



# Kansas Messenger

Christian Church in Kansas (Disciples of Christ)

[www.kansasdisciples.org](http://www.kansasdisciples.org)

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## Kansas Regional Office

### Financial Office

[Steve Martin](#), Regional Minister  
[Susan White](#), Executive Secretary  
[Barb Koelling](#), Treasurer  
2914 SW MacVicar Ave.  
Topeka 66611-1787  
785-266-2914  
Fax: 785-266-0174

## Central & High Plains

### Satellite Office

#### Clergy Care Office

[Ken Marston](#), Regional Minister  
[Krista Donaker](#), Admin. Assistant  
5230 Broadway Avenue  
Great Bend 67530-3208  
620-792-6490; Fax: 620-792-1268

## South Central Satellite Office

### Communication Office

[Steve Hart](#), Communications Director  
[Jessica Marston](#), Communications Spec.  
8492 SW Tawakoni Rd.  
Augusta 67010-8111  
316-775-1236

## Disciples Center at Tawakoni

[Sid Rutland](#), Camp Manager  
8492 SW Tawakoni Rd.  
Augusta 67010-8111  
316-775-1222  
[www.tawakoni.org](http://www.tawakoni.org)

## Fellowship Groups

[Carla Pearson](#), Disciples Women  
[Luis Mendez](#), Disciples Men

TBA, Regional Minister of  
New Church Ministry

**We would love to connect  
with you!**

Connect with us on

[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

## 2021 DISCIPLES CONNECT AND EQUIP

### Reconnecting by Covenant



As many of us begin to get back to some normalcy in our lives, and begin to make plans for summer camps, family gatherings, and vacations, remember to mark your calendars for the regional Disciples Connect and Equip gathering on Saturday, August 14, at Tawakoni.

The planning team is in the process of making plans for an exciting event. At this time, we hope to have an in-person event, however, if any changes should occur with COVID

restrictions before the regional event occurs, we will have contingency plans in place to move to an all-virtual event.

The theme of our event will be *Reconnect by Covenant*. Our General Minister and President – Terri Hord Owens will participate in our event virtually, as well as Erin Wathen from Week of Compassion as our keynote speakers.

One focus for reconnecting and building for the future will be the creation of an Ebenezer, a stone tower or wall, symbolizing God's presence in bringing us through the latest tribulations and reconnecting us in covenant. The Ebenezer is a tangible reminder of the Lord's power and protection. To create the Ebenezer, each church is asked to bring a stone to help build our Ebenezer.

In addition to worship, workshops, and fellowship time, there will be opportunities for fun, renewal and reconnection. The pool will not be available this year. Disciples Women will coordinate a morning reception and a catered boxed lunch to help minimize COVID risk.

Come celebrate and express those challenges as we reimagine what it is to be church from our experience of COVID. Registration will open in June. See details in the June *Kansas Messenger*, regional social media pages, and text alerts system.

### Rev. David Dubovich

1st Vice Moderator – Chair of Disciples Connect and Equip Event

## PENTECOST SPECIAL OFFERING

For the past 13 months, Disciples have been struggling with social isolation. They've stayed away from their places of worship to protect the health and safety of themselves and others. It has been difficult.

From hospital/prison chaplains to tri-vocational pastors, new church leaders have answered the call to be the new church. The Pentecost Offering supports Disciples new church development. Planning, nurturing, and sustaining new congregations is part of the Disciples' vision. This offering

supports the ministry of new church development through regional and general programs. Gifts for this offering are divided equally between the region in which they are given and the New Church Ministry to train, equip, assist, and multiply emerging and affiliating congregations and leaders.



## THOUGHTS FROM YOUR REGIONAL MINISTER

### “Reflections on Retirement”

BY STEVE MARTIN, REGIONAL MINISTER



How does one sum up the work and events of 24 years? I've spent a lot of time thinking and reflecting on my ministry over these last few years. My decision to retire was not easy, yet I know it is the right time for me to step aside.

