



The Buckeye Disciple

Christian Church in Ohio
Disciples of Christ
A covenant network of congregations in mission:
We are the Body of Christ gifted and called in

Volume 17, Number 6

November/December 2008



Yesterday, Today, AND TOMORROW!

God HAS DONE great things in Ohio and we can all name some of them. The first that comes to mind for many is the work of Camp Christian. For over 50 years the grounds of Camp have been holy for generations of people who have experienced God's presence there. Another would be the work of our Regional Pastors. Thousands of clergy and laity have turned to these dedicated individuals

over the years for leadership, support and celebration. We can look back at the work of many ministries in Ohio and see God's hand weaving great things.

God is not done yet! God is DOING great things in Ohio! Our Regional Assembly gave us the opportunity to see what congregations are doing to serve God. We also saw the continued work of dedicated leaders in the program our Youth presented at camp that weekend. God's hand is working in the Women's Ministry and the Men's Ministry of Ohio to bring people together again. God is breathing life into 10 young congregations seeking to serve the Lord.

God WILL continue to do great things in Ohio and we have the honor to be part of it! New churches are being birthed! New mission relationships are being formed here in the states and around the world! Congregations are being renewed and transformed! New Ministers and ministries are taking deep breaths of the Spirit to begin living faith in new ways.

We are called upon to give our time, energy and resources to the work to which God is calling us. Looking back can be a blessing, but it is also a call to look forward and to be active in the work that lies ahead of us. God has done great things in Ohio, is doing great things now, and blessedly, will do great things in the days and years ahead of us!

Thank You from Rev. David Vargas, President of the Division of Overseas Ministries

Words cannot express how grateful we are to the Ohio Region and this Capital Campaign (Keep the Fire Burning) which contributed \$163,664.50 for the Shalom Center Camp Grounds in Chile. These funds provided the necessary capital to purchase the land where the camp is located. This beautiful piece of property has been developed into a place for people of all ages to come and share their experiences and to learn about how to conserve and appreciate the beauty that God has created in the land and in each other.



A Pastoral Letter To The Church During This Period Of Economic Uncertainty

Dear Disciples,

As you are fully aware, global economic conditions are as unstable as we have seen for many years. The credit crisis, fueled by sub-prime lending, deregulation and corporate greed, has led to bank failures and mergers, declines in real estate values, higher unemployment, emergency loans and a multi-billion dollar bailout.

Many of you may be wondering about the state of our Disciples' financial ministries at this time.

Recently I had the privilege of sitting with the presidents of our Disciples financial ministries to hear their assessment of the situation as it affects Disciples. I am grateful for the wisdom and calm of these leaders and wanted to share with you their insights.

What impressed me, in addition to their good stewardship of church resources, was their care and concern for those neighbors both near and far who will suffer as a result of the current financial crises. I am grateful for these leaders among us!

In times like these, people on the economic margins suffer the worst. The pain is real and, in this global economy, it stretches from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth. As a church, we need to be in prayer for those who are most adversely affected by these conditions. We need to find ways to reach out to our neighbors. We need to give voice through public policy for those whose voices are all too often left out of the international conversation.

This is the time to refocus on our calling to be stewards of the financial and spiritual gifts God has given to us. It is time to model faithful dependence upon the God of abundance. In the midst of volatility and uncertainty, let us live a message of generosity born of our faith and hope. Let us remember our calling to love our neighbor as ourselves. Even in the midst of financial fragmentation, let us be the movement for wholeness!

Blessings,
Sharon E. Watkins



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Spiritual Insights

Rev. Dr. William H. Edwards

...for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. Luke 1:49

The biblical text for the 2008 Christmas offering is a great passage of Scripture. In Luke 46-55, we see a joyful song inspired by the Holy Spirit that anticipates the coming birth of the Lord. Mary, the mother of Jesus, sings a song of praise. Mary's great song of praise has come to be known as the "Magnificat". This is the Latin translation of the first few words which Mary speaks and it literally means, "My soul celebrates the Lord."

In verse 49, Mary sings that God is our strength. As she thought over the events that had occurred in the weeks before her visit to Elizabeth, she was overwhelmed by the concept that "the Mighty One has done great things for me." Mary's song recognizes and celebrates the "presence of God."

Mary's praise proclaims, "The Mighty One has done great things for me . . ." This may sound sort of self-centered, but keep in mind that she is focused on what "God" has done or is doing. It is a personal focus, but Mary does not lose sight of God. To rediscover the worship of praise, we too must rediscover the mighty things God has done for us personally.

In this scripture passage, we find Mary rejoicing because the Lord has been mindful of her. Here we find Mary the mother of Jesus bursting out in a "Hallelujah" chorus in praise of what God is doing in her life. "Hallelujahs" occur when we stand in awe of what God is doing for us personally. So Mary stood and sang, "*My soul magnifies the Lord ...for the Mighty One has done great things...*"

And like Mary, my soul magnifies God when I begin to focus on what the Lord has done. I praise God for the great things God has done in the ministry of our Regional Church. I want to take this opportunity to share some of the "great things God has done" through the ministry of the Christian Church in Ohio to make significant progress in accomplishing God's vision for Disciples in Ohio.

