



The Christian

A Disciples of Christ Quarterly Publication



Reconciliation Sunday's Sept. 27th and Oct. 4th

Embodying the Call

Fill in the blank. "You are the embodiment of _____!"

If that expression indicates that you are the embodiment of something delightful and pleasant, it is definitely a blessing. But what if someone told you that, "you are the embodiment of Christ?" How does that make you feel? "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ."* We are the body of Christ and all of us are members of this one body. As a church body, we have been on this journey to embrace and understand an identity as a Church that is pro-reconciling and anti-racist for 20 years.

We know the meaning of this mission imperative. We understand that the reconciled Church is moving toward 'right-aligning' ourselves with each other and Christ. This journey is difficult. It is fraught with messiness and mystery. God is in all and through all in spite of our differences. We have different origin stories, different languages, different understandings of how and who to love. God remains in the midst of all of us.

When we stand with those who desire to provide for their families in an

environment that is safe and full of opportunity, we embody Christ's love for our neighbor. When we sit together over 'a cup of tea' and listen to each other's stories and dreams and commit to hold each other in the bonds of community and fellowship, we embody the love of Christ. We are the embodiment of Christ in all of our chaotic, messy reality full of joy and mystery.

Reconciliation Ministry is your mission of embodiment to love one another as Christ loves us. Your generosity fuels our granting programs, youth and young adult leadership development, and Regional and General Ministry outreach toward building beloved community through advocacy, intentional conversation and action.

Your giving enlivens our Churchwide witness and presence as the one body of Christ in the communities where we live and serve! Thank you for your generosity! *(1 Corinthians 12:12 NRSV)

On November 30, 2018 Reconciliation Ministry launched "What's the Tea, with Reconciliation Ministry." A podcast about faith and social justice and how Christians can learn about and engage in conversations that transform our communities by tearing down the walls that separate us. The podcast will be published bi-weekly and will feature conversations at the intersection of faith and social justice. <https://reconciliationministry.org/>

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3rd Quarter
Volume 2, Issue 3



Rev. Dr. Teresa Dulyea Parker

Regional Minister's Moment

Our mission; To connect and empower Disciples congregations for life-changing and life-giving ministries in our evolving world.

A Conversation on Race---George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Rayshard Brooks, Ahmaud Arbery, Elijah McClain---

In June we hosted a virtual conversation on Race with about 75 Disciples from across our region and guests. It was just a beginning. These were some of our guidelines:

- Race is a human construct that doesn't exist. Multiple races do not exist---we are one human family. Race is a lie. It was used to create a hierarchy to justify (slave holder religion/doctrine of discovery) some of the worst human actions in history including: 300 years of American slavery, and genocide of native peoples; 100 years of apartheid, and legal segregation; and the ongoing violation of the imago dei in persons of color.
- Racism is the fruit of this narrative. It denies the imago dei, the image of God in every single person. It supports the degradation, humiliation and death of persons of color, while protecting white privilege---impunity. It damages the individual soul and shalom that God wills for our life together. No one is untouched by this sin.
- We all have prejudice. We are not focusing on our personal flaws or seeking absolution for our guilt. (Though there is a great need for Lamentation, Repentance, Reparations and Forgiveness.) We will be talking about the systems that continue to inflict pain on persons of color. For example, why is the mortality gap in Chicago between whites and blacks + 9 years? or Why are the disproportionate number of deaths for Covid-19 among black and brown families? or Why Black people are 3x more likely to be killed by police, and 1.3x more likely to be unarmed compared to white people? What about mass incarceration? What is it about our systems that makes this so?
- The pain of George Floyd's execution on the streets of Minneapolis has traumatized people we love. Maybe even you.
- When we gather, we will not debate. There is no justification for the death of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Rayshard Brooks. None. We have a guaranteed right to due process under the law (The Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments). Some are awarded this, while others are denied it. We will not be distracted. We will listen. We will keep our eyes on George Floyd and the systems that perpetuate injustice for more than 8 minutes and 46 seconds.
- Dr. David Anderson Hooker (Transformative Community Conferencing) tells us "People are not the problem, the problem is the problem." Our conversation will focus on the problem and help us consider a new reality--- a Kingdom reality--- and, the steps we can take to support the indwelling of that new reality---now.
- We will seek ways to move forward together. As our General Minister and President Rev. Terri Hord Owens said in her prayer this week, "The time is now, we won't go back."

Here are some of the things we learned:

- "I learned that my concerns are shared with many. I'm not alone in what I'm thinking and feeling in terms of what we're dealing with and how to deal with it."
- "I learned that I was not alone in my ignorance and frustration."
"To be quiet and listen."

Regional Minister's Moment Cont.