As I look back, I am amazed at how different the region is today. Life changes whether we like it or not. Some changes are good, and some not so. Yet in all of it we can find confidence in the promise that God is with us! That gives me comfort and peace.

I have never regretted my decision to accept the call to serve as one of the regional ministers for the Kansas region. I've found challenge again and again. I've found support and care from those in our congregations. I've enjoyed the care and support of staff members who share the same commitment to serving the ministries of the church. All of these have brought

me both great satisfaction and even a sense of empowerment. I have no regrets and I have been blessed over these past 24 years.

When August 31 comes, I will miss many things. I will miss meeting people in congregational visits (during COVID-19 these are perhaps my biggest loss). I will miss the relationships we have developed together. I will definitely miss the camp and all those who have been present helping in various ways, including the campers and their laughter and energy and enthusiasm for their time in that important space. I know there will be other things I miss, but most importantly, I will know that the work of the region continues and that it is in the good hands of both volunteers and staff.

Kansas is a very good place to serve in the church. I hope and pray that new faces will be present in regional church work. I also hope and pray that all will dedicate themselves to helping to build God's kingdom, knowing that together we will find faithfulness and God's blessings.

Thank you again and again for all your care and support. God bless you each and every one!

## KANSAS, NEBRASKA, GREATER KANSAS CITY REGIONS TALK INTER-REGIONAL COLLABORATION

### “A Spiritual Wind is Blowing”

BY KELLY GINDLESBERGER, RETIRED KANSAS PASTOR

Some wise person said, “The only thing that remains the same is change.” I believe our last year and a half proves the adage. Change is afoot in all manifestations of the Christian Church (DOC), from the local congregation to the General Church. You may or may not know that a group representing the three Regions of Kansas, Greater Kansas City, and Nebraska are working together to understand the possibilities in this environment of change.

Three members from each Region, plus the Regional Ministers, our General Minister and President, and Joyce McEwen Crane from the Kansas Leadership Center comprise the group. Kansas is represented by Laurie Lewis, current Moderator; Ruby Brower, Moderator Elect, and Kelly Gindlesberger, past Moderator.

After meeting several times, at the end of last August, the Regional Ministers convened the group and posed the question, “Where might God lead the three regions to collaborate and partner to fulfill more effectively the primary purpose of a region, which is to support and nurture local congregations”?

Since that time, the group has been meeting regularly, at distance, to explore the question in its full breadth. Our exploration is grounded in the tenets of adaptive learning, as such, we are not proposing answers so much as determining the best questions to ask of ourselves and our stakeholders.

As we continue our work, we will



be coming to you for help in our exploration. We need to gain your perspective on the relationship between local congregations and the Regional church. We need to learn how you might benefit from the Regional and General church to renew the vitality and effectiveness of your congregation in living out our common calling from Jesus the Christ. We need your thoughts on how we might lower the boundaries amongst our three Regions to better utilize the talents and resources of a broader ministry.

Stay tuned for our questions and to see where the Spirit leads us all in our calling.

## CAMP NEWS



### REGISTER TODAY FOR 2021 SUMMER CAMP

Children, youth and adults are invited to seven events for grades K

-12 and three specialty camps.

The cost is \$63-\$245 depending on camp session. Registration fees

cover lodging, meals, program, nurse, t-shirt, water bottle, snacks, and camp maintenance. All camps begin at 1 p.m. on the first day and end at 10 a.m. on the last.

Grand Camp 1 registration has reopened with additional spots available. For other camps register online at [www.kansasdisciples.org](http://www.kansasdisciples.org) or through your ENGAGE account.

### COVID PRECAUTIONS FOR 2021 SUMMER CAMP

Tawakoni staff continues their commitment to follow Jesus and love our neighbor into the summer camp program. They will do

everything possible to ensure a safe environment for everyone: campers, program staff, and all employees and volunteers.

