasion? No, it's just the O.W.L.S. (Older Wiser Learning Seniors) of High Street Christian Church in Akron, OH at their September 18th meeting. Special 3D glasses were provided to view a 3D slide show of Yosemite National Park presented by Dr. John MacDonald. The park came to life on the screen with the special glasses provided. The group meets once a month for lunch and a program. It was a great kick-off to the season.

Congratulations to College Hill Christian Church in Cincinnati for celebrating their 100th Anniversary!



Beautiful Donation

Arguably some of the most sacred times at Camp Christian are those times when we all participate in sharing Communion. Thanks to the youth from Tylersville Road Christian Church in Mason, this time was even more special this past camping season because of the absolutely gorgeous (and most colorful) Communion sets they made for and donated to Camp Christian. Their gift is deeply and profoundly appreciated by all who grace the hallowed grounds. More than that, however, the sacrifice of time, energy and talent is most pleasing to God. Each of the youth is an example of Spirit-led youth who are making a difference in God's Kingdom building program. On behalf of our Regional Pastor and President, William Edwards, the Regional Church Staff, and all who love Camp Christian *Thanks!*

Feeding the Food Box

The Circle of Christian Friends at South Side Christian Church in Lima is helping the Christian Action Committee with a Food Box that sits in the narthex. Their donations are taken to Churches United Pantry (C.U.P.) to help feed hungry people in the area. There has been an increase in their clients and more non-perishable items are needed. The church has helped C.U.P. for many years and believes that they still want to help. The Circle is going to step up and help the church family remember to keep filling the Food Box up. If each person/ family would bring in one or two items a month it would make that Food Box overflow. Jesus said, "Do you love me? ...Feed my sheep." John 21: 17

Each month certain items are highlighted to bring in. Of course, you can always bring anything else you want. The Circle of Christians Friends hopes to be very busy taking items to C.U.P. As of this writing they have taken approximately 198 boxes of cereal and other items to C.U.P. The volunteers at C.U.P. say South Side is making a difference and thank you. Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day.



Community Festival

Fifth Christian Church, Cleveland, held its Community Festival August 15. Pictured is Jacquelyn Sullivan, 11-year-old daughter of Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan Jr., with McGruff the Crime Dog and a Cleveland Police Officer. The Community Festival is designed to give

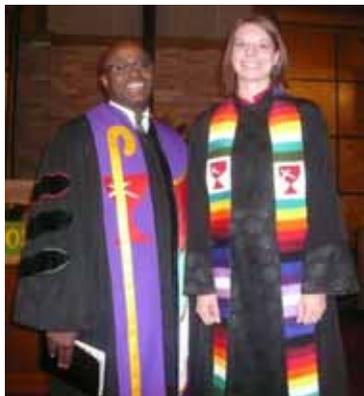
neighbors of the church opportunities for health screening, awareness of goods and services for children and families, and school supplies.

Wooster Elders Workshop

Dick Hamm, former General Minister and President, was the speaker for the 6th annual Elders Workshop at Central Christian Church in Wooster on September 26. More than 150 elders from more than 30 congregations met to hear Dr. Hamm lecture on the different generations currently at work in the life of the church and the different likes and dislikes of those generations. Hamm suggested that “the elders are called to be the adults in the congregation – to overcome their own likes and dislikes for the good of the church.” The 2010 Elders Workshop in Wooster on September 25, will feature Dr. Randy Harris, Instructor in the Department of Bible, Missions and Ministry at Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas and the author of *Godwork: Confessions of a Standup Theologian*.

Installation

Rev. Melanie Harrell De-laney was installed as the Pastor of Good Shepherd Christian Church in Macedonia, on October 4 by Regional Pastor and President Bill Edwards. A native Nebraska Cornhusker, Melanie studied Sociology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln while serving as a youth minister for Bethany Christian



Church in Lincoln. Discovering a call to ministry during one of many summers spent at church camp, Melanie moved to Nashville, Tennessee where she earned a Master of Divinity degree from Vanderbilt Divinity School in December of 2008 and was ordained in February of 2009. Pastor Melanie is passionate about finding new and creative ways to encounter God wherever we are, caring for all of God’s people through local and global mission, and connecting young adults (and the young-at-heart) to a meaningful community of love, spiritual growth and worship.

