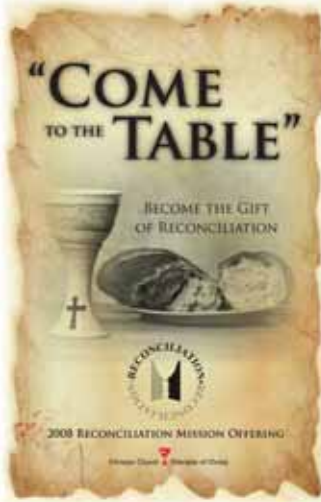




The Buckeye Disciple

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 5
September/October 2008



Reflections of my face

"Poochie" Williams was the first black kid – kid of any other color than Anglo – whom I had ever met. I did not know him well other than knowing that, every day on the playground at Garfield Elementary School in Colorado Springs, he would be "first up" no matter who was able to grab the top of the bat (the old fist over fist up the length of the bat with the winner's fingers at the top). He was also responsible for riding my red and white JC Penny balloon tire bike down the considerable length of the

red sandstone steps in the back of the school. Two broken axles and a long walk home. That was the mid-fifties and since then I have thought many times about how he died that year in the fifth grade. The account was that, as it came rushing up past the floor on which he stood, he tried to jump on the elevator in Hibbard's department store. He missed and fell to the bottom of the shaft. Was it, I wonder, an "accident" or maybe something that "happened" which was born of angry desperation and fear? I do not know. I just remember him. Much desperation is born of fear. Along the way, other "faces of color" were painted into my consciousness: in high school, Johnny, a superb Mexican athlete; Wendell, African American and fast as the wind on the cinder oval; David, a life-long friend claiming his heritage within the Cherokee nation. So, faces began to take shape and hue. The colors have grown richer and countenances clearer along the way to today. I am thankful for travels and friendships and the courage of many, all of which help sustain the compelling struggle against racism. Our Reconciliation ministries are more needful now than ever. As a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), I cannot imagine that there are, even in the wider church, any more courageous, winsome and prophetic voices than those "Disciple" voices who speak to us and for us in the struggle to end the evil of racism. As a white male, I have a particular challenge to continue to be aware of my "place" in our culture: a place of privilege and power entrenched in many of the social, economic and church systems of our day. My playmate, Poochie, I look at you, and as I do I somehow see my own face in yours. Could it be that somehow my fears and yours were and are the same? As we are able to see deeply, we may recognize ourselves in sisters and brothers across the astonishing spectrum of colors and cultures. May we look into dark, green, brown, and blue eyes and smile and embrace each other; and in God's amazing grace and fierce and tender mercies, may we hold fast to each other and fight the good fight of faith for justice and Reconciliation. Ron Parker, Retired Regional Minister

2008 Regional Assembly

October 17-18, 2008

EPH. 4:11-13

"Body Building: Strengthen Your Congregation for Mission"

- Workshops to Strengthen Your Congregation
- ***Structured Youth Workshops at Camp Christian***
- Ministry Fair & Exhibitions
- Clergy & Lay Luncheons
- Women's & Men's Luncheons
- Merit Awards Dinner
- Discussion Forums
- Fellowship with the Region wide faith community

Crown Plaza Hotel
600 Metro Place North
Dublin, OH 43017
Room Rate \$99.95

(You must reserve before September 23 to receive this rate)

Includes Full Breakfast Menu for Two

For Reservations call:

1-866-372-5566 or 614-764-2200

Group Name: Building Your Congregation

Register Online www.ccinoh.org



Attending Regional Assembly? Interested in helping out?

We are looking for people who can help at the registration/help desk and a few other tasks throughout the event. If you are going to be attending Regional assembly and would like to volunteer a bit of your time please contact Jennie at the Regional Church Office jstoddart@ccinoh.org or 614-433-0343 before October 6. Don't forget you will still need to register for the Assembly. The more volunteers we can get, the less time we would need from each volunteer.



Spiritual Insights

Rev. Dr. William H. Edwards

Do you know the church is a body? But it is not just anybody's body; it is the body of Christ. Jesus is no longer with us in the flesh and so we are his body in the world. We are not the body of parliament, but the body of Christ. We are not the House of Representatives, but the house of the Lord. We are not the congress of the United States, but the congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we are at our best and act like the body of Christ, it is amazing what happens in the congregations of the Christian Church in Ohio.