There were 1,163 campers this summer at Camp Christian (which reflects 9.33% growth in Partnership Camp and 5.67% growth in Chi-Rho camp)

18 young persons and 2 counselors stepped forward during CYF Conference to acknowledge a call to ministry.

The Commission on Ministry approved 4 new ministers for the office of ordained ministry; continues to the care and support of 30 seminary students; holds monthly meetings to mentor and counsel 46 persons under care to discern their call and credential 45 licensed ministers; and annually certifies the standing of 305 Ordained and Licensed ministers serving in congregations and a various ministries in Ohio.

The Christian Education Commission has been revitalized with new members and is working with the Ohio Disciples Outreach Ministry Team to hold a Congregational Leadership Event on April 25, 2009.

Continued in the next column

In 2008, our Regional Ministries of Adult Conference, Advance Conference, Congregation Transformation, Disciples Men's Fellowship, Ohio Disciple Outreach, Ohio Disciples Women, and Spiritual Life Committee, altogether have held fellowship and leadership development events that have involved more than 700 members of Disciples congregations in Ohio.

The New Church Committee is currently working with 10 new congregations with plans to launch a new church in Delaware, close to Camp Christian in 2009.

Our Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation Ministry Team is developing a congregational model for addressing racism. The team is currently testing the model with two congregations who are developing congregational anti-racism pro-reconciliation ministries with specific strategies for each congregation becoming anti-racist pro-reconciled.

The ministry of the Regional Elders continues to be a blessing as they serve with Regional Pastors in providing pastoral care and support to clergy and congregations. The Regional Elders are providing counsel to the development of the "Clergy Peer Support Group" model based on Clinical Pastoral Experience. The model is currently being tested with 8 Disciple Congregational Pastors. After evaluating the experience, the model will be offered to other Disciples Clergy in Ohio as way to provide genuine collegial support and encourage accountability.

These are just a few highlights of some exciting things that are happening in the ministries of your Regional Church, made possible through your gifts to the Christmas Offering and Ohio Disciples Outreach.

Please allow me to also use this opportunity to express deep appreciation for all the ways you support God's work in the region, be it through prayer, leadership and attendance at regional events, or financial offerings. "*My soul magnifies the Lord ...for the Mighty One has done great things...*" through your support of the Christian Church in Ohio.

May God's blessings be with you,
Bill

The Buckeye Disciple

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Regional Calendar**November**

- 6 Congregational Transformation Team Meeting
 7 – 8 Regional Church Council Meeting @ Camp Christian
 10 – 11 Regional Church Office Staff Retreat (**RCO Closed**)
 11 Christian Education Conference Call 7:00pm
 13 Disciples of Christ Southwest Ohio 7:30pm
 *15 Chi Rho Rally @ Camp Christian 10am – 3pm
 21-23 CYF Leadership Training @ The Hocking Valley Parish
 27-28 **Thanksgiving, RCO Closed**

December

- 1 **Deadline for the Jan/Feb issue of The Buckeye**
 10 RCO Staff Meeting and Christmas Celebration
 *12 - 13 Advent Retreat for Women @ Camp Christian
 16 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest CC Columbus
 24-26 **Christmas, RCO Closed**
 *26-28 Advance Conference Winter Retreat @ Camp

January 2009

- 1 **New Year's Day, RCO Closed**
 5 Interim Ministers Working Group Meeting @ RCO
 6 **DEADLINE FOR ALL 2008 DONATIONS**
 8 Disciples of Christ Southwest Ohio 7:30pm
 13 Christian Education Conference Call 7:00pm
 14 RCO Staff Meeting
 19 **Martin Luther King Junior Day, RCO Closed**
 20 Commission on Ministry @ RCO 9:00am
 *26 – 27 Minister's Convocation @ University Plaza, Columbus
 *27 Convocation Dinner TBA
 27 ODEC Meeting @ RCO 10:00am

February

- 1 **Deadline for the Mar/Apr issue of The Buckeye**
 4 RCO Staff Meeting
 14 Christian Education Commission @ Camp 10am – 2pm
 17 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest CC, Columbus
 17 – 19 Spiritual Life Retreat for Ministers & Spouses @ Camp
 20 – 28 United Nations Seminar for Youth in NYC & D.C.

March

- 3 Executive Committee Meeting @ RCO
 4 RCO Staff Meeting
 6 – 7 Lenten Retreat for Women @ Camp Christian
 7 Equipping the Saints in Columbus
 10 Christian Education Conference Call 7:00pm
 12 Disciples of Christ Southwest Ohio 8:30pm
 13 – 15 OWM Commission Meeting @ Camp Christian
 13 – 15 CYF State Youth Convention @ Hiram College
 17 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest CC, Columbus
 18 ODEC Committee Conference Call 10:00am
 28 Regional Church Council Meeting @ Camp Christian

April

- 1 **Deadline for the May/June issue of The Buckeye**
 1 RCO Staff Meeting
 3 – 4 Youth Council Meeting @ Camp Christian
 4 Cleveland Christian Home Work Day 9:00am
 10 **Good Friday, RCO Closed**
 12 **Easter Sunday**
 14 Christian Education Conference Call 7:00pm

RCO = Regional Church Office

** Online Registration is now available*

**Message from Regional Associate Pastor,
Rev. Dr. LaTaunya Bynum****God has done great things!**

A woman goes to the Ohio Disciples Women's Fall Retreat for the first time and is so excited by the experience that she goes home and begins organizing women from ages 18 to 81 and beyond to attend next year's Retreat.

