



CELEBRATION OF DR. KING



The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday honors a man who brought hope and healing to America. He taught us timeless values of courage, truth, justice, compassion, dignity, humility and service.

The Anti-Racism Team, the Greater Wichita Ministerial League and Wichita State University invite you to attend "Building Bridges" a

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Worship Celebration beginning at noon on Monday, Jan. 21, at the Eugene M. Hughes Metropolitan Complex, 5015 E. 29th St. N. The Special Guest Speaker is Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale, founder and Senior Pastor of the Ray of Hope Christian Church in Decatur, Georgia.

As a woman of vision, Dr. Hale is revered worldwide for her leadership, integrity, and compassion. Her vision and leadership led her to establish two ministries; Elah Pastoral Ministries, Inc. and the Women in Ministry Conference, Inc. As a recipient of numerous honors and recognitions, Dr. Hale was inducted into the African American Biographies Hall of Fame, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Board of Preachers of Morehouse College, and the Atlanta Business League Women's Hall of Fame. In 2009, Dr. Hale was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve on the President's Commission on White House Fellowships. She also served as a member of the 2016 Platform Committee for the Democratic National Convention and delivered the Invocation at the 2016 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

In Topeka, the 27th Annual "Whose Dream is It?" celebration is Monday, January 20, at El Shaddi Ministries Church, 920 SE Sherman Ave. The celebration will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a soup supper and a 7:30 celebration service followed by refreshments. The guest speaker is Shanae Holman, Lead Organizer of the Topeka JUMP organization, which is fighting for more safe and affordable housing. This is the community wide celebration of the birth of Dr. King hosted annually on the King holiday by the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice as part of the Living the Dream program.

COMING EVENTS

- Remind & Renew, Phillips Ministers' Week
January 23-24. Pg. 5
- TCU/Brite Ministers' Week Pg. 5
February 17-19
- Youth Spring Retreat Pg. 5
February 28-March 1
- Art of Church Communication . . Pg. 3
Tuesdays in March
- Spirituality Retreat
March 12-14
- All About the Campers Training . .Pg. 3
March 27-28
- IAS Trip 2020 Pg. 3
March 13-21
- Boundaries Training
March 26, May 23, Oct 20
- KDW SpiritFest 2020 Pg. 3
April 18, 19 & May 2
- It's Real 2020 Experience Pg. 6
July 22-25
- Regional Assembly
August 8
- Tawakoni Gala
Fall 2020

Submit your articles for the January issue by

December 16

Send text and photos to messenger@kansasdisciples.org
All articles are edited for clarity, conciseness, tone, and space. Photos need to be in (.jpg) format in separate attachments.

ATTENTION!

2019 Year end Gifts

The regional office will be closed Dec. 24-Jan. 1. Submit 2019 Annual Fund and other Kansas Plan giving to the Topeka Regional Office by:

Monday, December 23

Make checks payable to the Christian Church in Kansas or give online at www.kansasdisciples.org/give anytime.



THOUGHTS FROM YOUR REGIONAL MINISTER

BY RENEE BRIDWELL

After college in Oklahoma, I was a local youth minister, sponsor for the Regional Youth Cabinet, director and counselor for CYF conference, etc. – and the soundtrack for those years was Michael W. Smith’s *Friends are Friends Forever*. I no longer recall the rest of the words, at least not without

the music, but that line remains. Fragments have been playing in my head a lot lately, as I prepare to leave Kansas behind and move on to where half of my grandchildren live. I’m trading tornadoes and blizzards for earthquakes and wildfires, along with daily hugs and playtime.

For nearly twelve years we have walked the path of faith together in so many ways: Regional Assemblies, MissionFest, TEAM2, #DCE Disciples Connect & Equip, district events, preaching and worship with you in so many congregations, pastoral care, pastoral searches and all that accompanies the search, retreats, camps—especially Grand Camp, clergy groups, work groups at camp and in Joplin, individual consultation, and so much more—it has been my privilege, and you are a blessing in my life. Whether we see one another

again or not, you will remain in my heart. *Friends are Friends Forever*.

Farewell writings are incomplete without words for your future. I have loved seeing God’s people work side by side. It’s a delight when faithful people make bold decisions and follow new directions in the light of the gospel. In regional ministry, we see these things regularly and it brings absolute joy. In regional ministry we also see the dark side, and the hardest part of that is when the people of God act as if God does not matter in their lives and congregations. Google *Functional Atheism* to learn more. The core is this: Functional atheism happens when people who profess to know God and to follow Jesus, nevertheless act and speak as if God does not exist. It’s especially disappointing when this syndrome manifests itself in the church.

So my final word for you is this: if you would gladden the hearts of your ministers, let your holy light shine. Live every hour such that there can be no doubt that you serve the One who created you and all that is. On this path is deep, unshakeable joy and the peace of Christ that is beyond all understanding.