Based on state health guidelines, the camp will follow these measures:

- Camp staff and volunteers, over 19 years, will have a COVID test upon arrival.
- Staff and campers will have their temperature checked at check-in, and each morning following.
- Face masks will be worn throughout the camp program. Campers are encouraged to bring several masks. A supply of masks will be available for those who are unable to bring their own. Exceptions are: sleeping, eating, and pool/water activities.
- Program leaders will plan for social-distancing and meeting outdoors as much as possible.
- Camp staff will sanitize sleeping cabins daily.
- Meals will be served by kitchen staff. The salad bar will have pre-packaged items. Depending on weather, small groups may eat outdoors under a pop-up tent.

If a camper displays COVID symptoms, he/she will be isolated and tested, and the parent or guardian will be contacted for immediate pickup.

### CAMP NURSES NEEDED FOR 2021 SEASON

The summer camp program at Tawakoni provides a nurse at each event. This person is key for distribution of medications and at other times first aid. The nurse is present for many of the camp activities.



This year, some we have relied on in the past are not available. Brenda Davis is the coordinator and is seeking other nurses who are not on our list. The nurse will have private lodging and all meals are provided with campers in the dining hall. There is even a small stipend paid for the your service.

Anyone may apply online at [www.tawakoni.org/summer-camp-program](http://www.tawakoni.org/summer-camp-program), email Brenda at [thisnthat\\_1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:thisnthat_1@sbcglobal.net) or, or call the Topeka office 785-266-2914. Do not delay – this is a great opportunity.

### 2021 SUMMER LEADERSHIP INTERNS NEEDED



The Outdoor Ministries Committee is seeking applications for 2021 Summer Leadership Interns.

Qualified applicants have completed their first year in college, love children and the camp, have a specific camp skill (i.e., Lifeguard) to share with the program, have demonstrated their reliability and ability to work collaboratively with others.

Interns assist with a variety of tasks and activities including maintaining the pool, lifeguarding, tending campfires, leading games, serving food, washing dishes, facilitating challenge course activities, tending grounds, and more. They've even been known to step in as counselors when needed, and to lead music and energizers!

Former interns in most cases continue to serve in the church!

Apply online at [www.tawakoni.org/summer-intern-application](http://www.tawakoni.org/summer-intern-application) or contact Camp Manager, Sid Rutland, at [campmanager@kansasdisciples.org](mailto:campmanager@kansasdisciples.org) for more details.

### CAMP SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR SUMMER

Donations of needed supplies help the camp season run smoothly. In addition to donations of supplies, monetary donations are also helpful to cover camp operations. Needed supplies include:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • Paper towels, napkins, toilet paper   | • Crockpot liners                        |
| • 13- & 33-gallon trash bags            | • Soft Scrub Comet                       |
| • Toilet cleaner                        | • Zip-lock bags - quart and gallon sizes |
| • Flour sack dish towels and dishcloths |  |

## NEWS FROM YOUR REGION

**CCK EVENT COVID-19 NOTE:** We plan to begin meeting in-person at the Disciples Center at Tawakoni. Therefore, face masks and social distancing precautions will be expected of all participants. If health authorities indicate it is not wise for large gatherings, we will move events online or cancel the event and refund registration fees.



### 2021 DISCIPLES WOMEN FALL RETREATS

Plans are underway for the 2021 KDW Fall Retreat in-person at Camp Tawakoni. Mid-week retreat will be October 6-8 and Weekend retreat October 8-10.

Rev. Dr. Beth Rupe will bring the keynote messages to follow the theme, "Who Needs a Bridge?" Several workshops are being planned as well as service projects and crafting fun.

Come and take part as we worship and fellowship together. Registration will open July 1.

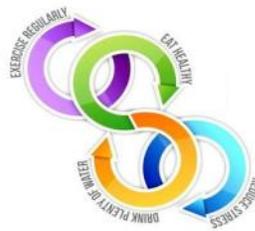
Be sure to watch the KDW Facebook page, the *Kansas Messenger*, and regional website – [www.kansasdisciples.org](http://www.kansasdisciples.org) - for more updates.