A congregation finds a renewed sense of hope and justice and is transformed because its leaders traveled together to attend the congregation-based anti-racism training.

African American pastors sponsored a region wide evangelism conference and workshop. The worship was wonderful, the ideas shared were plentiful and helpful, the conversations were stimulating, and information shared was invaluable.

And people of faith, between the ages of 19 and 29 have gathered at an Advance event at Camp Christian to talk about beginning school, beginning careers, beginning families, beginning the next part of their life's journey. The conversations take place as they talk about all of the ways their faith helps them make decisions about how they will live their lives.

These are the ministries of the Christian Church that, along with other ministries including search and call, engage most of my attention. There are many other ministries that nurture the soul and enlighten the mind. God has indeed done great things and we who are part of the Christian Church in Ohio and beyond are at our best when we let others see the goodness of God in what we do. As you participate in the ministry and mission of the region, know that you are an important part of the ministry that happens here.

God has done great things, including calling you.

Thanksgiving Offering

For two centuries, Disciples colleges and universities have trained Disciples leaders to think clearly and rationally and to minister to the world around them. While those first instructors and students might not recognize modern campuses, those classic values live on in the 21st Century. Disciples undergraduate institutions serve nearly 27,000 students in a wide variety of settings – from a rural college town with several hundred students to a metropolitan setting with almost 9,000 students. Despite those differences, these schools all share a commitment to the church, emphasize spiritual faith and values, and cherish a commitment to a liberal-arts education.

Your gift to the Thanksgiving Special Offering supports the training of our church's emerging leaders – an investment in our church's future.



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

"Oh, how great is your goodness to those who publicly declare that you will rescue them. For You have stored up great blessings for those who trust and reverence you."

Ps 31: 19 The Living Bible

The holiday season is fast approaching. Families are busily making plans to celebrate this special time and to give thanks to a good God for the many blessings bestowed on them. Your extended family, Disciples from across the Ohio Region, join with you in collective thanksgiving for the many opportunities, through regional ministries, to proclaim our faith and trust in God.

Indeed, God's goodness is made manifest throughout the Ohio Region as evidenced by the availability of numerous ministry opportunities. In the area of Program Ministry, you can look forward to an exciting year ahead as we look forward to the following regional events ...

- Our **Christian Education Commission**, led by Chairman Rev. Don Barnes, is planning an extraordinary *"Congregational Leader Equipping Conference"* to be held on April 25. The Conference will focus on the creation and implementation of "out-of-the-box" ideas for your Christian Education programs. The featured keynote speaker, Dr. Sharon Warner of Lexington Theological Seminary, will also conduct workshops designed to acquaint you with new and exciting CE techniques. If you need ideas to attract youth and young adults as well as your more seasoned learners ... attend the conference. You'll be glad you did! Contact Don for details pastordon@neo.rr.com
- The **Camp Christian Parent Network**. Parents of our campers and conferees are extremely vital to our camping program. Many parents have served Camp Christian as counselors and/or assistant directors, but all have gifts and talents, skills and abilities along with creative ideas and a desire to serve God in community with other parents. This Network will extend to parents an opportunity to meet, plan and implement events of particular interest to parents. Keep your eyes and ears open for more information regarding the formation of our *Parent Network*.
- Camp Christian will seek to become accredited during 2009 by the **American Camp Association**. Camp Christian is, undoubtedly, one of the best Christian residential camps in the world (yes ... I said *WORLD!*). *Accreditation* will provide solid proof of our accountability, credibility and commitment to provide a safe, quality environment for our campers and staff. Accreditation says that we *care* ... that we have been evaluated and passed the test. We ask your support and prayers as we continue to lift up the legend of Camp Christian.

God looks for us to *"publicly declare"* our love for and trust in Him, and God reciprocates with blessings too numerous to mention. Take advantage of the many opportunities offered by the Christian Church in Ohio to give thanks and praise this holiday season. Get involved! As usual, your ideas and comments regarding the Program Ministry of our Region are welcome. Contact me at 614-433-0343 or bwebster@ccinoh.org.

Message from Regional Associate Pastor, Rev. Stephen Bentley

The Lectionary Scriptures this summer have come from Israel's desert experiences. Over and over again they were shown that even in the wilderness, God was there: making water flow from a rock, making manna (bread) in the desert, providing protein (Quail) for sustenance, and pouring forth healing from snakebites and illnesses. Israel discovered God's love in that even when they were taken captive into Babylon, God went with them. David, in the middle of his troubles, sings of God's presence many times in the book of Psalms. Matthew gives us that beautiful story of the disciples at night working frantically to get to the other side of sea, fighting the wind, being pushed by the waves. Suddenly in the early morning light they see a figure moving across the water. "It's a ghost," they yell. Suddenly, they hear the voice of Jesus say, "It is I!" It is as if Matthew was letting the church know that in the midst of difficult times, Jesus is there.