Bazetta Christian Church Baptisms

What a joy it was to celebrate the Baptism of 25 individuals on a glorious Sunday afternoon, September 27th, at the pond on the Schwartz Farm! We rejoice with these folks who have committed their lives to following Jesus. May God be with them on their journey of faith! A picnic celebration followed the Baptisms and was enjoyed by all. What a great atmosphere we had with the sun was shining, the cool but comfortable air, the nice clean refreshing water! Thank you to everyone who participated in any way, from the planning to the clean-up. It was great to be together and celebrate this special day.



Hocking Valley Parish

The Hocking Valley Parish, consisting of 5 congregations with Pastor Deanna White, and Associate Pastor Debbie Koons, is collecting clothing for children at the area schools. The Trimble-Glouster local school district is the poorest district in Ohio. The Chauncey elementary school has 90% of its children in poverty conditions. The special mission at the Chauncey Church is providing help for the area children. Elder Mike Camechis provides transportation to church, Sunday School, and special events.



Pet Blessings

First Christian Church of Alliance recently held a ceremony of Pet Blessing in the church pavilion. Pastor Pam Bruno officiated by retelling the story of Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals. According to legend, St. Francis once gave up his own house to provide shelter for a homeless donkey, and he is remembered for his love and devotion to all of God’s living creatures. In the tradition of St. Francis, First Christian recognizes the importance of pets in the lives of their owners. Pictured, Pastor Pam Bruno, right, blesses Ava, a German Short-haired pointer, as owners Jen and Avery Lewis look on.

Holiday Buckeyes

The Circle of Light ladies at New Horizons Christian Church in Akron, are now making Buckeyes for the holidays. A signup sheet is located in the Information Center. Last year they made **756** dozen. The cost is still only \$3.75 per dozen. The Circle of Light is a dedicated group of ladies who labor for God's glory. They have donated funds for countless needs of the church and community. Besides making Buckeyes this fall, they are going to be cooking and serving food at the bazaar on November 14th.



Operation Inasmuch continued -wood Mall, cleaned the exterior of Southview Manor Group home by weeding, mulching, mowing, clearing out debris. They also provided a number of new lawn chairs to the residents.

At Bolindale Christian Church there were 21 workers. They worked at Bolindale park cleaning up and staining and painting the wooden jungle jim, and the maintenance shed. They even fixed some fascia falling off one of the pavilions, and eliminated a great deal of graffiti.

Lordstown Christian Church had over 30 members who did landscaping and yard clean-up at several locations, including mulching weeding, trimming and mowing. At one site, the roof was repaired. At the next site a wheel chair ramp that was no longer needed was dismantled and a brand new set of stairs and handrail were constructed. The front porch was also reinforced, making it safe for its inhabitants.

None of these projects were for church members, they were for people in the community. The work was amazing and everyone is already making plans for next year. We hope that even more District 4 churches will join us in August next year. As a matter of fact, we hope that Disciples churches in all of Ohio will join us in the wonderful ministry. If you have any questions contact one of us in District 4 or just read the book "Operation Inasmuch" by David W. Crocker. Or if you need someone to come and talk to your church about the program, please feel free to call Central Christian Church in Warren 330-372-1676.



Operation Inasmuch

For the second consecutive year, on Aug. 15, 2009, members of Warren's Central Christian Church reached out to the local community through a program entitled Operation Inasmuch. The program began in North Carolina in 1995. It is a one-day blitz by church folk in their own community to help people in need. This year the program, in District 4, has grown to include 5 other churches, Champion Christian Church, First Christian Church in Niles, Bolindale Christian Church, Lordstown Christian Church and First Christian Church in Girard. Each church worked in its own community, but we all worked on the same day.