Well, *how does the body of Christ act?* (I'm so glad you asked. You ask such good questions.) In order to know how the body of Christ ought to act now, we've got to go back and see how the actual body of Christ acted then when Jesus walked the dusty streets of Palestine. And whatever his body did then, that is what the body of Christ today ought to be doing now.

His eyes saw visions of things to come.

His head thought thoughts of the revelation of God.

His ears heard the cries of those who were helpless, hungry and homeless.

His knees bowed down in prayer every now and then to pray to his Father in heaven.

His legs supported him as he stood on the promises of God.

His arms reached out and embraced people who needed to be loved and needed to feel that they were somebody.

His hands reached out and picked up those who were less fortunate.

His feet walked in the paths of righteousness.

His tongue preached and taught the gospel truth in season and out of season.

In the work of ministry in our congregations, we ought to act just like that, like the body of Christ. For when the world sees those of us in the house of God, the body of Christ, there ought to be something about us that looks like Christ.

"Thanks be to God" that we have the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish our mission. The Bible says, ¹¹*The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. . .¹*.

Ephesians 4:11-13

This scripture is the basis of our theme of the 2008 Regional Assembly:

"Strengthen Your Congregation for Mission"

Please be prayerful for our upcoming Regional Assembly. You should have received several special mailings by now inviting you and members of your congregation to register for the [October 17-18, 2008 Regional Assembly](#). I would like to encourage you to register ASAP and encourage others to do the same.

This will be a wonderful time of celebrating the "work of ministry" God is doing in our congregations and in our lives as people of faith.

Regional Calendar

September

- 1 **Labor Day RCO Closed**
- 3 Regional Church Office Staff Meeting
- 4 Regional Assembly Planning Team Meeting @ RCO
- 5-6 CYF Commission @ Camp Christian, Monroe Lodge
- 8 Interim Minister's Working Group @ RCO 10 - 2
- 9 Christian Education Conference Call 7:00pm
- 10 Congregational Transformation Conference Call 10am
- 11 Disciples of Christ Southwest Ohio 7:30pm
- *12-14 OWM Fall Retreat @ Camp Christian
- 15 Interim Ministers Working Group @ RCO 10 - 2
- 16 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest Christian
- *19-21 Disciple Men's Fellowship Fall Retreat @ Camp
- 27 Chi Rho Commission @ RCO 10:00am - 3:00pm

October

- 1 **Deadline for the Nov/Dec Buckeye**
- 1 Regional Church Office Staff Meeting
- 1 Regional Assembly Planning Team Conference Call
- *3-4 Grandparent Camp @ Camp Christian
- 4 Chi Rho Commission @ Camp Christian
- 4 Cleveland Christian Home Work Day 9:00am
- 7 Executive Committee Meeting @ RCO
- *17 - 18 Regional Assembly @ Crowne Plaza, Dublin
"Body Building: Strengthening Your Congregation for Mission" Ephesians 4:11-13
- 21 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest Christian
- 22 ODEC Meeting @ RCO 10:00am
- 23 Ohio Disciples Outreach Planning Retreat @ Camp
- 27 IMWG Fall Workshop @ Westerville Comm. UCC
- *29 Anti Racism Training for Ministers @ Camp 9am-5pm
- *30 Sexual Ethics Training for Ministers @ Camp 9am-5pm

November

- 7 - 8 Regional Church Council Meeting @ Camp Christian
- 11 Christian Education Conference Call 7:00pm
- 13 Disciples of Christ Southwest Ohio 7:30pm
- 15 Chi Rho Rally @ Camp Christian 10am - 5pm
- 21-23 CYF Officer Training @ The Hocking Valley Parish
- 27-28 ***Thanksgiving, RCO Closed***

December

- 1 **Deadline for the Jan/Feb Buckeye Disciple**
- 10 RCO Staff Meeting and Christmas Celebration
- 16 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest Christian
- 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
- 8 Disciples of Christ Southwest Ohio 7:30pm
- 13 Christian Education Conference Call 7:00pm
- 20 Commission on Ministry @ Northwest Christian

RCO = Regional Church Office

* Online Registration is now available

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

I want to invite you to join me and my colleagues in a conversation. I know, politicians says such things often, and then ignore whatever does not fit with their particular agenda. None of these conversations is exclusive, all input will be welcome, but there are some people whose opinions I am eager to receive. What is the purpose of the conversation? We need to talk about what happens after the worship and workshops of our October Regional Assembly. After the meals and meetings and worship, what will we do?