As a nation we have experienced our own desert troubles this year. Just recently in the trouble with the housing market, the price of gas at over \$4.00 per gallon, hurricanes, and of course, all of the mudslinging of candidates running for office. Yet I think of all of the ways God was/is present with us during these times: Regional workshops and retreats calling us to experience God in new ways, conferences for all ages, opportunities for mission here in Ohio and beyond, working with churches through the desert of Search and Call, and a great Regional Assembly where we could all come together as Christ's people. "God has done Great Things for us!" As we approach the season of Advent where we will celebrate Emmanuel – God With Us, let us remember how God has been present with us all year. I am reminded of that old hymn, "Count your many blessings. Name them one by one. Count your many blessings, see what God hath done."

Mark your calendars now for the:

**CYF
State Convention**

March 13-15, 2009

Hiram College

This Year's Theme:

Green Faith

This little energy efficient light of mine...

Using a faith approach, you along with your fellow CYF'ers, will take a look at global warming, energy conservation, fair trade, organic farming, local food, composting, etc.

Registration forms coming soon!



Entering into the mystery of Advent

ADVENT Retreat for Women

Saturday December 13
9 AM to 3 PM
At the Herald B. Monroe
Lodge at Camp Christian
Leaders: Margot Connor
and Kay McGlinchey



\$25 (after November 23rd - \$30)
Come the night before for an additional \$20
Register: www.ccinoh.org

Join us for a day with God as we meditate, share, do a craft and prepare ourselves for the Holy Season of Advent.

To register offline send payment along with name, address, and phone number of the person registering to:

Christian Church in Ohio
355 East Campus View Blvd
Suite 110
Columbus, Ohio 43235

Looking for A Good Used Truck?

After more than 10 years of service, over 100,000 miles, and many great memories, we decided this year to replace the work truck at Camp Christian. Now that the new unit has arrived, we have decided to auction the 'Big Green Truck' and wish to offer all Disciples who may be interested an opportunity to bid. The approach is pretty simple. Contact Duncan Draper at our Regional office, (email address is ddraper@ccinoh.org) and provide a bid amount. The deadline is December 1, 2008. If more than seven (7) bids are received, the individuals with the three highest bids will be contacted and given one additional opportunity to re-bid. Final bids would be required by December 10, 2008 with the highest bid selected. Once the winning bidder is selected, that person will be notified. If less than seven bids are received initially, the highest bid will be selected.

Here are the specifics. The truck is a Green ½ ton 1996 4x2 Ford F-150 XLT 5.0 V-8 regular cab with 8' lined bed. It has 101,000 miles, new brakes all around, and the tires are less than 2 years old. This truck has functioned as the all purpose Camp Christian work truck since being bought new on October 28, 1996. This would be a perfectly functional work truck for someone.

The minimum bid is \$1,500.00 and must be submitted in writing. Please include your contact information, both email and phone number where you can be reached.



Advance Conference Winter Retreat

Camp Christian
December 26-28, 2008

Drink In God:
*Faithful responses to
substance use and abuse
&
Imbibing the Divine*



This year's winter retreat will be centered around the Serenity prayer: *God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.* The Serenity prayer is most known for its use in 12 step programs. Using Biblical passages and various narratives from world cultures, we will break down the prayer and explore its various spiritual elements.

We will also be tackling issues of substance use and abuse. As young people, we are constantly confronted with drugs and alcohol. We struggle to lead Christian lives without completely separating ourselves from our peers. How can we drink in a way consistent with our faith? As non-drinkers, how are we uniquely able to minister to and socialize with those who choose to partake? How do we know when substance use is abuse? How can we lovingly and constructively help a friend or family member who is chemically dependent? These are some of the tough questions which we will be working through.

Our key-note speaker will be Doug Althaus. Doug has over twenty years experience in Drug and Alcohol rehabilitation. He recently graduated from law school and hopes to be an advocate for the chemically dependent. He is an active member at Peace Lutheran Church in Columbus.

Register online at www.ccinoh.org!

Questions? Contact the Advance Conference Officers at advanceconference@yahoo.com

"Not what we say about our
blessings,

but how we use them,

is the true measure of our
thanksgiving."

W.T. Purkiser



Ohio Region mission team to Metairie, LA

Thirteen Ohio Disciples left from Northwest Christian Church in Columbus on Saturday, September 20 and at the same time two more left from Florida to join them in Metairie, Louisiana. All came not knowing exactly what they were going to be doing when they arrived there.

These five women and ten men, despite the fact that one member of the team was hospitalized for the first day and an half for an illness unrelated to the mission work, forged ahead, and much work was accomplished.

The group was assigned to work in the St. Bernard parish with the St. Bernard Project. This project was started by Zack Rosenburg and Liz McCartney after the couple had volunteered in the St. Bernard parish in February 2006. They served an initial month where they met residents who were courageous, spirited and determined to rebuild their lives and community. They shared their stories and opened their homes, making Liz and Zack laugh, cry and question their own values. Through this experience the two were inspired to create an organization that would provide very important resources and support to such families that came to the couple from the people of St. Bernard parish. Thus, the St. Bernard Project was born to meet the needs as determined by the community members through the efforts of, at times, up to 200 volunteers per week.