At Central, Warren they had 101 volunteers who painted a house, cleaned up 5 yards, made 36 lap robes, visited people in two nursing homes, did blood pressure checks for 82 people, did a 12 point inspection for 22 automobiles, gave away 250 sets of school supplies, and packed 12 boxes to be mailed to soldiers. Girard, First Christian Church worked with us on our projects.

At Champion Christian Church there were 149 volunteers who offered automobile check ups, did yard work at several homes, painted the Champion ball field fences, made cards for soldiers, baked cookies and delivered to public servants and Mobile Meals, visited nursing home, provided school supplies to needy families, and helped residents learn how to write resumes.



At Niles First Christian Church there were 35 volunteers who Did 35 blood pressure checks, made microwaveable rice bags to go to homebound, made 18 lap robes for nursing home residents, gave out water to people walking at East-

Continued in the next column

Chalice Arts Series

Celebrating their Fourteenth Season, the Northwest Christian Church, Columbus, Chalice Art Series is an eclectic array of artistically expressive performances.

December 13 - "Joy to the World" (3pm) - The spirit of the holiday season comes to life through this Christmas program presented by the choirs. "Let every heart prepare him room."

February 21 - "The Seven Last Words of Christ" (3pm) - The Chancel Choir, members and friends will be joined by members of Advent Lutheran Church for this well-known and beloved sacred cantata by Theodore Dubois.

March 19 & 20 - "The Song of Mark" (7:30pm) - The gifted Youth Choir presents this Marty Haugen musical for the first time. The meaning of discipleship is a central theme throughout the Gospel of Mark, presenting a Jesus who is constantly in action. The Song of Mark seeks to convey this sense of dramatic action by using quick, sparse dialogue, and songs which divide the story into a number of episodes.

April 25 - "The Rainbow Express" (8:30 & 11am) - The sanctuary will once again come alive as the elementary age Kids of the Kingdom present this musical by John & Phyllis Miller. They will lead both worship services on this special Sunday morning.

Elder Emeritus

Kathleen Johnson was raised to the office of Elder Emeritus by the congregation and elders of Disciples Christian Church in Youngstown during worship on September 13. Kathleen was one of the first two women elders of the First Christian Church in Youngstown, and has devoted her life to serving others. She is a model of Christian Love, caring, action, and faithfulness. A red and gold Elder Emeritus pin and certificate were presented to Kathleen as a token of the love and respect the church has for her. The pin reads, "Well done, good and faithful servant."



Is your congregation doing something amazing? Tell us about it!! ccio@ccinoh.org

Thanksgiving Offering

Homecoming is a process of returning to a particular place with a particular group of people who have shared a particular experience.

Homecoming is often associated with alumni of a particular college, university or institution of higher education.

Homecoming is a process that starts for Disciples students with your gifts to the 2009 Thanksgiving Offering, benefiting our 17 colleges and universities and 10 seminaries and divinity houses.

The **General Assembly** is often described as a homecoming event where friends reconnect and relationships are built. At the 2009 General Assembly, several Disciples were interviewed for the Thanksgiving offering and here are some words from their stories.

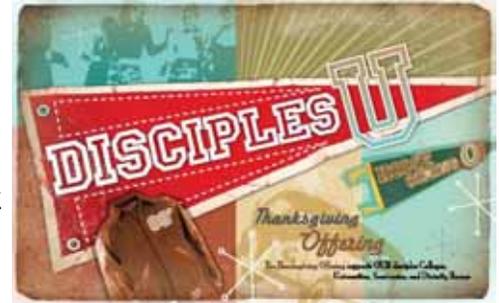
Aly Gideon, who will be a freshman at Chapman University said, "I am attending Chapman because Disciples Financial Aid is making it possible." Your generosity is providing the way for future leaders.

Sven DeJong stated, "I wasn't raised in the church, but at Bethany College I came to an awareness of faith. Today I am so in love with the nostalgic beauty of Bethany College and the tradition of the Campbellites that I've never left." Your generosity brought someone to faith in Jesus Christ.

Minkook Um, a seminary student, remarked, "I am empowered to study for ministry. Your gifts to the Thanksgiving Offering make it possible for students like me to attend seminary." Your generosity is training leaders today for the changing face of America.