- "I think I was reassured that justice is an essential part of the gospel."
- "I learned that quite a few clergy are concerned about racial injustice. Their knowledge base covers a range of awareness. Sympathy, however, does not translate automatically into change. Additional training is required."
- "Listen then learn"
- "I learned that I have a lot more to learn; that this conversation only scratches the surface, but we need to continue in dialogue."
- "I learned how to hold sacred the stories of people of color through bearing witness, active listening, naming experiences of racism as evil, and affirming these experiences as true."

As a region we have over 20 years of working to be a Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racist Church. As a denomination we have over 50 years. This is not new work. And, this is a Kairos moment. Kairos is a Greek word that means "fullness of time." Let's us not miss the opportunity to listen, learn, grow in awareness, be in community and act for God's beloved community.

We plan to offer workshops on talking about race and other difficult issues in our congregations, including in worship. We are discerning actions we might take together. In the meantime, across our region we have congregations showing up and marching peacefully in support of Black Lives Matter: Peoria, Rushville, Gibson City, Eureka, Taylorville, Chicago, Carbondale, Champaign, Bourbonnais. **#Somethingisintheir**

God's Shalom: Justice and Wholeness in Today's World Transforming the Narrative for Healing and Wholeness

Are you concerned with the news about the tragic deaths of individuals such as George Floyd and Breonna Taylor? Are you confused about how to enter the debate over the removal of the Confederate Flag or historical statues? Do you avoid certain topics. Not quite sure what to make of sermons that name systemic racism? Or are you recently learning stories of people of color that were not a part of your history classes in the past? These are some of the questions that individuals and congregations are facing as we attempt to move forward to transform the trauma of racism that has marked our nation and churches.

The Pro-Reconciliation Anti-Racism Team invites you to participate in a seminar addressed at identifying the primary narrative that supports ongoing racism in our society today. Dr. David Hooker will lead this event in which participants will be able to identify the historic and ongoing harm of racism and methods designed to engage and move congregations in the work of healing and reconciliation. ***There is no fee for this event but tickets will be issued to facilitate social distancing policies of the College.***

Please note that at this time this event is being scheduled for the campus of Eureka College. Precautions are being taken to assure the health and well-being of each participant and of our guest Dr. Hooker. These precautions will include, but may not be limited to, the following: 1) all participants are required to wear masks, 2) all participants are asked to social distance from those who have not accompanied them to the event, 3) seating capacity in the main hall will be limited to the first 50 registrants and others will be assigned alternative sights with audiovisual access to the main hall based on when they register and 4) we will have a question and answer period in which questions will be submitted in writing and shared by a single speaker with Dr. Hooker. To minimize the risk of transmission of the coronavirus there will be no reception or time for socializing after the lecture.



To assure that we may follow these guideline, no group registrations will be accepted. INDIVIDUALS must register individually. You can register for this event on the Regional Website,

<https://cciwdisciples.org/portfolio/gods-shalom-justice-and-wholeness-in-todays-world-transforming-the-narrative-for-healing-and-wholeness/>

A packet of resources to download and a ticket indicating your registration number will be emailed to you the week of September 7.



The Disciples Women's Ministry: Fall Retreat

While we all are looking forward to the day when we can gather without the concerns of exposing ourselves and others to potential health risks, today we continue to live in the shadow of growing cases of COVID 19. Out of caution and a desire to actively care for the health and well-being of our neighbors, the decision has been made to postpone the 2020 Fall Women's Retreat. Please be aware that this has been a difficult decision as we know how past participants look forward to this annual event.

Be assured that we are moving forward with plans for the 2021 event. Camp Walter Scott has been reserved for the last weekend of September, **September 24 - 26, 2021**. The theme for the event will be **INSIDE, OUT** and the scripture focus will be the book of Esther. The Reverend Mary Runge from Galesburg, IL will be our keynote speaker.

So until we can meet in person, continue to hold each other in your thoughts and prayer, be creative in how you sustain and build relationships, be open to the new ways in which Christ is calling you to live out the gospel and be Safe. We will keep you informed on how to be a part of the Women's Fall Retreat and other event hosted by Disciples Women soon.

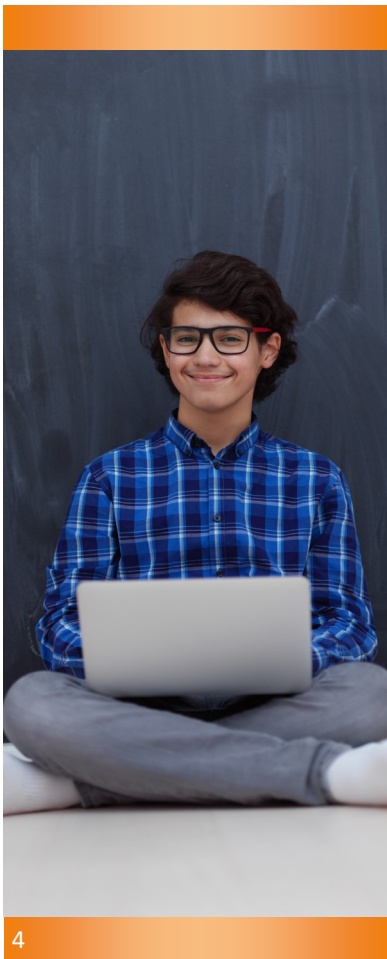
Youth Ministry: Midwinter Youth Retreat

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to approach things very differently than what we're used to. Without a doubt, it's been challenging and tiring but we're figuring things out, especially when we remain faithfully committed to building up and caring for God's kingdom. Given the uncertainty of our current situation, the Regional Youth Council has decided to hold our annual Midwinter Youth Retreat virtually in January 2021.