THE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL DAY OFFERING SUPPORTS REGIONAL MINISTRY

‘TOGETHER, WE CONNECT AND EQUIP’

This month, congregations across the US and Canada will gather the Christmas Offering, designated for support of their region.

The Christian Church in Kansas works with member congregations and leaders to bring a sense of unity as **TOGETHER WE MINISTER** in the name of Christ.

Through fellowship groups, camps and conferences, and retreats, we **CONNECT** congregations and their

members to each other and the universal church so that we may all grow up until we reflect the true nature of God as revealed in Jesus.

Through leadership and ministry skills training we **EQUIP** ministers and church leaders to carry out the mission and ministry of Jesus. Participants develop a greater sense of shared mission and ministry.

Your generous gifts to the Christmas Offering support the ministries of the Christian Church in Kansas.

These include Disciples Men’s and Women’s programs, summer camping

programs, pastoral care, leadership training, *The Kansas Messenger*, social media, and www.kansasdisciples.org.

eome — as we connect with one another.

eome — as we equip one another for the ministry to which God has called us.

eome — join in supporting this ministry which benefits our churches and strengthens us for our mission in this world.

eome, they told me



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COOKBOOK ANYONE?



Disciples Women will publish a region-wide cookbook with all proceeds going to the Jones Lodge construction fund. Jones Lodge will have six hotel style suites giving greater diversity to the size and type of camps and retreats Tawakoni is able to offer.

Included in the cookbook will be history of Camp Tawakoni along with pictures and information about the Jones Lodge project.

Additional information can also be found in the November and December editions of DW Newsbytes or by contacting your local Disciples Women fellowship group. All women are encouraged to participate in this project.

Send in your some of your favorite recipes to KDW Coordinator, Carla Pearson at 1816 17th Ave, McPherson, KS 67460 or by email at carla.pearson58@gmail.com. The deadline for recipe submission is Wednesday, May 20, with the books available for purchase by the 2020 Women's Retreat. Disciples Women are excited for construction of the Jones Lodge project to begin and excited to be part of the fundraising effort.



SEEKING CAMP LEADERS FOR 2020

The Camp Program Team is bringing together current and future camp adults and those who are curious about where they might fit into the program. Learn how the pieces fit together and how each person contributes to the whole camp experience.

Camp leadership training will be March 27-28 at Tawakoni. There's something here for everyone! The program will begin with supper at 6 p.m. on Friday and will close by 2 p.m. on Saturday. Bring bedding and spend the night in one of the cabins.

Rev. Greg Rea will keynote on Trust-Based leadership. Greg has done much research regarding challenged youth, and he brings insightful and helpful information.

Register early and save big! Register by Tuesday, March 10, and pay \$25. Beginning March 11, the registration fee is \$45, still a great deal! Online registration at kansasdiscalples.org will open in January.

IAS 2020: CHRISTIAN FAITH IN 21ST CENTURY

To be serious about Christian faith in the 21st century is to live self-consciously as a global citizen. International Affairs Seminar (IAS) is designed to help juniors and seniors in high school experience what it means to live this reality. The seminar is intended for students who are active in a Disciples congregation.

IAS 2020 happens Friday, March 13, through Saturday, March 21. Steve Martin, Regional Minister, will serve as

director/coordinator. Adult sponsors will reflect the communities from which the youth are enrolled.

Full information is available online at www.kansasdiscalples.org. The fee is kept lower than actual cost by a generous grant from the Kansas Bible Chair.

For more information, contact Steve Martin at smartin@kansasdiscalples.org or call 800-737-8130.

2020 SPIRITFESTS:

Attention Disciples women mark your calendar for the 2020 SpiritFests on April 18 at Arkansas City Central Christian Church, April 19 at Galva Christian Church, & May 2 at Baxter Springs First Christian Church. Registration opens in January.

ART OF CHURCH COMMUNICATION

WORKSHOPS

Tuesday mornings in March. Cost is \$25 per workshop or \$100 for all five workshops. Learning is always more fun with friends! Sign-up with two or more friends for all five workshops pay \$90 each. Registration opens in January.

2020 Topics are:

- ⇒ Your Church Story in Photographs
⇒ Your Church Live
⇒ The Community Connection
⇒ The Welcome Center
⇒ Texting in Church

Read more at kansasdiscalples.org

2020 Camp Schedule

Eager to see all your camp friends? The 2020 Schedule will be available in January. Registration opens in the spring of 2020.



BECOME A DISCIPLES PEACE INTERN



Disciples Peace Fellowship is now accepting Applications for **2020 Peace Interns**. For four decades

they have served the wider church by spending a summer traveling to Disciples camps to as advocates for Peace and Justice. The DPF Peace Internship is a life-changing 12-week, paid internship with a \$2500 stipend for anyone age 21 and over.