### KDM FALL RETREAT

Save the date for the Disciples Men Fall Retreat September 24-25 at Tawakoni. The theme will be "Beyond Brotherhood: friendship as a model for growing as men of faith."

The keynote speaker is Rev. Alex Ruth, associate director of Disciples Men and pastor at Marshfield Christian Church, Marshfield, Mo.

Individual cost is \$70 per person and church groups of five or more is \$65 per person. First time attendees under the age of 50 is free. Registration will open in June.



### BOUNDARIES TRAINING—HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

As part of the regional church's efforts to help our clergy maintain good relational boundaries, clergy will have two additional opportunities in

2021. This training fulfills their boundary training requirement for maintaining standing with the region.

These opportunities are offered to clergy, clergy spouses, and church leaders to explore the importance of maintaining appropriate relational boundaries. The next session is from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 22, at the Disciples Center at Tawakoni, with lunch provided. The final session will be 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 19, at Great Bend, First Christian Church. The cost is \$35 for clergy and \$10 for church leaders and spouses are free.

### REGIONAL CLERGY SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Twice a year, the regional scholarship committee meets to award grants primarily for Ministerial candidates seeking a Master of Divinity degree. We are able award these educational grants thanks to the foresight and generosity of congregations and individuals over the years.

Gifts are placed into permanent funds and we award scholarships based upon the returns which is around \$3,000 in scholarships twice a year.

If you are an ordination candidate, a commissioned minister engaged in a continuing education program at one of our college or seminaries and are in need of some financial help, contact the Central/High Plains regional office for a scholarship application form. We will be making the scholarship awards for the Fall semester by the end of May.



### Have you signed up for CCK text alerts?

Text **KSMESSENGER** to **474747** to sign-up for the regional text alerts system.

### SIGN UP FOR KDW NEWSBYTES

Be informed about upcoming events and DW happenings. Sign up for the KDW *Newsbytes* email newsletter. Contact KDW Coordinator, Carla Pearson, at [carla.pearson58@gmail.com](mailto:carla.pearson58@gmail.com) to add your name to the list.

### HAVE NEWS TO SHARE? KANSAS MESSENGER ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

We are glad to receive your news articles and photographs for publication. We reserve the right to edit all materials. Submit your items online at [www.kansasdisciples.org](http://www.kansasdisciples.org). Article submission deadline for the June issue is:

**Monday, May 24**

## NEWS FROM THE GENERAL CHURCH

### SAVE THE DATE! DISCIPLES VIRTUAL GATHERING



Join other Disciples congregations at the Disciples Virtual Gathering on Saturday, Aug. 7, for an opportunity to connect, learn, worship, and imagine new ways of gathering as church.

Through Bible study, workshops, and worship, the event will focus on the covenant we share as Disciples and the promise of Romans 8:38-39 that nothing can separate us from the love of God. The Kansas region hopes to continue this theme into their Disciples Connect and Equip event at Tawakoni the following week. **(See accompanying article on page 1)**

The virtual gathering day will begin at 10 a.m. with words of welcome, music, and a brief orientation to the virtual meeting space. Bible study led by Disciples scholars with interactive learning opportunities from general ministry leaders and other ministry partners will follow. The closing worship will feature a roll call of regions and a message by General Minister and President Terri Hord Owens. Throughout the day, a virtual exhibit hall will allow participants to connect with ministry partners in real time.

This all-church event is made possible by the generous financial support of general ministries and other sponsors. Regular registration starts at \$25, which includes access to all sessions and workshops, as well as the virtual exhibit hall. Options for reduced registration fees will also be available so the event can be accessible by all.

Sign up to receive email updates at [www.disciples.org/2021-virtual-gathering](http://www.disciples.org/2021-virtual-gathering).