We don't know how our situation will change in the next few months but we want to be mindful of everyone's safety; thus, holding this event virtually will ensure that we can gather our region's youth in a faithful and safe manner. It might seem like an early decision but this will give our youth and adult leaders ample time to be innovative and be well-prepared for an event that is creative and engaging.

We will definitely miss gathering in person and we look forward to the time when we can safely see each other face to face. Until then, we are committed to using our creativity along with the technology at our disposal to create the best experience possible for our region's youth. It is something new for us but with God's wisdom and grace, we are figuring out how to do new things. Stay tuned for unfolding details as RYC continues its faithful planning work. Midwinter might look different in 2021 but it will certainly remain a moment for worship, fellowship, and spiritual growth for our youth.

On behalf of the Regional Youth Council,
Pastor Eli, Associate Regional Minister



2020 Clergy Ethics Training Update

Healthy Boundaries 201: Saturday, Nov. 14, 2020

Online Zoom Training

Rev. Rebecca Kirby, Rev. Dee Ann Woods, and Rev. Eli Rolón Jeong are presenting on Conflict Transformation Skills for Congregational Leaders using the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center Model.

All Clergy are required to attend an Ethics Training class every three (3) years Register on line: www.cciwdisciples.org Events

Deadline: Oct. 26, 2020

Cost: \$30.00

Session is from 8:30—3:30 pm



Camp News

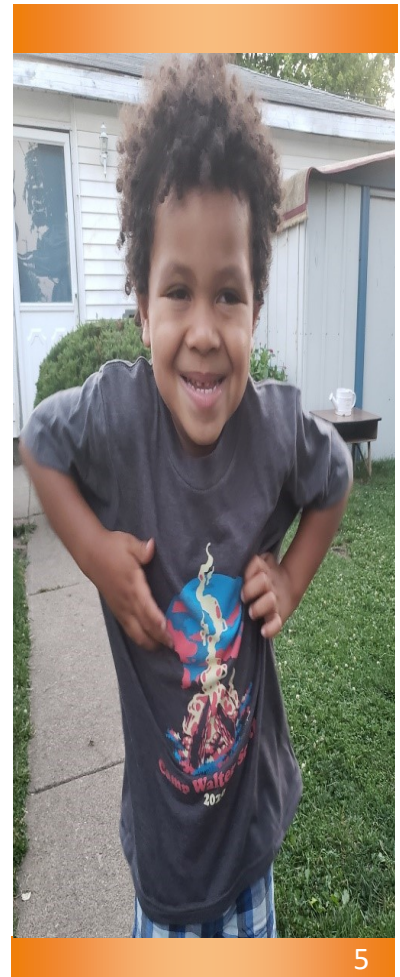
This year has been challenging for all of us. Staff and leaders at Camp Walter Scott and at the Christian Church in Illinois & Wisconsin were devastated when we had to make the ultimate decision to not hold camps this year. But even though it was a tough decision, we knew that the health and safety of our campers, visitors, and staff are of great importance.

Although we couldn't hold camp as usual, we still wanted to provide an experience of camp by bringing it home to our campers. With the help from directors, counselors, and staff, we put together Walter's Camp Treasure Box, a collection of camp-related items for our campers to enjoy. Some items were branded with Camp Walter Scott designs while others were crafts and activities focused on prayer and reflection that we normally do at camp. This was our first time doing something like this so it was difficult to predict how it would go but we are happy to say that we sold out the camp boxes that we prepared. Overall, we had positive feedback and tremendous experience.

Thank you for your support! We look forward to welcoming you in person at camp as soon as it is safe for us to do so. Peace and many blessings.

Pastor Eli, Associate Regional Minister

Pastor Eli, Associate Regional Minister



Transformation in a Pandemic? Part One

“When our whole world turned upside down...”

In this time of virus crisis, **how can we embrace transformation?** How can we even think about that when we’re just trying to keep things going – worshipping online, getting back in the sanctuary, giving pastoral care at a distance?

“**Don’t Waste a Crisis**” is what we’re being told. There is so much we can learn and do in these days.

The church we knew in the past has changed dramatically since March. We will not gather in the same way as we did before the crisis. Some of our more vulnerable friends may never set foot in the building again. We’ve lost so much. The future is not clear. How do we make decisions about the future that capture what we value most and help us to remain faithful?