Work on this Mission trip from Ohio included: cutting, detailing, hanging, taping, mudding, and sanding sheetrock, plumbing on bathtubs, washers, vanities, and toilets, installing studs, tyvex and vinyl siding, painting walls, removing debris from yard, repairing steps and new stair treads, adjusting doors, repairing the roof, installing hand rails for stairs and installing a range and a microwave. In addition to all the work, three persons volunteered to prepare delicious breakfasts and dinners for all.

The team was given a brief tour of the Lower Ninth Ward and met Pastor Charles Duplessis, who left the area before Katrina hit, with thirty-five members of his church. He began an initiative called Churches Supporting Churches is trying to get 360 churches to partner with him to help rebuild 36 churches in the Lower Ninth Ward that had been destroyed during Katrina. Thus far they have only 11 church partners. There is a great need for these churches in the Lower Ninth Ward and a very challenging initiative.

The group traveled and worked very graciously with each other. There were twelve retired persons, two individuals who were twins, and a retired minister.

Ohio Spiritual Life Retreat for Ministers (Retired Ministers and Spouses of Ministers are welcome)

"Practicing Your Path"

February 17-19, 2009

Speaker: **The Reverend Kerry Reed**
Camp Christian, Magnetic Springs, Ohio

This is an intentional time of rest, reflection, and spiritual renewal. It is also a time of reunion and fellowship. It is always wonderful to enjoy a few days in front of an open fireplace in the Herald B. Monroe Lodge at Camp Christian. Make these few days a priority on your calendar. Register online at www.ccinoh.org or mail in the registration form that will be included in the coming months' Minister's Mailing packet. On behalf of the Spiritual Life Committee, We hope to see you there! Questions? Contact Rev. Stephen Bentley at sbentley@ccinoh.org or (614)433-0343.



Alternative Christmas Giving

Looking for a creative way to celebrate Christmas this year? Alternative Christmas Gifts are a meaningful way to give a gift that keeps on giving.

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 sourced, 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. Gifts may be in any amount. You may send your check with information about the gift recipient and gift designation to:

*Global Ministries
Office of Resource Development
P.O. Box 1986
Indianapolis, IN 46206*

Please indicate the name and address of your honoree(s) and the designation you have chosen. We will send your honoree(s) a Global Ministries Christmas card and photo, notifying them that a gift has been given in their name(s). You may instead choose to have the card and photo sent to you so that you can present the gift to your honoree. We will send you a letter and receipt for your tax-deductible gift(s). 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 (OCWM) and the Disciples Mission Fund (DMF). For More Information contact Sarah Riester, 317-713-2564 or sriester@dom.disciples.org



New Executive Director named for Week of Compassion

(Indianapolis, Ind. – DNS – Oct. 3, 2008) - The Rev. Amy Gopp has witnessed the crushing impact of war, poverty and natural disaster on people's lives around the globe. But she also has seen how faith, cooperation and a resilient spirit can instill hope in devastating situations.

Gopp will draw on her experiences as a missionary, preacher, global activist and peace-maker in her newest position as Executive Director of Week of Compassion (WOC). Gopp was called to the position earlier this week after a nationwide search. She had previously served three years as Associate Director of WOC.

"I am thrilled to be able to serve the Church in this new way," said Gopp. "This ministry allows me to do all that I love and all that I feel God calls me to do. I am able to preach, connect with congregations, and accompany people that we are serving around the world."

In her new position, Gopp will continue Week of Compassion's long tradition of ministering to those in need across the United States and Canada and around the globe. She will lead the ongoing work of Week of Compassion, which serves as the relief, refugee, and development ministry fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In partnership with more than 3200 congregations across North America, the ministry annually channels more than \$2.5 million for world-wide humanitarian needs.

Gopp's goals include continuing WOC's relationships with key partners, donors and congregations in developing the annual giving campaign that undergirds WOC. She also will work to interpret theologically and practically the work, mission and vision of WOC, as well as help Disciples grow in their understanding of disaster response and the ways it often connects to deeper systemic issues within social structures.

"Week of Compassion has been one of Disciples' most effective ministries," commented Gopp, who notes that she has been associated with WOC for about 12 years. "I will basically continue to build on the success created by my dear colleague Johnny Wray and work to continue the ministry."

Gopp will succeed Wray, who has served as director of Week of Compassion since 1992. Wray announced in May that he will leave the position at the end of 2008, citing a desire to spend more time with family in a less travel-dominated field. In announcing her selection, General Minister and President Sharon Watkins noted: "Rev. Gopp brings not only experience in Week of Compassion's well-known disaster relief and development work but she also brings a passion for ministries of justice. I look forward to working with Amy in this important position."

"Amy has served Week of Compassion in an excellent

Continued in the next column

New Executive Director continued

way," added John Richardson, chair of the Week of Compassion board and regional minister of North Carolina. "I am very enthused about her selection as Executive Director."

Gopp, 37, is a native of Kent, Ohio. She is an ordained Disciples minister who credits First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kent, Ohio with helping to form her faith, as well as Camp Christian. Gopp received her Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations from the American University School of International Service in Washington, D.C., a Master of Arts degree in Conflict Resolution from the McGregor School of Antioch University in Yellow Springs, Ohio and a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York.