It begins the last week in May with a weeklong training event in Indianapolis followed by 10 weeks on the road at weeklong Church Camps and Conferences all over the United States and Canada.

As an added bonus, next year's Peace Interns will attend "It's Real," the first ever joint event of the National Convocation, North American Pacific/Asian Disciples and Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries hosted at Texas Christian University!

The Internship concludes in early August with a weeklong closing retreat where they will debrief the experience, recuperate from the summer, and begin thinking about what's next for our justice and peace advocates. Learn more about the [Peace Internship](#) at the DPF Website.

BOOTS ON THE GROUND, EYES TO THE HEAVENS

The Upper Midwest region invites pastors to take part in Ministers' Institute 2020, held January 27-29 at Christian Conference Center, Newton, Iowa.

This year's theme is "Boots on the Ground, Eyes to the Heavens: Dismantling White Supremacy in Our Church." Among other topics, this event will offer at least four hours of Anti-Racism training.

Visit their website for more information: docgeneralassembly.webconnex.com/MI2020



DISCIPLES MEN SESSIONS 2020

Join Disciples Men from across the denomination for Sessions 2020 Friday—Sunday, July 10—12, on the Texas Christian University campus in Ft. Worth, Texas.

Every four years, Disciples Men gather to pray, teach, support, fellowship and care for one another so that they may return home impassioned and uplifted; moved by the Holy Spirit; ready to lift their

churches and their ministries through the grace, power and wisdom of Jesus Christ.

Registration fee is \$295 for those under age 30 and \$395 for those 30 and over. Save \$70 when you register before May 1. *Scholarship support (1/2 of the registration fee) for Kansas Disciples Men to attend Sessions 2020 may be available; contact your regional minister to inquire.*

HAVE YOU REMEMBERED THE CHURCH IN YOUR WILL?

Your gift can benefit the church for years to come. For information about bequests, contact the Christian Church Foundation at 1-800-668-8016, by email at kgould@ccf.disciples.org or on the web at www.christianchurchfoundation.org.

2020 DISCIPLES YEARBOOK REPORTING

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Year Book and Directory is more than just numbers. It is, above all, a touchstone for our covenantal relationships across the expressions of the Church. General ministry reports, general assembly resolutions, regional and congregational information and more appear in these pages connecting us. The year book is also a document of record. Not only does it show trends in membership and giving, but it also serves as the documentation for congregations' 501(c3) nonprofit status with the Internal Revenue Service in the United States.

Between Jan. 4 and 14, church offices should receive a postcard with the congregation's PIN number. The disciples.org/yearbook web page will have a link to the online reporting form, downloadable instructions and other resources to help you through the reporting process. The deadline for submitting is March 15.

This year there will be additional questions that may look unfamiliar. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is partnering with Faith Communities Today in their 2020 Census of religious communities. Please note: the data from these questions will be shared in aggregate form only to protect confidentiality.

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Mark your calendar for the 2020 regional assembly on Saturday, August 8, at Tawakoni. The planning team is currently being assembled. More information to come.



PHILLIPS SEMINARY

Throughout history, Christian churches have deliberated on the definition of justice in the context of Christianity. Two Phillips Theological Seminary faculty members, Dr. Ellen Blue and Dr. Richard Ward, will explore the relationship between the two during the 2020 Remind & Renew conference, At the Intersection of Jesus and Justice, Jan. 23–24 in Tulsa, Okla.

REMIND & RENEW MINISTERS' WEEK

The Rev. Alexis Carter Thomas will preach for Remind & Renew 2020. In a special evening event, Dr. Charles Kimball will present a talk on Jan. 23 in the evening.

Registration for Remind & Renew 2020 is now open. Sign up by Jan. 4 and receive the early registration discount.

Lodging can be booked at a discounted rate at the Hampton Inn & Suites in Tulsa. Hampton Inn & Suites is located at 3418 South 79th E. Ave in Tulsa, OK.

BROTHERS IN MINISTRY TIMOTHY & TITUS JAMES SET TO RETIRE

For almost 16 years, Rev. Dr. Timothy James has been an Associate General Minister and the Administrative Secretary for the National Convocation, based in Indianapolis. By his retirement date of Dec. 31, 2020, he will have had more than 17 years in the position. Kansas Disciples may know Dr. James as the twin brother of our own Rev. Titus James, pastor of North Heights Christian Church in Wichita since 1979.

"I have had such a wonderful time serving over these years. I am deeply honored to have served with the first woman General Minister and President, Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins and the first African American General Minister and President, Rev. Terri Hord Owens. A lot of changes have occurred and I am confident, more are still to come." James has been AGM in partnership with three GMPs, beginning with Rev. Dr. Chris Hobgood in 2003, followed by Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins and Rev. Teresa (Terri) Hord Owens.