And **what opportunities** have been afforded us in this time? Nearly every minister reports they are reaching many new people through their online worship experiences. Family members, former church members who moved away, strangers by every definition – we are welcoming all of them to a new kind of church family! We are being called to share the Good News in new ways with people who may not share the sanctuary with us. We have a chance to create intentional, Christian community at a safe distance. Our evangelist friends are thrilled! What does this look like in your setting to share the Good News today and what do we need to learn?

Most important is this - **Be gentle with yourself.** Explore new ways to rest and relax. Take time breathe, and more time to breathe. Spend time in quiet to hear what your soul is saying, to feel the anxiety and its source, to hear the voice of God. A regular, daily discipline of centering and listening can lead to a path that is clearer and calmer. We can prioritize our efforts for effective ministry, focusing on what is most important. We can show up for others in our congregation as steady and faithful.

Connect with others in the wider church. In the Regional church we are sharing stories and ideas. You are not alone. We are grieving together and growing together. We are exploring a hopeful future together. God joins us there and God is with us on the journey.

What does the next chapter look like where you are?

Let us know where you are and how we can be great partners with you to be the church God calls you to be. We’re here to join you on the journey and help bring all the gifts God can give.

Reach out to Scott Woolridge - scott@cciwdisciples.org

And watch for **Transformation in a Pandemic - Part Two**, coming soon!

Transformation 2020

“**Look! I’m doing a new thing; now it sprouts up...**” Isaiah 43:19

What will God do in this new season with you?

Change yourself and change the world – connect with God, with other faithful followers, with partners in your community

Where would you like to start? We can help.

<https://cciwdisciples.org/transformation/>



The Jesus Way: A New Ministry with Men from Disciples Men

Looking for a new adventure in Men's Ministries? Here you go!

The Jesus Way equips men to live life in a way that reflects the principles and priorities Jesus himself lived by. Each man is uniquely gifted by God. God established life principles and priorities foundational to realizing our giftedness. Jesus shows us the way. This ministry takes men on that journey, the Jesus Way.

This journey will enrich each man's life and the lives of those around him. Each man will rediscover God's unique purpose for his life and what active citizenship in the realm of God can mean for his life.

The Jesus Way will launch six new studies for men. Training opportunities will be offered on how best to establish The Jesus Way ministry in congregations. These resources are designed to establish/enhance a congregation's ministry to and with men.

The major developers of The Jesus Way are Greg Alexander and Alex Ruth, respectively the Director and Associate Director of Disciples Men, a ministry of Disciples Home Missions and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada.

For more information about **The Jesus Way**, click here or contact Scott Woolridge-
scott@cciwdisciples.org.

CCIW Coaches : What difference does it make?

Some might read that question with a sense of defeat or resignation. Not me!

I am constantly on the lookout for how we make a difference with the gifts God has given us. I see **our approach to Christian coaching** in that same light.

A Christian life coach is a partner for your journey, someone focused on your interests and your goals. Imagine having a resource that adds value in all areas of life – work, family, calling.

Spending time focusing on an issue or a problem, considering insightful questions, creating a plan of action. Suddenly a problem of long standing is on it's way to resolution. A new adventure has the beginning of a clear path ahead.

One recent client said, "I didn't know if it would work but I love it! I get to hear aloud my own thoughts and refine that thinking as we talk. You're helping me by listening and asking questions. You're provoking thought and there's no judgment or evaluation of what I'm saying. I get to be the judge." Coaching sessions are lively and insightful. They are biased toward action.

CCIW has a cohort of coaches ready to engage. And the first conversation is free.

Want to know more about the difference it makes? Contact Scott Woolridge –
scott@cciwdisciples.org.



What is “Healthy Congregations”? by Gretchen Barron



Healthy Congregations is really a philosophy, a way of thinking about and being “church”, and specifically thinking about and being a church leader. Through a series of workshops, which can be tailored for your specific congregation, trained facilitators, primarily pastors from the Christian Church in Illinois and Wisconsin, will meet with and guide the leaders of your church

through the concepts of Healthy Congregations. At the core of these concepts is the belief that spiritually and emotionally healthy leaders are vital in shaping, cultivating and growing a church, a congregation, that is also spiritually and emotionally healthy.

Healthy Congregations draws upon Systems Theory to step-back and take a wholistic and wide look at a congregation. Systems Theory is not new. Nearly two-thousand years ago, the Apostle Paul described the emerging church as a living system of different and varied parts that make up the whole. In fact, he even called it the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12). We know that our human bodies are made up of a complex system of parts and organs and processes that all interact with each other and work with (and sometimes, against) each other. If one organ is out of balance or diseased, it affects every other part of the system -- and so it is with the church, the Body of Christ.