Her numerous international experiences include living for four years as a peace activist and missionary in the war-torn former Yugoslavia. She worked in Croatia and Bosnia helping to relieve refugee concerns, promote interfaith dialogue and provide education toward conflict resolution. She also coordinated the award-winning Pontanima, an inter-religious choir based in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Gopp recalls those experiences as having a profound impact on her outlook and ministry.

"I was amazed to see how people could survive in the midst of so much destruction, death and suffering," she says. "Living in that area had a huge impact on me. I learned a lot about how people are able to dance in the midst of suffering." Gopp also has worked with relief and development efforts in Kenya and the Sudan, as well as been involved in poverty outreach efforts in this country, in places such as New York City.

"I see my calling as one where I must heed my call to bring good news to the poor, but also bring good news from the poor," said Gopp. "This is the way I live out the Gospel and respond to the mandate to minister to those who are suffering."

In her free time, Gopp enjoys reading poetry, writing, singing, cooking and spending time with her nieces and nephew.

Save the Date!
**Congregational Leader
 Equipping Conference:**
***Christian Education
 and Stewardship***
 9:00 am - 4:00 pm,
 April 25, 2009
 Gender Road Christian Church



50 years of service

The Rev. Dr. Herbert R. Hicks celebrated fifty years serving congregations in Christian ministry on July 20, 2008. A reception was held where many friends and parishioners attended from churches he had served in Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

Dr Hicks earned his doctorate from Lexington Theological Seminary and retired from the First Christian Church in Zanesville March 1, 2002.

After retiring he served two interims, one in Cleveland and one in Pennsylvania. In June 2005, he began a settled ministry at Zion Reformed UCC near Thornville, Ohio. He continues to serve Zion, and resides with his wife, Shirley and two Jack Russell terriers in Zanesville.

God Has Done Great Things

At the heart of the "Nineteenth Century Reformation" led by Stone and the Campbells was the call to form congregations modeled after the simple essentials of the church of the apostles. State Evangelists were charged with the responsibility of forming numerous congregations and preaching points. But early Disciples soon discovered that cooperation was necessary for congregations to get their start, to survive in times of need, and to minister effectively. As mission societies developed, the position of State Secretary was created to coordinate the mission of the church. With the adoption of the Design for the Christian Church, Disciples affirmed the covenant relationship between "Regions" and the other institutional expressions of the church. Each Region is led by a Regional Minister who not only serves as a programmatic leader and as an administrator for the many and varied ministries of the church, but gives general pastoral oversight to all members of the church in a given Region. Each Region is charged with the responsibility for working to fulfill the mission the church and providing for the continuing renewal of the life of congregations, members, and ministers.

With the gifts they receive, Regional Ministries support congregations through:

- Planning, visioning, pastoral care and conflict management
- Empowering leaders through workshops, resources and networking
- Strengthening ministry through calling new ministers
- Licensing, ordaining and maintaining current ministers
- Growing faithful Disciples through camps, conferences, youth ministries and ministries to men and women
- Providing outreach through establishing new congregations, eradicating racism, sharing in mission with projects and trips, and ecumenical partnerships

With your Christmas Offering, you fund the ministries offered by the Region that serves *your* church.



Fundraising Talent Show

We are excited to inform you about the fourth annual Advance Conference Alumni Talent Show and Fundraiser. It will be held at Northwest Christian Church, Columbus, Ohio on April 24, 2009. This is an opportunity to reunite with old friends and enjoy some wonderful talent from current, past, and future Advance Conferees. All of the proceeds will go to the Advance Conference Scholarship Fund,

which is designed to help conferees who can't afford go to Advance Conference pay for the expenses. We look forward to seeing all of you there. If you have any questions, comments, or would like to add your talent to the mix or participate in anyway, please contact the planning team. Our e-mails are listed below. If you know of anyone who would like to attend this very important event please let them know and bring them along with YOU.

Randy Green rjgreen57@yahoo.com
 Jayne Hilvers jehilvers@earthlink.net
 Pat Fatig prfatig@msn.com
 Dave Diehl hyperforam@aol.com

FREE TO A GOOD HOME!

Wurlitzer Model 4700 organ with 2125 leslie speaker, complete with instruction manual. If you could use this instrument, it's yours for the pickup. Contact Anderson Hills Christian Church 8119 Clough Pike, Cincinnati, OH 45244 or (513)474-2237.

Luke 1:47-55

46And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord
47and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, **49**for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name.

50His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. **51**He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. **52**He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. **53**He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. **54**He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful **55**to Abraham and his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers."