### NEW CHURCH IMPACT REPORT

Starting new places of worship and making new disciples has been part of the Disciples tradition from its earliest days. The 2020 Vision's commitment to new faith communities isn't new for Disciples, but it pushes the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada to go further and more intentionally than it has done before. In the first ten years of the 2020

Vision alone, Disciples launched and affiliated more congregations than during any decade in its history. In 2020, Disciples celebrated welcoming more than 1,000 faith communities to the Table and surpassing the goal set in 2001.

As we both celebrate this huge achievement and imagine what will come next, New Church Ministry offers its 2020 Vision New Church Impact Report to share a snapshot of the last two decades of the Disciples New Church Movement. You will find New Church data and listings by Region, hear gratitude for long-term financial support, see programmatic highlights, and history, as well as stories of new congregations and their impact. You can view the comprehensive report at [www.newchurch2020vision.org](http://www.newchurch2020vision.org).

### WHAT IS DMF?

Every day, Disciples answer the call to be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. In the Preamble to the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), we accept our mission of witness and service to all people in the name

of Jesus the Christ. We extend God's welcome to all at the Lord's Table because we believe that our shared Christian faith bonds us to each other and to the entire world.

No matter the challenges we face – from combatting racism to ending human trafficking, from starting a church to sustaining a community – Disciples know that by sharing the work, we accomplish what, by God's design, we cannot do alone.

Disciples Mission Fund (DMF) brings the whole Church together, connecting us to the life-giving and life-saving work we have been called to do. It also simplifies giving for congregations and individuals, providing a way to support the

entire Church at once. DMF-funded regional and general ministries offer opportunities for Disciples to serve as missionaries, attend college or seminary, advocate for the least of these, and so much more.

When you [make a gift](#) to Disciples Mission Fund, you share God's love from your doorsteps to the ends of the Earth.



Share  
your gifts.  
Share  
the story.

Learn more,  
make a gift,  
and find  
resources at

[disciplesmissionfund.org](http://disciplesmissionfund.org)



## REGIONAL BOARD APPROVES SPRING KBC GRANTS

At the April Board meeting the Regional Board approved seven grant requests totaling \$40,000. These grants keep your registration costs low for regional events. Spring 2021 Grants approved are:

- \$150 to the Kansas Disciples Women for 2021 Spirit Fest speaker fees and costs.
- \$2,400 to the Kansas Disciples Women for speaker and program cost of annual fall retreats in October.
- \$1,600 for a series of 7-10 educational Congregational Ministry & Educational Leadership Podcasts.
- \$8,000 for the Anti-racism Team's two training events. The first training, open to all, will focus on what racism is and how societal systems/institutions reinforce and sustain policies and structures of racism from generation to generation. The second training is for the Anti-racism team as they seek to equip themselves to provide workshops for congregations and regional events and to engage in the work of dismantling systemic/institutional racism.
- \$18,300 for the Regional Connect and Equip event on August 14 at the Disciples Center at Tawakoni.
- An additional \$2,800 to the already approved \$3,000 for the High Plains District to develop an ongoing program of conversational Spanish language courses for pastors and church leaders.
- \$6,750 to the Ecumenical Campus Ministry on the Campus of Kansas State University for the Social Enterprise Project: "Faith in Action."

### IN TRANSITIONS

**Tara Thompson** ends her ministry at Belmont Boulevard CC, Salina, June 27. She will begin her ministry at Emporia First CC July 1.

Erie First CC called **Wayne Shaw** as pastor. He began February 20.

Shelton Memorial CC, Ulysses calls **Craig Kirby-Groves** as interim pastor. He begins in-person in May.

**Mark Davis**, recently commissioned minister, has accepted a call as pastor at Utica First CC.

### IN MEMORIUM

Retired pastor **Edward "Ed" Snider** died November 20, 2020 of complications from vascular dementia. He served at Baxter Springs First CC as well as several churches in Oklahoma.

### 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](mailto:kgould@ccf.disciples.org) or on the web at [www.christianchurchfoundation.org](http://www.christianchurchfoundation.org).