



# Reconciliation

*A Special Publication of the Christian Church in IL-WI*



## Reconciliation Offering 2012

The 2012 Reconciliation Offering will be received in congregations on September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 7<sup>th</sup>. We continue with the theme from last year, "Seeds of Hope" acknowledging the power of God in us for strengthening the ministry of Reconciliation and our witness on Christ's behalf.

The Special Offering is used to fund our Church's mission priority to become an pro-reconciling/ anti-racist church through experiential education, inclusive worship and intentional dialogue across racial/ ethnic difference.

Funds from this offering are providing for leadership development in our camps, our communities and our congregations as well as providing resources to promote small group study and community-action. Your giving is changing lives and building hope for realm of God for our children and for Christ's Church!

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**January:** 50% of IL-WI's reconciliation offerings return to the region to support PR/AR work

**February:** Social Concerns Committee meets; grant recipients chosen

**March:** First quarter funds typically dispersed; recipients submit quarterly reports

**April - June:** Reconciliation ministry work continues; recipients submit quarterly reports

**July - August:** Recipients submit articles/media for Reconciliation issue

**September:** Reconciliation issue published, promoting Special Offering and grant recipients

**October:** Special Offering collected and sent to DMF; grant applications available

**December:** Grant application process closes

## Junior High Drop-In Center

South Park Presbyterian Church

Rock Island, IL

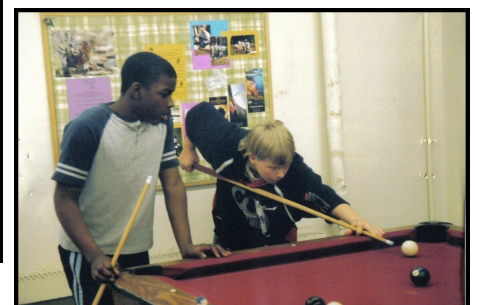
For the past 17 years students from Washington Junior High School in Rock Island, IL, have been invited to stop by after school at the Junior High Drop-In Center. The Center is open from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m. on school days, and is housed a short walk from the school in the basement of South Park Presbyterian Church. The Program came into being at the request of city officials who were encouraging churches to offer supervised positive programs for young teens as an alternative to being on the street or home without supervision after school. The program is free, yet offers a wide variety of recreational activities, snacks, help with homework, fieldtrips, and chances for new experiences. Those who attend are almost always from low income homes, and many do not have an adult at home in the hours between school and the supper hour.

We try to promote healthy eating habits by offering a healthy snack each day after school. Typical food items are fresh fruit, raw vegetables, soup, sandwiches, cereal, and milk. We also offer interested students opportunities to cook for the group. Pizza and tacos are favorites. Many recreational activities await the students who come to the Center. We have crafts, ping pong, pool, board games, card games, puzzles, as well as the opportunity to simply “hang out” and enjoy time with friends. Some of the students who come to the Center are not very socially adept, and the relatively small intimate atmosphere of the Center seems helpful to their social development.

Fieldtrips are always highlights of the program. During the 2011-2012 school year the Drop-In Center sponsored several trips including seeing Disney on Ice, going on a hayrack ride, attending our local Festival of Trees and seeing the Christmas parade associated with it, and spending the first day of summer vacation at a water park. The fieldtrips offer several positive features. Students earn points to be able to attend. Points are given for doing homework at the Center, improving grades at school, helping to clean up the Center at the end of the day, participating in community service activities, and following the rules. Fieldtrips also expand our students’ horizons, since most have limited opportunity to attend such events.

Each year the Drop-In Center youth help with several community service projects. We are participants in the “Adopt a Highway” program which involves picking up trash along twelve blocks of a busy road in Rock Island four times a year. This year they also helped with activities for young children at “Fright Night” which is a pre-Halloween activity for youngsters and is sponsored by the city. Several of the students walked in the Labor Day parade and handed out brochures for the program. The also helped with activities for young children at the Festival of Trees.

The Drop-In Center is staffed by students attending Black Hawk College who are looking to careers involving work with young people, with some help from volunteers. We believe that in addition to being a service to the students who attend and to their families, the staff has great opportunities to develop skills in preparation for their careers while they also earn money to make college possible. Everyone involved with the Drop-In Center is grateful to the Christian Church in Illinois and Wisconsin for the Reconciliation Grants which have helped us pay our portion of staff wages for many years. We sincerely thank you.