Healthy Congregations seeks to build up and strengthen the leadership of a congregation much in the same way that living a healthy lifestyle builds up and strengthens the individual parts and organs of our human bodies. It’s not a guarantee that we won’t get sick, but it certainly affects the ability and speed with which we recover.

Healthy Congregations will provide the leaders of your church with a virtual tool-kit of useful skills, ideas and methods which will strengthen your congregation and promote a healthy balance and a renewed sense of purpose and mission. It is not designed for churches in active conflict. Rather, it is primarily a pro-active approach to strengthening leadership skills ... seeking to equip your church leaders with the tools, information and confidence they need so that when conflict, tension and unbalance arises (as it does in all congregations, indeed in all systems) they will have the resources within them to lead and move the congregation back toward balance and health.

What does a healthy congregation look like? Well, it’s important to remember that congregations, just like individuals are in varying stages of growing into the full potential that God has placed within us. We are indeed, works in progress. But a healthy congregation is one that is growing and reaching toward that full potential, empowering and equipping its members to do the same.

A healthy congregation is one that has skills to deal openly and honestly with anxiety and conflict and to understand and embrace them as catalysts for wholesome change and growth. A healthy congregation is one that views all of life as a gift to be received and embraced with grace and humility and to understand that we are called to be responsible and accountable stewards of those gifts as we grow in ministry and mission and reach out to become the hands, and feet and voice and indeed, the body of Christ, in our broken and searching world.

Con't. What is “Healthy Congregations”?

I join with the other Healthy Congregation Facilitators in our Region in inviting your church to consider becoming a Healthy Congregations congregation! For more information contact Scott Woolridge – scott@cciwdisciples.org

Cohort Leaders: Lynchpins for Success

If you haven't already heard, the School for Ministry is unique. Most other programs leading to a Certificate in Pastoral Ministry offer a list of courses one must take to earn the credential. By contrast, the School for Ministry is not only concerned about providing requisite academic coursework, it is also concerned about building community among our prospective commissioned ministers. To that end, the cohort provides a coach/mentor to walk with the students on their journey of growth and discernment.

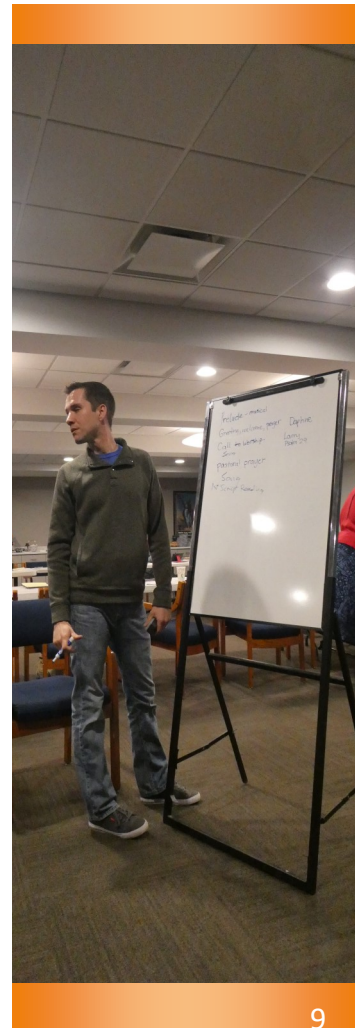
Cohort Leaders are the linchpins for success with our approach to adult learning and spiritual growth. They each serve as a mentors and guides for up to 10 students from diverse backgrounds and levels of congregational experience. Their responsibilities include helping students build supportive, collaborative, and engaging relationships to enhance their long-range success. Our cohort structure facilitates leadership development, academic growth, and spiritual formation among the students. Further, it provides the context of community where constructivism can occur. That means that the community learns and grows together. Such structure also provides mutual support to participants so that they all may endure to the end of the three-year experience. In a recent interview, the School's Cohort Leaders Melissa Ebken and April Stewart shared their insights.

In your opinion, why is face-to-face interaction important to students?

April reported that ministry can be lonely and training for ministry, while serving in other positions, can be spiritually draining. The cohort provides support, solidarity, and solace to students who are, in most situations, juggling home, career, family and church, while trying to be faithful to a call that is, at times, daunting. According to Melissa, face-to-face interaction enhances the online course experience. She noted that, when taking an online course, students can feel pretty isolated. Having the give-and-take with other students helps one to feel a part of a class, rather than merely an individual. Moreover, with the particular content in studying the Bible from an academic perspective, students may have difficulty with fitting the new information into their faith understanding. Having peers who are experiencing the same struggles has many benefits.

What face-to-face opportunities currently exist for Cohort students?

In answer to this question, April responded enthusiastically: “Thank God for digital connections!” Students in her cohort enjoy meetings, at least monthly, on Zoom, as well as the opportunity to meet with each other in smaller groups or one-on-one with Zoom. As the cohort gathers in class virtually, they miss the face-to-face interactions, thus these gatherings on a platform that provides relatively simple access become a place to check-in with triumphs and trials, questions and encouragement. Twice-annual retreats in winter and summer provide a “destination” of sorts. “We are all looking forward to seeing each other in person and being able to give each other actual pats on the back for the work being done now,” April said.