I Peter 3:15 says "always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reasons for the hope that you have." Where is your hope?

There will be a Saturday luncheon and program sponsored by Ohio Women's Ministries. We are in the process of evaluating our structures so that we can better work in ministry teams, and provide the roadmap for our future together. How can we interest women who work, care for families, maintain intimate relationships, and work in the church in volunteer and paid positions in Ohio Women's Ministries? What should we keep doing? What should we stop doing? What can we do better?

There will be a Friday forum and a Saturday workshop by the Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciling Team. Has your pastor had anti-racism training yet? There is training available that will increase the congregation's understanding of its role in helping to eradicate the sin of racism from our hearts and from our church. Is your congregation interested? See me at the Regional Assembly.

As we build up and strengthen the body for mission, go by the booths, meet the Regional Church staff; meet old friends and make new ones. Converse with one another. See you there.



Global Ministries

Erin McKinney, a member of Hiram Christian Church in Hiram, Ohio, was appointed by Global Ministries to serve a one-year term (with the possibility of an extension) with Caminante in Boca Chica, Dominican Republic. She will work with children in Caminante's Outreach Ministry. Christian Church in Ohio is excited to affirm this wonderful Missionary Relationship

with Erin. For more information about Global Ministries please visit www.globalministries.org.

**Message from Regional Associate Pastor
Rev. Stephen Bentley**

1 Tim 4:7-8, 15 says "Train yourself in godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. ... Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress." NRSV

It is no secret I love to backpack. Each year I try to spend at least one week backpacking another 100 miles of the Appalachian Trail with the hope that one day I will have walked the complete 2162 miles of the trail. I cannot just leave work one day and begin hiking 15 miles per day with 40 lbs of pack on my back. I need to work up to it. I walk several miles a day for months before while taking 20 lbs pack as often as I can. Several weeks before I leave I try to get in several 5 mile hikes with a 30 lbs pack. Finally, about a week before I leave, I get in two 10 mile hikes with a fully loaded pack. This way my feet, legs, back, lungs, and heart are all prepared for the strenuous adventure when I go.

This is what we hope to do at our Regional Assembly in October. We are going to "Body Build," to exercise, to practice our faith so we can get ready to do the work God is calling us as a Regional Church to do. I hope and pray you are coming to the Regional Church Assembly but don't just show up on that Friday. Work up to it so you mind, body, and Spirit are ready. In the weeks leading up to it, pray that God might use this event to work God's will in our Church and bring us together in love. In your church, study Ephesians and especially chapter 4:11-13. Seek to discover what this means for you and what it means for your church. I look forward to seeing you there as together we prepare ourselves for God's Mission in our local church, our Region, and in the world.

Deadline for the Nov/Dec issue of

The Buckeye Disciple

**Due in the Regional Church Office by
October 1, 2008**

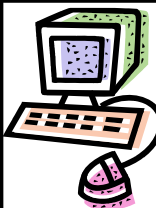
The Buckeye Disciple

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Betty Adams: Secretary Elizabeth Jewell: Assistant Secretary
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If you would like to replace your hard copy of this newsletter with an emailed copy, please send an email



(from the email address you want it sent to) to ccio@ccinoh.org. Don't forget to include your name and the address it's currently being sent to.