"Forty years ago when I applied to seminary, I could not afford to attend. W.A. Welsh wrote me and said 'come to Lexington Theological Seminary' because through Disciples dollars, my way would be provided," shared **Mary Pat Spencer**. Your gifts transform lives well beyond the year in which you give them.

For decades now, Disciples like you, have been providing resources to further the education of Disciples students at Disciples institutions of Higher Education. The 2009 Thanksgiving Offering provides the way for more Disciples to have that shared experience, with a particular group of people. Please give generously and let us support **OUR Disciples student at OUR schools!**



David K. Dunlap Foundation

Susan Dunlap Potts and her late husband Ken Dunlap both cherished their summers at Camp Christian during the 1950's. Ken was elected president of Hiram Conference during the summer of 1955. They both went to Bethany College, and he graduated in 1959. In April, 2004, Ken died of diabetes and a heart attack.

In December of 2003, their son, David K. Dunlap died of heart arrhythmia. His wife Cyndie began the David K. Dunlap Foundation, which generates funds to purchase Automatic Exterior Defibrillators (AED). This foundation, through an annual golf outing, is able to purchase several defibrillators each year, which it donates to charities, and organizations.

In years past, the foundation has given AED's to The Boy and Girl Scouts of America, The Selesian Boys Club, The Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Ohio, and private and public schools. It was their wish to add Camp Christian to the list of recipients this summer.

On June 25, 2009, during Hiram Conference, the newly donated AED was presented to Camp Christian by the family. Pictured above: Front Row - Becky Nelson, Evelyn Lehman, Lauren Nelson, Sue Dunlap Potts, and Tom Potts. Back Row - Ron Lehman and Paul Hansen. Cyndie Dunlap, who had the foresight for developing the foundation, unfortunately could not be there.

For more information about the David K. Dunlap Foundation please visit <http://daviddunlapfoundation.com/>

Prayer for Honduras

By Alan Dicken

Loving God,

We come before you today together as your children. We come before you today and ask that we may know that sometimes what you ask of us is difficult, but that with you, all things are possible. We come before you and ask that you may help heal the wounds in a hurting country. We come before you with hope for the future of Honduras. We come before you and ask that we may do what we can to help in the lives of others, even if it means compromising our own wealth. For the wealth we may have in this world is nothing compared to the wealth we have in you.

Prayer Requests:

- The staff of the CCD, that they may continue striving towards sustainable development in Honduras
- Understanding from both political parties struggling for power, and hurting many in the process
- Safety, comfort, and healing for those affected by the human rights violations ranging from violations from police officers to having chemicals dumped on them from a helicopter
- Discernment for the Council of Latin American Churches, which recently concluded their tour of Honduras and their discussions on the situation here, that they may bring information to their home countries and congregations

Alan Dicken, a member of Tylersville Road Christian Church, Mason, Ohio, serves as a Global Mission Intern with the Christian Commission of Development (CCD) in Honduras. He works in the communications ministry and assists with hosting groups visiting the CCD.



2010 Media Center Membership

The Media Center offers an extensive collection of media resources including: DVDs, VHS tapes, video curricula, video clips for projection, software, and equipment, including LCD projectors and screens for church use. Our resources are appropriate for Sunday school classes, Bible study groups, men's or women's groups, youth or any other small group. We have many things to help in worship as well to serve as sermon illustrations, assist with music, scripture and to serve as transitions. We have many popular authors and Bible studies on hand, allowing you to bring well-known preachers and authors into your church to share the Gospel.

Because the Ohio Regional Church Office has a Regional Membership, all Ohio Disciples of Christ churches may join the Media Center for a small yearly membership fee of \$55.00. There are no rental fees to members; the only additional cost is for return postage using Library Mail. The Media Center will ship the resources to your church more than a week before your scheduled date, or you may pick them up if you are nearby. You may reserve resources up to one year in advance, allowing you to plan ahead for retreats and seasonal uses.

You can search our online catalog to see what we have, stop by the Media Center to browse our shelves if you are in the neighborhood, or the Media Center Staff can help you find the right resource for your group by phone or by email.