Cohort Leaders: Lynchpins for Success Cont.

Melissa meets with her cohort monthly, or as requested. She noted, “In the beginning, this was difficult to establish and attendance was poor. However, once into the content online and the challenge of it all, these face-to-face Zoom meetings became a touchstone that was looked forward to.” After spending time in the same geographical place during a summer intensive, the group grew even closer. Now, they meet online more frequently, as a cohort, and sometimes cohort members organize their own online gatherings. Plans to meet in person in a central location from time to time are considered.

In addition, cohort students enjoy other benefits from interacting with their peers. Melissa reported that one of her students is of retirement age and grew up with a very conservative understanding of biblical interpretation. She really struggled with the new content she was learning, and how she could integrate what she was learning with the faith she had built over many decades. Through the loving support of her cohort members, she was able to see that she didn’t have to throw away all she knew and all she was, but that she could build upon it. She is still in this process - as are all the other cohort members, but together they are helping, comforting, challenging, and accepting one another; loving each other into a new faith understanding.

April’s cohort is diverse in ways most of the students don’t experience in daily life. Racially, economically, educationally, theologically, etc., the students are united in a love for Jesus and the church and deeply desire to be faithful. They recognize that in each other and out of that commonality, they afford respect and encouragement to each other.

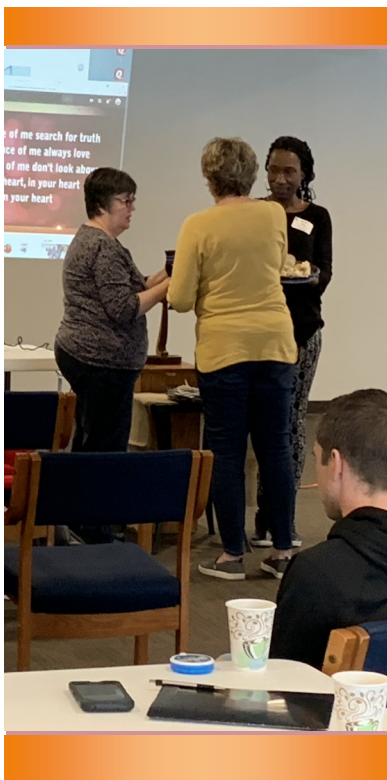
What have been some of the biggest challenges for students in the program? How have you facilitated their problem solving in these instances?

In Melissa’s group, some of the problems have been technical, figuring out online issues. She has addressed these issues by communicating with the school representative, or by referring the students to school tech support. Other challenges have been discussed above - those of faith building. Some have had questions about what a “scholarly” paper should look like, or how to address a point of view in a paper. Others have had administrative/monetary questions that are referred to the appropriate personnel. Some have reached out for individual coaching regarding vocation and call. Some just need words of encouragement.

For April’s cohort, most of the students are highly involved in their vocations apart from a call to ministry. Unlike traditional seminary students who often move to a campus and focus their efforts for a number of years, these students are answering a call to ministry while working or volunteering full-time, navigating personal challenges, caring for loved ones, etc. April finds that her job as the Cohort leader is most often to simply remind students of their calling, encourage them to persevere, name their gifts, and celebrate their accomplishments while reminding them of Whose they are.

What have been your greatest challenges as a Cohort leader?

In response to this question, Melissa said, “My biggest challenge as a cohort leader was forming a community with the students.” Melissa was not a part of the program at the beginning, when the students gathered for a retreat and got to know one another. She was brought onboard two months later, and there was a lot of confusion. She said, “We were, in a sense, ‘building the plane as we were flying’ and that was a lesson we learned.” Now cohort leaders are hired and are present from the beginning with each new cohort. April, on the other hand, said, “I am learning along with the students what kind of support they need from me. This process is one of discernment and, as is the case, with all discernment, involves uncertainty and willingness to trust each other, ourselves, and God to gently move forward in the right direction.”



Cohort Leaders: Lynchpins for Success Cont.

What has been your most gratifying experience as a Cohort leader so far?

“It has been a gift to speak-into the lives of the students, to encourage them to claim their callings, to recognize and celebrate their gifts, and to pray for and with them,” April responded. Melissa’s most gratifying experience has been “witnessing the students fly. Those moments when they achieve and overcome and I am able to celebrate with them will be with me forever.”

7. What background and training should an aspiring Cohort leader possess?

Melissa indicated, “It has been helpful to have been a pastor for many years in a congregation similar to what the students will be leading. As I face challenges in ministry, especially during a pandemic, as I ask myself how I need to be present as a spiritual leader in my community, I ask them to consider the same questions, themselves, in their contexts.”