Designing Worship Conference

What do you get when you combine an ordained Minister from the Disciples of Christ, with a worship planner who grew up Baptist, with a song leader who is Methodist, a band leader and band members who are non-churched, and a keyboardist who is Catholic? You get the CrossRoads Worship Community at Avon Lake United Church Of Christ. For the past five years a unique group of individuals have come together from different backgrounds to create a worship experience each week for those who attend Avon Lake UCC as well as folks from the community. They have blended together contemporary worship, with visual elements, multi-sensory elements, and participatory elements to give worshipers a weekly worship experience that keeps them coming back for more. The CrossRoads worship community has grown and sees a steady stream of visitors attracted to this worship celebration. Now they would like to share their approach to worship, how they plan their worship, what their obstacles have been, and how they have overcome them to continue to build an exciting growing worship each week. This fall the church will host a Designing Worship Conference on Saturday, September 27, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. At the conference you can learn more about how you can bring back what Avon Lake UCC has done to incorporate into your worship planning. For more information and a brochure call the church at (440) 933-3241.

Let The Children Come

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." – Matthew 19:14 In the Village of Kanye, Botswana, church members were concerned about the escalating number of orphans in the community. Most of these children are victims of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has hit Botswana hard. According to the United Nations, almost 24% of the adult population of Botswana is affected by HIV/AIDS. Seeing the toll this was taking on the village children, a local congregation of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA), one of our partner denominations, decided to take action. In 2001, they founded the Kgodisong Centre, a preschool/daycare for orphans and vulnerable children between 2 and 6 years old. Today the center serves more than 50 children, who are transported on a daily basis to the center and returned at the end of the day to their homes. While at the center, they are given opportunities for learning, fed nutritious meals, and provided with encouragement and spiritual support. Many of these children find themselves in difficult and stressful circumstances. There is a stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS in the wider community, which leads to isolation for affected families. Children must also witness the long-term decline in their parent's health. They must live with reduced family income and all the consequences of illness and poverty. However, at the Kgodisong Centre, they have the chance to be children again and build skills for the future. At the Kgodisong Centre they can find support, understanding, and hope. *James & Jayanthi Wilson are missionaries with the Kgolagano Theological College in Gaborone, Botswana. Jim serves as a teacher of theology at Kgolagano Theological College. Jayanthi serves at Kgolagano Theological College as a librarian assistant.*

There's still time to register for Men's (Sept 19 - 21) and Women's (Sept 12 - 14) Fall Retreats at Camp Christian!! See you Pastor for more information or you can download forms and register on the website www.ccinoh.org. Hurry, time is running out!!!

Is Coaching for You, Pastor? How About for Your Church?

From your Congregational Transformation Team

Many Christian leaders, pastors & congregations are taking advantage of Coaching as a way to develop into the most faithful and best developed leaders they can be. ***Coaching might be for you!!***

How Does Coaching Work? A bit like having a mentor, guide, or a counselor, with this difference: in the coaching relationship, all the tools needed are already within the person being coached. The coach works with you by asking questions and by making brief yet powerful statements about the topic being discussed, for the sake of empowering the person being coached to find the best path forward for him/her/themselves.

Who Is Coaching For? Coaching is for anyone who wants to partner with God and another person to become the leader God calls them to be. Coaching is not about taking weak leaders and counseling them to improve, so much as it is about beginning wherever you are (hopefully a place of strength!) and partnering for a better future. Coaching, really, is for anyone ready to go further in servant leadership.

How Do I Find a Coach, and How Do I Pay for It? Good news! The Congregational Transformation Team has identified available coaches from within the Regional Church (among the pastoral staff, within the Transformation Team, among the Regional Elders, and with some specifically targeted coaches). These folks have participated in some training, with the promise to be available to coach after receiving that training. And, really Good News! Coaching received by a pastor or congregation in the Christian Church in Ohio, given by one of the coaches we have trained, is given ***at no financial cost to the person/congregation being coached!***

How Can I Find Out More? Two ways: 1) at Regional Assembly in October, the Congregational Transformation Team is sponsoring a workshop for those who may consider being coached. This workshop, led by Jim Bane and Janet Mers (members of the Transformation Team), takes place Saturday, October 18th as one of the afternoon workshops; 2) in your district pastors' meetings/lunches this Fall, your Regional Pastor or one of the Associate Pastors will introduce the concept and answer questions about the possibilities and even demonstrate a coaching session for your district group.