## Pro-Reconciliation Anti-Racism Team

Christian Church of IL-WI

During March, an exciting new course was offered as part of ethics trainings for clergy in the Christian Church Illinois and Wisconsin (CCIW). This regional event, co-sponsored by the Regional Minister and President, Rev. Dr. Teresa Dulyea-Parker, the Committee on Ministry, and the Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism Team (PR/AR) welcomed over 130 pastors and congregational leaders during four seminars held throughout Illinois in Mattoon, Jacksonville, Galesburg, and Aurora. Pro-reconciliation/anti-racism leadership training is essential for this denomination as more and more churches and people of varying ethnic backgrounds join the family of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Continuing to work as pro-reconciling/anti-racist people is one of the long-range strategic initiatives of CCIW. Although racism is not an easy subject to talk about, most of the participants appreciated the wealth of information presented and the opportunity to share experiences and thoughts in small groups. All sessions were facilitated by Dr. W. Chris Hobgood and Dr. Marcus Leathers, core organizers and trainers for the General Church Reconciliation Ministry. Rev. Dwight Bailey, PR/AR Team member, was a valuable resource as chauffeur and go-to person for our presenters.

The Team offers a variety of ways in which the issue of racism can be addressed in congregations, including the current invitation to all individuals and congregations in the Region to participate in the **One Region One Book** project in the time leading up to the Regional Assembly in October. The book that has been chosen for this first common reading is John Howard Griffin's *Black Like Me*, his chronicle of his experiences in 1959, when, disguised as a Black man, he traveled around the pre-civil rights south to gain insight into the lives of Black southerners. This project is patterned after the One City One Book experience which began in Seattle in 1998 under the guidance of librarian Nancy Pearl. The idea is that large numbers of people (ideally, everyone) in one city will read the same book and talk with one another about the book and the issues it raises. This model has spread across the country with many cities reading many different books. To our knowledge, this is the first time the model has been implemented in a denomination.

There will be a discussion of the book at the Regional Assembly on October 12-13 at the Illinois State University Campus Religious Center on 210 W. Mulberry St. in Normal from 2:30pm to 5:00pm

Members of the Regional Team are available to visit churches and act as resource persons for book discussions. Contact Minta Colburn at [mintajeane@yahoo.com](mailto:mintajeane@yahoo.com) if you would like to schedule this. For evaluative purposes, please inform the Team of how you are using the book by emailing Minta at that address.

A special thank you goes out to those who give regularly to the yearly Reconciliation Offering, which helped to make the ethics seminars possible. The suggested dates for this year's Reconciliation Offering are September 30 and October 7. Remember, half of every dollar is returned to the Illinois/Wisconsin Region to continue our work to become a pro-reconciling/anti-racist Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).



## **Weekday Wonders**

Glen Oak Christian Church

Peoria, IL

Glen Oak Christian Church, located in an urban (inner city) neighborhood of Peoria, Illinois offers Weekday Wonders each Thursday evening from 5 PM to 7 PM during the school year for 60-80 multi-cultural, lower social economic, multi-racial children ranging from 4 years old through 8th grade.

Activities, based on Faith Weavers (Group Publishing), include a weekly Bible story integrated through drama, study, crafts and games. A meal is served family style. 30-40 adults and high school students mentor the participants in this Christian Education and outreach experience.

Weekday Wonders began twenty years ago (1991) as an evening activity for “church family” children while their parents were involved with the weekly choir rehearsals. As our congregation and neighborhood changed, the children and youth that we served increased in numbers. No longer were they just “Sunday morning attendees” but children who had never attended a church were coming to this weekly program. We increased our hours, activities, developed more structure and began using a consistent curriculum that was faith based.

We offered a dinner served family style like church camp and moved into small group ministry so that closer relationships could be developed and fostered. As we begin our 22nd year, many of those original children are now serving as adult leaders in our program. In 1991, we had 10 children, 100% who also attended on Sunday morning and were accompanied by both parents. Twenty years later, we have 120 participants, living in the neighborhood, walking to the church independently and 95% of our children and youth make this weekly commitment to strengthen their spiritual journey by themselves without parental support.