According to Melissa, spiritual leaders are accustomed to joining in and helping out, but to be the one who assesses a situation, determines what is needed from leadership, and how to implement those actions are what is necessary from the one designated - called upon to be - the spiritual leader. She further noted, “My pastoral experiences from being a pastor during 9/11/2001, and during community tragedies have given me insight to share with them to think as a leader during the difficult and challenging times, and also the day-to-day ordinary times.” As an added benefit, Melissa also has a coaching certification, a skillset that has served her well as she coaches her students individually or as a group.

From April’s perspective, one should possess a willingness to offer oneself and to listen to challenges as well as a practice of seeing and believing the best in those to whom we have been called to serve. Mentoring training, coaching, or training for spiritual direction would be helpful. But according to April, “I don’t think it is absolutely necessary if you have a candidate who has practiced encouragement and exhortation regularly.”

What “pearls of wisdom” can you share with others who are considering use of a Cohort group structure for ministerial training purposes?

April noted that the spiritual health of those receiving training for ministry is of critical importance to the health of the churches they will be serving in the future. All pastors and ministry leaders need the support of colleagues who are not in competition but instead are willing to encourage and exhort.

The Cohort model provides this basic structure as bi-vocational students face the challenges of answering a Call while also being faithful to vocations as spouses, parents, family members, coworkers, etc. This is a template that students can use going forward that might mitigate some of the loneliness, frustration, and fear involved with serving in ministry. And Melissa’s pearl of wisdom: “Do it! Don’t wait until you have everything figured out to start, because you won’t!”

Calling All Prospective Cohort Leaders

The School for Ministry will be recruiting a cohort leader for the upcoming 2021 School for Ministry Cohort. Please stay tuned for additional details. Address all questions to Executive Director, Rev. Lorrie Reed at lorrie.cciwdisciples.org.





Now Accepting Applications for 2021 School for Ministry

Do you feel called to be a source of calm in the middle of the storm? Are you willing to be a shepherd who feeds God's people during a spiritual drought? Do you believe you have gifts for ministerial leadership?

The School for Ministry is now accepting applications for admission to the 2021 Cohort. New classes begin January 2021.

As part of a structured, 3-year program leading to a Certificate in Pastoral Ministry, the S4M can help you discern your call and develop your gifts for service in a range of congregational settings. The curriculum consists of four major components; namely, a January Spiritual Discernment Retreat, Online coursework through Phillips Theological Seminary, an Intensive Summer Retreat, and Cohort Group support.

Here is what our students are saying about this unique program:

"My experience thus far in the S4M has deepened my faith in God and enhanced my desire to be a good church leader."

"Being part of the School for Ministry is stretching me in ways that are preparing me to serve God with more confidence, knowledge and insight. I am being challenged and nurtured. I'm grateful to be on this journey. Thank you!"

"This ministry provides a tremendous opportunity for caring, compassionate individuals to explore ways to better serve those who are searching for peace and hope."

"It engages the heart and the mind in a way that inspires creativity and non-judgmental solutions to perennial problems of human interaction."

Please visit our website [CCIWdisciples.org/school-for-ministry/](https://cciwdisciples.org/school-for-ministry/) for further information, or contact Rev. Lorrie Reed, Executive Director at lorrie@CCIWdisciples.org

<https://cciwdisciples.org/2020/07/apply-now-for-the-2021-school-for-ministry-cohort/>

Self Care in a Pandemic

A timely workshop for clergy – creating a space for listening, learning and a spiritual spa.

Two sessions – September 22 & 29, 2020 – 9 am to 12 noon

Led by Al Keeney and Scott Woolridge

Self-care is truly a spiritual practice... just as important as prayer, meditation and scripture reading.

Join us to discover together:

Ways to recognize the many areas of stress in our lives and the new stresses in a time of pandemic

Ways to help in dealing with stress – methods that will work for you!

Save the dates and check our website for more information – cciwdisciples.org



Important-Illinois Mandated Reporter Changes

Effective January 1, 2020, significant changes to the Illinois mandated reporter law took effect for addressing child abuse and neglect issues. These changes are particularly important for all persons who care for children, in houses of worship, schools, and social service organizations. New training requirements apply for all mandated reporters, with clarification that all child care workers qualify as “mandated reporters.” Clergy members’ reporting obligations are now expanded, but their privilege not to report remains under certain circumstances. All mandated reporters are subject to the Act’s requirements for mandatory training.

BACKGROUND

The Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (Act) was enacted more than forty years ago and has been amended several times. (See 325 ILCS 5.) Act reflects a paramount concern for protecting children against abuse and neglect. Anyone in Illinois may report suspected abuse through the following hotline number: 800-25-ABUSE (800-252-2873).

Some people are “mandated reporters” and therefore must promptly report suspected abuse to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Mandated reporters consist of a wide variety of people who may come into contact with children, such as physicians, substance abuse treatment personnel, school personnel, clergy members, foster parents, and other child care workers. Failure to comply with mandatory reporting requirements constitutes a Class A misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class 4 felony for a second or subsequent violation.