Also, the list of trained coaches is available from the Regional Office at your request. Our prayer is that God will use this as a way to lead us into God's future.



Ashtabula Mission

Rev. Richard Elwell, Senior Pastor at First Christian Church in Ashtabula, will be doing some mission work in Texas. Dick will be working with the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries from September 28 – October 7. The Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (SWGSM) was founded in 1985 in Los Fresnos, Texas, to provide assistance to hundreds of people in need, especially the Central American political

refugees, Cubans, and individuals from other countries in political turmoil. SWGSM is now a member institution of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest Region. There will be a commissioning service at First Christian Church in Ashtabula for Dick Sunday, September 28 at 9:30am. This service will also be celebrating the members of the church participating in the CROP walk that same day. For more information about the SWGSM go to <http://www.swgsm.org/index.html>, or for CROP, go to <http://www.churchworldservice.org/CROP/>.

Bird sanctuary and garden

With a \$500.00 WTI Environmental Grant, this patch of land behind the First Church of Christ Disciples in East Liverpool, OH has been turned into a bird sanctuary and garden.



Working hard on the area, cleaning out brush, rocks and whatever, were Karl Fife, Bill Johnson, Ray Roe, Betty Pease, Ron Pease, Sheri Dagan and George Robinson. Shrubs and flowers have been planted, a bird bath has been installed, and the cross has been erected. The area is known as "Reflections", and as you can see in the picture, this morning dove is already enjoying the area.



Honored Minister

Rev. George Nikolas "Nik" Donges was presented the Pension Fund Honored Minister's Pin by Anderson Hills Christian Church, Cincinnati, at his retirement ceremony on June 7, 2008. A graduate of

Lexington Theological Seminary, Pastor Nik has completed 38 years of ministry in Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina and Ohio. After a time of rest, he will continue to serve congregations through the intentional interim ministry. Eunice Donges was also presented the Honored Spouse's Certificate. Pictured, Eunice Donges pinning the Honored Minister's pin onto Pastor Nik's shirt.

Grandparent and Me Camp!

An interactive Camp for Children **entering** Grades 1-2 AND their grandparent (or Aunt, Uncle, or Friend)

Theme: "Let's Take a Trip: Taking a trip with Sarah and Abraham" Based on Genesis 12

**October 3-4, 2008
Camp Christian**

For more information, including how to register, visit us on the web www.ccinoh.org or ask your pastor for a hard copy of the forms.

Attention 6th, 7th, & 8th graders

You're invited to the Regional

Chi Rho Rally

"Salt & Light"

Date: November 15, 2008

Time: 10:00am - 5:00pm

Place: Camp Christian

Cost: \$15 per person

Join with other Chi Rho groups from around the state for a day of fun, food and fellowship.



If you have any questions contact Brenda Webster at the Regional Church Office at (614) 433-0343 or bwebster@ccinoh.org.

Adult leaders will be needed to help lead activities.

See your pastor for a registration form!

**Welcome back home Anna "Mom" Thorpe
CCH Reinstates Tradition of Annual Homecoming
Celebrations:** by James D. Runyon, CFRE

"Need alone opens these doors... thousands of good friends caught the vision of a home as we felt it should be... not a shelter alone for those in need, but a place of joy, of love, of inspiration to grow ever upward toward happy Christian achievement and living." ~ Anna "Mom" Thorpe, *Former Administrator at Cleveland Christian Home, Family Talk, 1962 Summer edition*

When I came to work for Cleveland Christian Home almost two ago I had no idea my life would some day intersect with Anna "Mom" Thorpe's life. It has. This story has some interesting twists and a happy ending, and reveals the vision and compassion Mom Thorpe had more than 46 years ago that remains true today at Cleveland Christian Home.

But I've gotten ahead of myself. This story began in April when I met with a group of Cleveland Christian Home Alumni at a social gathering. The evening was filled with memorable and oftentimes humorous stories of growing up in the Home. Mom Thorpe was a central theme in almost every story. There were fond remembrances of Camp Otaneto near Hesperia, Michigan where Cleveland Christian Home residents visited each summer. This camp was owned and managed by Anna's husband, Otto Thorpe.