The Media Center

Have you ever looked at catalogs or mailings with video-based resources with well-known Christian speakers and teachers such as John Ortberg, Beth Moore, Max Lucado, Adam Hamilton, or Phillip Yancey? Do you wish your budget could afford all of these resources? Do you wish you could bring them to your church? On the other hand, a telemarketer will call about a resource. You go ahead and tell them to ship it to you on approval. After you see it, you know it is just the thing for your youth and your church pays the \$150 or more and use it once. These problems are over. The Christian Church in Ohio is subsidizing your membership in the Media Center operated by the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church. For \$55 a year, any church that is part of The Christian Church in Ohio may join the Media Center. You will have access to thousands of audio-visual materials such as clips for worship and video based curriculum on DVD and VHS. Whether your church is in Cincinnati or Canton, East or West, the Media Center will loan these resources to you for as long as you plan to use them. There are no rental fees. You only pay the return postage. Learn more about the Media Center and how it operated by going to www.eocumc.com. Select resources, and then select Media Center. You may call the Media Center at (800) 831-3972 x 139 or send e-mail to ray@eocumc.com.



85th Anniversary

Wickliffe Christian Church in Austintown, will celebrate their 85th anniversary on Sunday, November 30th. The church was founded on Dec. 1, 1923, and had its first executive meeting on May 29, 1924 at its first location on Lexington Place. The church remained there until building their present facility on Potomac Avenue. Pastor Andy Wade is the minister.

Pastor Wade, along with our Associate Regional Pastor, Rev. Stephen Bentley, will be sharing the message at the morning worship at 10:30 am. The Action Committee will be hosting a "Meet and Greet" at 9:30 am. To conclude our day's activities, a dinner and program will start at 12:30 pm where our members will share thoughts and prayers, not only for the past members for their dedication to Christ's work, but prayer for our extended vision to the future to do God's work.

Any past members who would like to share our day with us can contact the church at: Wickliffe Christian Church, 3939 Potomac Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44515, or email at wickliffe.chur@sbcglobal.net.



Christmas Madrigal Dinner returns to Gender Road Christian Church

Gender Road Christian Church will present its third Christmas Madrigal Dinner at 7 p.m. Dec. 5 and 6 at the church, 5336 Gender Road, Canal Winchester.

Guests will travel back to the 15th century for an evening of beautiful music, fanciful costumes, delicious food and medieval suspense as members of the choir and congregation present an adaptation of "The Wife of Bath" wherein a desperate knight tries to determine "what women want most" — but if the women of the court disagree, then it's "off with his head!" This event to usher in the celebration of Christ's birth includes a four-course meal and hot wassail.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$12 for children age 12 and younger. Tickets at this price can be reserved in advance by calling GRCC at (614) 834-5973 before Nov. 14. After that, the price increases by \$5 per ticket. ALL reservations must be made by Nov. 26. Reserved tickets will be held and can be picked up at the door each night. Child care will be available for ages 3-8 for \$10 per child; children will be fed a snack and entertained with games.

2008 Ohio Ministries Convocation

January 26 - 27, 2009

University Plaza Hotel

3110 Olentangy River Rd. Columbus, OH 43202

Online Registration at: www.ohcouncilchs.org

For more information offline contact The Ohio Council of Churches 614/885-9590; or 1-800-760-9590

ALSO...

Ministers' Convocation Dinner

Northwest Christian Church

1340 Fishinger Rd

Columbus, OH 43221-2398

6:30pm January 27, 2009

Join us for wonderful Christian fellowship and to discuss the future of the Region

You can register for this event online at www.ccinoh.org

Operation Inasmuch

Inspired by a book written about *Operation Inasmuch* as well as the opportunity to give back to the community, 84 members of Warren's Central Christian Church spent a Saturday, August 16, volunteering to serve others.

A breakfast and a worship service began the day's events. Both were held at the church. Following the worship service, the members of Central's congregation ventured out in the greater Warren area community following the lesson of Mathew 25, "... inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

Easily identified with royal blue tee shirts with the *Operation Inasmuch* logo, members of Central Christian provided community projects that included car service check points, sewing circles, lawn service, visits and craft projects at local nursing homes and even youth helping customers of a local laundromat.

James F. Shively, who co-chaired Project *Inasmuch* along with Ken Conklin, explained that the service event was first brought to the attention of Central's Board of Elders by Rev. Caroline Bloomfield who distributed copies of the book *Operation Inasmuch*. Enthusiastic about the opportunity to serve others, plans began for what members of Central Christian has now selected as an annual event. "We all felt that we needed to get outside the walls of our church," said Shively, "and be the hands and feet of Jesus as a family of believers." Shively continued, "We provided a one-day blitz to reach out to our neighbors. Our goal was to show our faith by our deeds through ministering to others."

Operation Inasmuch began at the Snyder Memorial Baptist Church in Fayetteville, NC, in 1995. There are now over 36 churches in Fayetteville coordinating efforts for the twice-a-year project. Committee members from Central Christian are hopeful that next year they will be able to coordinate with other area churches. Church members plan to reserve the third Saturday of August each year for their community service work.

Funded through monies raised by the Board of Christian Education and the church's annual Strawberry Festival, Central's *Operation Inasmuch* featured auto check points in the church's parking lot. Workers provided a general check up including checking oil, tire pressure, and transmission fluid. In addition, free coffee, donuts, blood pressure checks and AAA driver information was provided. Another group of workers remained in the church where, as a part of the sewing circle, they created lap blankets for nursing home residents. Other church members broke into four teams to offer free lawn service to neighboring homes. Another project involved members making and delivering small pots of flowers to local nursing homes where they read and visited residents.