"I have so appreciated working with Dr. James," said General Minister and President Hord Owens. "He was so welcoming when I arrived.... His collegial attitude and easy-going ways will be missed. This next year of transition is an exciting time in the 100+ year history of the African-American community of Disciples."

Rev Titus James has announced he will retire August 31, 2020 after more than 40 years as pastor of North Heights Christian Church.

BRITE MINISTERS' WEEK:

Join students, faculty and staff of Brite Divinity School and Texas Christian University for three days of inspiring worship, thought-provoking lectures, enriching workshops and an uplifting organ recital and hymn sing.

Ministers' Week will be Feb. 17-19 at University Christian Church and on the TCU campus. The featured preacher is Rev. Grace Imathiu, Senior Pastor of First United Methodist Church in Evanston, IL, and plenary speakers are Rev. Dr. Nancy Ramsay, Rev. Michael Yandell,

Rev. Richard McCullen, and Rev. Dr. Eugene Boring. Dr. Sheryl Sebo is the guest organist for the recital and hymn sing.



As this event is a gift from Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University and University Christian Church there is no general registration fee; however, pre-registration is encouraged.

YOUTH SPRING RETREAT: WHO WE ARE AS DISCIPLES

Spring Retreat for youth will be February 28-March 1, at the Disciples Center at Tawakoni. The retreat will include both middle school (Chi Rho) and high school (CYF) youth and sponsors.



Keynotes will feature Rev. Rob Tulloch, associate pastor at Hillside Christian Church in Wichita. Rob and his wife, Oksana have 3 dogs. He came to Kansas from Idaho and youth have found him to have a listening ear and a heart of

care.

The program begins at 7 p.m. on Friday and ends at 10:45 a.m. on Sunday. Eat before you arrive!

What should I bring?

- Sleeping bag
- Towels
- Personal Items
- Offering
- An Open Heart!

Register before Wednesday, Feb. 21, to save \$15 off the \$80 fee.

BEING JESUS IN NICARAGUA

Pittsburg First Christian Church, Fredonia First CC, Trinity United CC in Cheney, and churches in Iowa have worked in a little village in Santa Emilia, Nicaragua for several years. Their focus has been on health care and education.



“We would like to thank the Southeast District for the generous contribution of \$1500 for this Nicaragua project,” said project leader and Pittsburg pastor Pat Nixon. “This will help some of the poorest people in the Americas. Most of them survive on just a few hundred dollars per year.”

So far the mission group has built a pre-school, provided a clinic, remodeled a church, built flushing toilets for the schools, brought electricity to the schools, built a couple of bridges, and, most importantly, brought clean water to almost every house in the village.

“When we began working few houses were within access to water, and that water was contaminated with everything from chemicals to sewage,” said Nixon. “Now most houses have access to clean water every day.”

They are now looking to expand that water system to another couple of dozen houses that were not included in the original plan.

Another project that is in the works is a foot bridge across the river. From about May through October there are frequent and heavy rains. In the mountainous area the river rises quickly and substantially. Those who are on the wrong side of the river simply cannot get out to go to work or school.

February 19-26 a mission team will go on a work trip to the village to assist with these projects. If you are interested, please contact Patrick Nixon at 620-231-1430 or 316-833-0948.

A Kansas regional mission trip to this village in February of 2021 is under consideration.

IN TRANSITION:

Augusta First Christian Church has called **Loy Hoskins**, recently of Marshall MO, as their next minister. His ministry in Augusta begins January 21. Hoskins may be known to some Kansans for previous service as Youth Pastor at Lyons FCC, while teaching at Sterling College.

Trinity United Christian Church has called **Travis Smith McKee** as their next minister, to begin January 1. Smith McKee previously served in Kansas as Co-Associate Minister of Atchison FCC with his wife Kassie, and before that as Minister of Youth and Young Adults at Pittsburg FCC.

BE TRANSFORMED IN RELATIONSHIP AT THE 2020 EXPERIENCE



The ministries of Obra Hispana—our Disciples Hispanic congregations, NAPAD—our Pacific Asian congregations, and National Convocation—our African-American congregations, will come together to listen, learn and worship for a joint convocation July 22-25 at Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas. The meeting will center on the theme

“It’s Real!”, drawing from Rev. 7:9-17. The 2020 EXPERIENCE is not about an event, but about the way we are transformed in relationship and as the Church along the way, from the planning process, to the event, and to whatever comes after.

SERVICE PROJECT OPPORTUNITY

Pittsburg First Christian Church is collecting plastic lids from food, beverage and household items. The lids will be recycled into a new playground bench. Their goal is to collect 200 pounds.

For more details on how you or your church can get involved contact the church at 620-231-1430 or email fccpittsburg@disciples.kscoxmail.com.