Through the years some residents would visit the camp and the Hesperia area to recapture some of those meaningful moments they experienced in their youth. Pam (Lee) Rossell had visited the area many times and made some friends. That night in April she told me that she had met a funeral director there who claimed that he had Mom Thorpe's cremains.

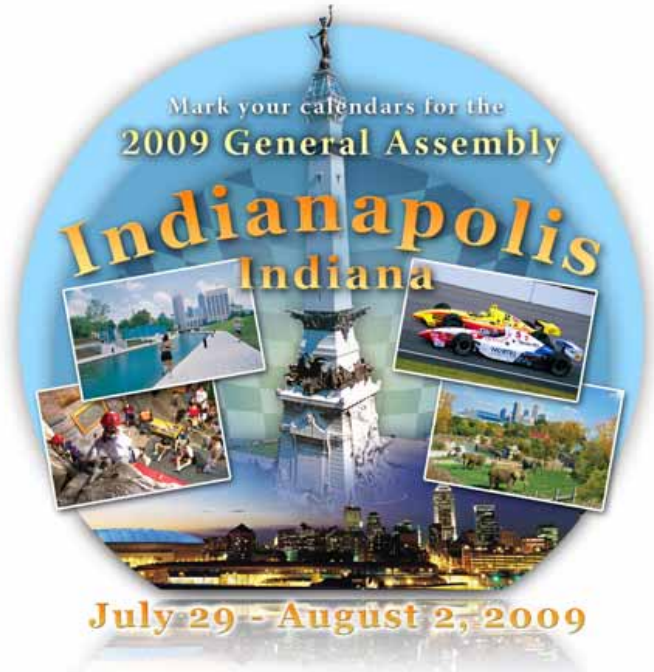
The following week, when I related the story to David Lundeen, Cleveland Christian Home President and CEO, he immediately said, "We need to bring Mom back home to Cleveland Christian Home." Pam Rossell called me by the end of the week with the name of Arthur Raymond, Funeral Director at Raymond Funeral Home in Hesperia.

Mr. Raymond verified that Mom Thorpe's cremains had been at his funeral home since 1972 and she had been preceded by her relatives and there were no other provisions for her burial arrangements. He was grateful Cleveland Christian Home wanted to give her a final resting place on our campus. Mr. Raymond kindly forwarded her cremains to our offices.

Our story continues as we plan to honor the legacy of Anna "Mom" Thorpe. This year, on Saturday, October 4th, 2008, we will reinstate the tradition of an annual Homecoming Day for former residents, family, friends and supporters of Cleveland Christian Home. A primary focus to Homecoming Day 2008 activities will be a Memorial Service for Mom Thorpe.

Homecoming Day 2008 will be a busy day at Cleveland Christian Home, featuring the Christian Church in Ohio's annual Fall Work Day and alumni activities for former residents of the Home. A full schedule of the day's activities is highlighted in a separate article in this publication.

Continued in the next column



"Mom" Thorpe continued

The memorial service honoring Mrs. Thorpe will begin at 2:00 P.M. in the Cleveland Christian Home School Gymnasium. The service will highlight Mom Thorpe's life, her commitment to the Cleveland Christian Home, the Disciples of Christ, and the community and to the thousands of children she served as Administrator of the home.

The Memorial Service will include participation by clergy, musical presentations and testimonials from residents and acquaintances of Mrs. Thorpe. The eulogy will be given by Rev. Dr. William Edwards, Regional Pastor and President of the Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ). An urn and headstone, donated by Keith Jenkins, longtime friend and owner of Jenkins Funeral Chapel in Westlake, will be placed at Cleveland Christian Home in Mom Thorpe's honor.

During Mrs. Thorpe's 46-year tenure with Cleveland Christian Home she touched many lives. She visited weekly churches in Pennsylvania, Indiana, West Virginia, Michigan or Ohio telling the Cleveland Christian Home story. She loved and remained committed to the church throughout her life always believing the church and church related ministries could make a difference in the lives of individuals. Our hope is to have a delegation from every church in these states to join with us in honoring the life of Anna "Mom" Thorpe.

We encourage Cleveland Christian Home alumni, Board members, staff, friends and community organizations to be a part of this memorial celebration of Anna Thorpe's life.