On Saturday, August 16, members of Central Christian, worked together to answer the question posed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is 'What are you doing for others?'" The answer they provided is one that has sparked an annual community event.

(More national information is available about *Operation Inasmuch* through the website www.operationinasmuch.com)

Operation Inasmuch Photo Taken by Pat Shively



Disciples Leadership Institute

In search of "the truth"? Could you explain your understanding of "truth" in a few minutes? Maybe if you had a whole week?

The Disciples Leadership Institute (DLI) focused on truth for its third meeting, held in August at Eden Theological Seminary in Webster Groves, Mo. Using John 14:6 – "I am the way and the truth and the life." – as a starting point, 24 participants from all parts of the church worked through the week to explain their own understanding of truth, both in the literal sense but also their own interpretations of God's intentions for the world.

DLI is HELM's (Higher Education and Leadership Ministries) project to create personal and professional linkages among younger congregational leaders from both new and established congregations and across the divides of race, culture and language. DLI is intentionally diverse: half of the participants are from new congregations, half from established congregations; half are People of Color. Centered around a week-long event, DLI combines worship, discussion, testimony, various spiritual disciplines, and fellowship to transcend those divides.

"Diversity and openness is key to the advancement of all types of ministry," said Earle Fisher, a new church pastor in the Memphis area. "This is the ethos of DLI."

New connections also bring new understandings of faith and ministry. "Being able to connect with people with such diverse backgrounds and journeys was really helpful," said Danny Gulden, a pastor at Sandy Spring Christian Church in Atlanta. "The differing perspectives on the church helped me to better understand my own ministry context and the needs of other people."

Through its first three years, DLI has been funded by grants from two foundations. Support for future meetings will be provided by DLI participants and other sources. HELM has agreed to fund as well as supporting the DLI's planning and organization.

In an effort to draw more diversity to the conference, DLI accepted applications for this year's conference and will do so again later this year. The 2009 conference will be organized by a six-member steering committee.



World AIDS Day Why is 2008 important?

From the World AIDS Campaign

December 1st marks the 20th anniversary of World AIDS Day. Since 1988, the face of and response to AIDS has greatly changed. While many of these changes are positive, this anniversary offers us an opportunity to highlight how much more still needs to be done. For example:

Leaders in most countries from around the world now acknowledge the threat of AIDS, and many have committed to do something about it. As of 2007, nearly all countries have national policies on HIV. However, despite these policies, most have not been fully implemented and many lack funding allocations. While treatment for HIV and AIDS has improved and become more widespread since 1988, many still do not have access to it – in 2007 only 31% of those in low- to middle-income countries who need treatment received it.

Despite HIV awareness now reaching nearly all areas of the globe, infection rates are still happening 2.7 times faster than the increase in number of people receiving treatment.

While the number of countries protecting people living with HIV continues to increase, one-third of countries still lack legal protections and stigma and discrimination continues to be a major threat to universal access.

More broadly, real action on HIV and AIDS and human rights remains lacking. Legal barriers to HIV services still exist for groups such as women, adolescents, sex workers, people who use drugs, and men having sex with men, and programmatic responses promoting HIV-related human rights have yet to be prioritized.

World AIDS Day began in 1988 when health ministers from around the world met and agreed on the concept of the day as an opportunity for all of us to come together to demonstrate the importance of AIDS and show solidarity for the cause. In 2008, this underlining principle of solidarity and awareness remains the same.

We have only two years to go for "the goal of universal access to comprehensive prevention programs, treatment, care and support by 2010."

To achieve this goal, leadership and action is needed now. Governments must deliver on the promises they have made. Communities must encourage leadership of their members. Individuals must feel empowered to access treatment, to know their rights and take action against stigma and discrimination, and to know and use methods of prevention against contracting and transmitting HIV.

***Now, more than ever is the time to
lead – empower – deliver.***

Retirement of Rev. Robert Thornton



Rev. Robert Thornton leaves United Christian Church Sanctuary for the last time as he retires from pastorate of the church.

**Deadline for the Jan/Feb issue of
The Buckeye Disciple
Due in the Regional Church Office by
December 1, 2008**



Ohio Disciple Men's Fall Retreat

The Ohio Disciple Men had a very successful Fall Retreat. Our speaker was Johnny Wray, Director of Week of Compassion. His presentation, "Men Called to Compassion: Seeking, Serving, Leading", was entertaining and inspiring. The Bethany Men's Choir blew us all away on Friday night and Saturday had many opportunities for fellowship with activities such as fishing, canoeing, cornhole, carpet ball, and a movie. Also on Saturday our new officers were installed, including, Rob Bernard, as President, Felix Ortiz as Vice President, and Dave Moxley as Secretary. We would like to thank Eric Crenshaw for his leadership over the past 2 years and we look forward to the next 2 years. More information about Men's activities is available on the Regional website or on Facebook (search "Ohio Disciple Men"). We hope to see you at Regional Assembly, District Rallies and the upcoming Spring Retreat!

Christian Church in Ohio
Disciples of Christ
A covenant network of congregations in mission:
We are the Body of Christ gifted and called in covenant together as Disciples of
Christ to be centers of transformation on the new mission frontier of our own
communities

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Disciples of Christ

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of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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