Call Susan Arnold at (800) 831-3972, extension 139 or email sarnold@eocumc.com for more information. www.eocumc.com look for Media Center under Resources on the drop down menu.

Adult Conference in Ohio announces theme for 2010 Conference

At its meeting in September, the 2010 Planning Team of Adult Conference in Ohio chose the theme for next year's conference, **Deep & Wide: Living Out the Spiritual Journey**.

"We are pleased to announce that the Bible Lecturer is, the Rev. Dr. Ronald J. Allen, Nettie Sweeney and Hugh Th. Miller Professor of Preaching and New Testament at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. The Vesper speaker is the Rev. Dr. William Edwards, Regional Pastor and President of the Christian Church in Ohio," says Deb Bolen, president of the 2010 conference.

She said that Dr. Edwards recently received the 2009 Faithful Servant Award, given annually by the Disciples Historical Society. The conference offers its heartiest congratulations to him on receiving this prestigious award.

Further plans are underway for another spirit-filled Adult Conference at Northwest Christian Church in Columbus, June 14-18, 2010. Other officers serving on the planning team with Deb Bolen are Allen Harris, VP, Sue Chivington, secretary, Bob Thompson, financial liaison, Pat Davis, 2009 president, Lee Snyder, 2009 secretary, and at-large members Charlotte Bougher, Ken Coy, Lynn Mattox Baker and Patty Worsham. Rev. Steve Bentley, Regional Associate Pastor, is the region's liaison to Adult Conference.

Week of Compassion reaches out

Week of Compassion, the relief and development fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), has responded to a bevy of emergencies in the last week. A destructive tsunami that washed over parts of the Samoan Islands, a typhoon that caused severe flooding in the Philippines, Vietnam and Cambodia, earthquakes that rattled Indonesia and flooding in the southern United States area of Georgia were among a spate of disasters that Week of Compassion was closely monitoring.

Several members of the First Congregational Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Samoa, located in Magna, UT have been unable to contact their families in Samoa because communication lines there have been disrupted by the tsunami and a related earthquake. Week of Compassion is staying in contact with Saitumua Tafaioalii, pastor of First Congregational Church, about the status of the Samoan disaster. To find how to help and more information, visit:

www.weekofcompassion.org

William Edwards named 2009 Faithful Servant



Disciples of Christ Historical Society announced today that the Reverend Dr. William H. Edwards is the recipient of the 2009 Faithful Servant Award. Given annually by the Historical Society, the award recognizes individuals who have given an extra-measure of service to causes in the whole Church.

The award was presented by Dr. Glenn Thomas Carson, president of Disciples of Christ Historical Society, at Lakewood Christian Church (DOC) in Cleveland, Ohio, at their morning worship service on September 13. The congregation has recently sold its property and was meeting for its very first Sunday as a nesting congregation in the Cove United Methodist Church in Lakewood, Ohio. Dr. Edwards was on the program for the morning service as the church begins a new process of discernment for its future. Rev. Paul Durbin, longtime pastor in the Ohio region, is serving as the interim minister for Lakewood.

Rev. Dr. William H. Edwards is the Regional Pastor and President of the Christian Church in Ohio (DOC). He has served churches in Kentucky, Ohio and Tennessee, and served as Associate General Minister and Vice President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

A graduate of Hiram College, Christian Theological Seminary, McCormick Theological Seminary and the University of Memphis, Dr. Edwards serves with excellence throughout the life of the Church. He has worked in the Office of General Minister and President, Disciples Center, Homeland Ministries, and the Department of Christian Education.

If you would like more information about the Faithful Servant Award please contact Kristin Russell at 866.834.7563 or russell@discipleshistory.org



Global Ministries announces establishment of Endowment Fund

Global Ministries has announced the establishment of the "First United Church of Christ, Pomeroy - Behle Endowment Fund." This new Wider Church Ministries endowment fund is established by the First

United Church of Christ in Pomeroy, Iowa, as it ends its visible ministry. It will witness in a permanent way to the high priority the church places on sharing God's love with other children of God, the leadership of Harold L. Behle, and the service of Global Ministries missionary Mark H. Behle.