Weekday Wonders has evolved from a “keeping children busy” to a pure outreach and evangelism tool. The church can no longer solely rely upon families covering the cost of food and supplies. Children are asked to bring 50 cents each week but no one is turned away. As new faces are welcomed there is a need for logistics, organization and implementation of this program.

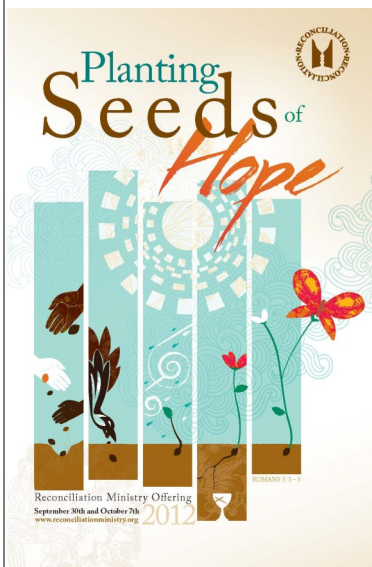
The entire church facility is filled with activity and the preparation and follow-up to make this an effective program requires time and talents of both paid staff and volunteers.

This year, Glen Oak Christian Church received a Reconciliation Grant of \$2200 to support Weekday Wonders.



## Reconciliation: Your Questions, Answered

Information from Multiple Sources



Reconciliation is a hot topic in the Christian Church (DOC), but it's more than just a buzz word. Reconciliation ministry is the effort to eliminate racism by breaking down the walls that divide us and building new communities within the church. The pro-reconciling anti-racist approach addresses both the "historic fractures caused by racism and the systems that perpetuate it." (ReconciliationMinistry.org) Through unified education, discussion and implementation, reconciliation ministry strives to bring understanding and permanent change to the Christian Church.

Every fall, a special offering is collected for reconciliation ministry. Each congregation is sent promotional materials such as bulletin inserts from the General Office. Congregation treasurers collect offerings during two Sunday services, total the funds and submit them to the Disciples Mission Fund. 50% of the region's contribution supports general Christian Church's reconciliation efforts. DMF sends the other 50% of IL-WI's total back to the region for use by the Social Concerns Committee.

This Social Concerns Committee focuses on a number of issues but primarily supports the region's Pro-Reconciliation Anti-Racism (PR/AR) Team. This team receives funding, along other equality-focused organizations, by applying for grants set forth by the Social Concerns Committee. The grants are approved on an annual basis, meaning that organizations or agencies apply yearly for funding. Applications are submitted in late fall, typically October and November.

Once the process closes in December, the Social Concerns Committee reviews the applications. At the first committee meeting of the year, they announce the recipients and release the amounts granted. Recipients must follow certain guidelines to receive the funding, including sending quarterly reports as well as providing media materials for this issue of The Christian. The publication brings awareness to the active use of funds in Disciples' communities and promotes the upcoming special reconciliation ministry offering. Primarily, it gives everyone in the Region a chance to personally understand and connect with the efforts of the recipient organizations. Though it was previously printed and mailed out, the Reconciliation issue will now be available exclusively in electronic format on the Regional website. Congregations may choose to print copies for their members or those without internet capabilities.

Current grant recipients include the PR/AR Team, focusing on pro-reconciliation anti-racism work throughout the region. The Quad Cities area Junior-High Drop-in Center provides afterschool supervision and activities that promote healthy development for at-risk youth. Glen Oak Christian Church's "Weekday Wonders" program offers children ages 4-14 faith-based activities and a meal every Thursday.

We encourage you to read more about our current grant recipients in September's Reconciliation Issue. If you know of or manage a group or organization in your area that focuses on reconciliation ministry, send them the application or encourage them to apply. The Region's PR/AR Team is also a fantastic resource for any congregation interested in deeper involvement in reconciliation ministry. You may send inquiries to the team's chairperson, Minta Colburn at [mintajean@yahoo.com](mailto:mintajean@yahoo.com). Please refer to the abbreviated timeline on page 1 that reflects a typical year's major Reconciliation highlights. If reading this publication electronically, you may follow the links below for further information:

[Grant Application and Guidelines](#)

[DMF Remittance Form](#)

[Reconciliation Ministry Website](#)