Please plan to join us on October 4th for Homecoming Day 2008. Former residents of CCH are invited to contact us and are encouraged to become part of our Alumni Association. Please contact Donna Ryant with your information. To participate in our Homecoming activities, or to volunteer time to help us prepare for Homecoming Day, call (216) 476-0333 or send an e-mail to dryant@ccnworks.org. (A listing of nearby hotels is available if overnight accommodations are necessary).

New Horizons hosts Back to School Party

Over 225 grade school students and their parents attended a Back to School Party on August 3 at the New Horizons Christian Church in



Akron. The students received backpacks filled with school supplies, won prizes at a variety of games, were treated to hot dogs and ice cream, and received haircuts by local stylists. Everything was free to all the attendees. "This is one way that we can give back to our community," commented Pastor Jim Bane. "We feel that we have been blessed as a church and we want to be a blessing to others." Many church members participated in



one way or another in this outreach event which has grown from 65 students served at the first Party in 2006. Other church members have become tutors at the elementary schools closest

to New Horizons. Pictures of the Party can be found in the outreach/missions tab of the church's website:

www.newhorizonschristian.org.

150th Anniversary

First Christian Church of Nelsonville will be celebrating their 150th Anniversary with a service of Worship and Praise starting at 10:00 am on Sunday, October 5, 2008. The Rev. Ted Faulconer will be the guest speaker. There will be memories of the past, praise for the present, and hope for the future celebrated in word and song. Following the service, we will share a catered fellowship meal in the church social room. There will also be displays commemorating our rich history; including *"Historical Reflections"* which is a book written on the history of the Nelsonville church compiled by Susan Canter-Hanning, and opportunities to share memories with the past and present church family and friends. We look forward to seeing you on this very special day. (It seems that through the years we have many times lost touch with many of our past members and friends due to address changes, etc. Therefore if you do not receive a mailed personal invitation we deeply apologize and ask that you notify us of your present address, and that you bless us with your presence this day.) Please send all correspondence and RSVP's to: Jon Thomas Hanning, Pastor, First Christian Church, 200 Fort Street, Nelsonville, Ohio 45764, or you may email us at jont@frognet.net.



Week of Compassion prepared to send relief to Georgia

Week of Compassion, the relief, refugee and development ministry fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), is preparing a response to an appeal by Action by Churches Together (Act) for emergency relief assistance for the victims of the violence in the country of Georgia. The fighting that broke out between Russia and Georgian forces in the disputed Georgian provinces of South Ossetia and Abkhazia has left scores of people dead and tens of thousands of others displaced.

Week of Compassion has already approved sending a sustainable development grant to provide vocational education and employment opportunities for at-risk youth in Georgia as part of Church World Service's assistance to the Tblisi Youth House Foundation. The foundation has helped more than 15,000 displaced and vulnerable Georgian children over the past decade.

Advance Conference

Advance Conferences was a fantastic success, with yet again, another strong showing of over 100 young adults coming together to worship and celebrate in God's love at Camp Christian. The theme for Advance this year was Divinity and Diversity and it proved to be both exciting and challenging as we discussed a variety of diversity topics and how they interact with our faith. We are still energized from our week at camp and feel truly blessed to serve the Advance conferees and God in this next year. We look forward to seeing everyone at the Regional Assembly and Advance Conference Winter Retreat. In the meantime, there are other ways to stay connected. There are weekly Bible studies in various parts of Ohio, so be sure to check out the one closest to you. Also, become a part of the email list by going to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/campchristian> and signing up.

Meet the new Advance Conference Officers!



Laura Huffman (left) is a member at First Christian Church in Medina. Laura is working in customer service to pay the bills, and working as a church musician to ensure that the hymns are sung fast enough.

Ryan Turner (center) is a member at Central Christian Church in Kettering. Ryan has done mission work in India and is currently a full time student at The Ohio State University. Susan Wilson (right) is a member at Central Christian Church in Warren. Susan is in the midst of an academic marathon, pursuing her Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Ohio University. The Advance Conference Officers can be reached at advanceconference@yahoo.com.

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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Mark your calendar's 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!