Distributions for the fund will support work in Africa. For more information on this fund, see: globalministries.org/africa/projects/first-united-church-of.html

Caminante* participates in the First International CROP Walk in the Dominican Republic ~From the Blog of Global Ministry Intern, Erin McKinney

Julia Alvarez, author of "In the Time of the Butterflies," is from the Dominican Republic and teaches at Middlebury College in Vermont. She participated in a CROP walk there and after realizing that [Church World Service](#) supports several projects in the DR, she became interested in hosting the first International CROP walk in her sustainable organic coffee farm in the mountains of the DR.

Yesterday Caminante traveled together with Servicios Sociales de la Iglesia Dominicana, (Social Services of Dominican Churches), to the mountains in Jarabacoa to walk in solidarity in the struggle against hunger and poverty in the world.

I have participated in many CROP walks with my church and community growing up, but this was by far the most powerful and unforgettable. The idea of a CROP walk is to bring people of different faiths, cultures, and ages together to walk in solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized. The slogan "we walk because they walk" took a whole new level of meaning. We hiked through the hills of Los Marranitos, a little country village in the mountains, and as we walked, children and different people from the communities joined in the walk. As we were walking one of the local coffee farmers described to me the entire process of coffee production and taught me names of different plants and fruit trees native to that area. We were accompanied by different volunteers from Europe and the US. The young girl who organized the event is from India working as a volunteer for a year in this community. The hike ended with each organization sharing of the work that they are doing in different communities, the sharing of food and listening to a local Haitian musical group playing traditional country music. Relationships were established, information was shared. It was truly an inspiring mix of different cultures, faiths and ages all recognizing that we are in this struggle together.

The CROP walk is to raise awareness and funds to support many different projects and programs around the US and the World. Caminante and SSID are just two of those programs that are supported through CWS. In this country it is the poor who walk. We work with children who every day walk miles to get water for their family, then walk 20 minutes to get to school and then after walking back to their homes continue walking, selling sweets to the tourists on the beach. In the country town where the walk took place, most people do not have a vehicle and if they need to go to town, to the market, or visit a doctor they must walk miles to get to town. The name Caminante means 'to walk the path' or 'the walking ones.' It was developed by the first children in which Caminante worked because they were always walking. The symbolism of walking together in the first international CROP walk was inspirational and powerful and a great experience of solidarity with this international **Community Responding to Overcome Poverty**.

*Caminante is a Global Ministries partner in the Dominican Republic. "Caminante" means "to walk the path." They are an organization of people walking along side children in their paths of life, promoting the rights of children as well as providing spaces for creation and development through educational and prevention programs.

November/December 2009
Volume 18, Number 6

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Columbus, Ohio
Permit No. 8724

Christian Church in Ohio
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Children are the focus of prayer vigil

Sept. 6 marked the beginning of "The Light a Candle for Children Forty Day Prayer Vigil." The vigil ends on "Children's Sabbaths Weekend," Oct. 16-18. The annual observance of Children's Sabbaths is a time for people of faith to demonstrate their concern for children

and to take specific actions on behalf of children. Children are the most vulnerable people in any society and are unable to advocate for themselves, said Kaye S. Edwards, director of Family and Children's Ministries at Disciples Home Missions.

Some congregations involve children in the actual vigil, having them light candles on Sunday morning as concerns for them are lifted up to God. "There must be a way found to deal with the thousands of children in this rich nation who live in families without health care," said Edwards. "The numbers of children going to prison, especially young African American boys, is alarming. Something must be done. These are the two issues that are lifted up in this year's Children's Defense Fund's planning book for Children's Sabbaths." Find out more at:

www.discipleshomeissions.org/FamilyandChildren/index.htm

Deadline for entries into the Jan-Mar issue of
The Buckeye Disciple
Due in the Regional Church Office by
December 1, 2009

Submitting via email is preferred ccio@ccinoh.org

The Buckeye Disciple

Published by : Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ)
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Printed/Distributed by PXP OHIO, Reynoldsburg, OH