Any child-care worker affiliated with a church, other house of worship, or other non-profit (whether in a paid capacity or as a volunteer) is now a “mandated reporter.”

Although child-care workers have long been mandated reporters, the Act thus now clarifies that volunteer child-care workers affiliated with a church or other house of worship are mandated reporters. Organizations with volunteer-heavy child-focused programs should be aware of this legal clarification’s impact on their reporting responsibilities. Volunteerism does not excuse anyone from such obligations.

Required trainings must be in-person or web-based. The trainings must be provided either through DCFS or through an organization approved by DCFS to provide mandated reporter training.

If you would like to receive information from Insurance Board via email, or someone else at your church should, please visit www.InsuranceBoard.org/ email-address and enter your information. Thank you for allowing us to be a valued partner in protecting your ministry.

DCFS’s free web-based training resource for mandated reporters is available here. Source: <https://wagenmakerlaw.com/blog/illinois-mandated-reporter-changes-clergy-child-care-workers-and-other-mandated-reporters>



Gifts to CCIW

The following churches and individuals have contributed to the 2020 mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) through the Annual Fund and Designated and Capital Gifts to Camp Walter Scott.

The Region gives thanks for the incredible support through prayers, volunteer hours and the financial support that allows ministry for children and youth, leadership development, congregational consultation, ministerial search & call, and shared mission activities to occur. **You do make a difference.**



Individuals

Eron Dupree
Frank Helme
William Chaney
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Dan and Doris Carter
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Neil and Kay Deupree
Don and Margaret Merritt
Nancy and Gene Lamport
Tommy Akers
Eugenia Griese
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Larry Pepper
Martin and Kathy Sallee
Neil and Dorothy Sallee
Nancy Pfaltzgraf
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Ken Granitz
Marilyn Walter
Scott and Vicky Woolridge
Marla McElroy

Designated and Capital Gifts to Camp

Jane Cahill
Canton First Christian Church
Arrowsmith Christian Church
Benton First Christian Church
Danville Central Christian Church
Pekin First Christian Church
Peoria Memorial Christian Church
Parkway Christian Church
Jacksonville Central Christian Church
Metropolis C.W.F. First Christian Church
Marion Christian Women's Fellowship
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Everette Hill Baptist Church
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Blue Mound First Christian Church
Danville Central Christian Church
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Lincolnshire, Community Christian Church
Lomax Christian Church
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Petersburg First Christian Church
Sullivan, First Christian Church
Villa Park Christian Church

Churches

Hoopeston First Christian Church
Long Point Christian Church
Winchester First Christian Church
Blue Mound First Christ Church
Lawrenceville First Christian Church
Champaign DoC Community Church

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Ecumenical Council of Churches in Guatemala

Pension Fund of the Christian Church

Sarah Renfro srenfro@pensionfund.org

Christian Church Foundation Representative

India Bobadilla indiab@ccf.disciples.org

FOR INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE CALL:

Prayer Concerns

Prayer Concerns:
Rev. Gretchen Barron;
Rev. Sandra Brown;
Kay Deupree, wife of
Rev. Neil Deupree; Rev.
Ray Culver; Rev. Frank
Hoss

Deaths: Marilyn Tjardes of
Gibson City FCC; Frances
Peirce, sister of Rev. Bill
Rucker; Rev. Jesse Allen
Sr., pastor of Washington
Park Christian Church;
Mary Allen, pastor of
Washington Park Christian
Church; Rev. Neil Sallee;
Jane Keeney, sister-in-law
of Rev. Canon Al Keeney
and Rev. Dr. Teresa Dulyea
-Parker; Rev. Julie Asbell

Pastoral Changes: Rev.
April McClure Stewart to
ministry at Memorial
Christian Church, Peoria;
Rebecca Kirby to First
Rushville as Interim; Amy
Booker-Hirsch to New
Mexico to begin ministry
as a Chaplain; Zach Martin
to Carlock Christian
Church; Jamie Kent to First
Paris; Mark Parkinson
from Interim Paris to
Indiana

The Annual Fund

Our Regional church is committed to high quality partnership with local congregations, providing ministry services not available elsewhere – helping congregations in times of crisis, providing camps for our children and youth, helping congregations call their next pastor, joining in global ministry together. We invite you to support the Annual Fund and join us as partners in life-changing ministry!

One way to show support in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in IL & WI's Mission is through a donation to our Annual Fund. Gifts to the Annual Fund enable us to grow Disciples congregations for healthy vital ministry!

Your support is appreciated



Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in IL & WI *Growing Disciples congregations for healthy, vital ministry.*

- Yes! I believe in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in IL & WI's Mission and I want to help!
 Enclosed is my gift to the Annual Fund \$100 \$250 \$500 Other

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Congregation _____ City _____

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