The Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM) continues to live into its mission “to receive and share the Good News of Jesus Christ by joining with global and local partners to work for justice, reconciliation, and peace.” 2022 was filled with transitions that created opportunities for realizing the more significant potential for mission in the 21st century and beyond. Partners continue to participate in transforming ministries that support local and global communities. Despite facing various challenges related to climate and environmental justice and areas of operations, partners remain optimistic. DOM continues to accompany partners in humanitarian relief efforts due to natural and human-made disasters and in response to economic challenges, the refugee crisis, and emerging challenges during the global pandemic.

After nearly three years of working from home, the Division of Overseas staff returned to the 1099 North Meridian Office building on a hybrid schedule on September 6. The staff is in the office two days a week. Staff resumed travel in June, marking a renewed opportunity to be physically present with partners. In these travels, staff are connecting with overseas personnel and witnessing how Global Ministries' accompaniment has been helpful to the partners.

In 2022, Krista Johnson Weicksel was called to be DOM’s Vice President for Administration and Programs. Also in 2022, DOM adopted the following logo:

The logo shows moving waves representing DOM's active connections around the world, collaboration with international partners and local congregations and regions, pathways to peace with justice, the movement of the spirit and a focus on the Disciples chalice.

Africa
The global pandemic continues to affect the African region. Following the sixth wave, the number of COVID-19-reported new infections and deaths on the continent declined to its lowest levels since the onset of the pandemic. However, at the end of 2022, there was a five-week increase in new coronavirus cases. In Africa, as in the rest of the world, mask mandates and travel restrictions have been lifted. Health officials continue reiterating that Africa must remain vigilant with COVID-19 vaccinations and strategies to control infection. The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), World Health Organization, and other multi-sector partners have led major initiatives on vaccine acquisition and production on the continent. According to the WHO, only three countries have vaccinated more than seventy percent of their populations, and four have vaccinated fifty percent. This is far from the projected 2022 global goal of preventative measures for seventy percent of the people. Therefore, partners continue to collaborate to achieve equitable access to COVID-19 testing, vaccines, and medications and carry out programs
to dispel myths and misconceptions about COVID-19 vaccines to increase vaccination rates on the continent.

The United Congregational Church in Southern Africa (UCCSA) held its 41st General Assembly in Gaborone, Botswana, from September 22-27, 2022. The Assembly voted to extend the UCCSA’s mission into Malawi and unanimously welcomed the Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola (IECA) into UCCSA’s membership. On December 6, 2022, IECA welcomed its first delegation of UCCSA church leaders to Angola as a UCCSA member church. The delegation’s visit was the first of ongoing exchanges that will take place over the next year two years to integrate IECA into the denomination. The integration process will conclude at the 2024 UCCSA General Assembly, which will be held in Mozambique.

The year culminated with several historical events. Within the last quarter of 2022, Africa experienced a recent coup d’état in Burkina Faso and a failed coup attempt in Sao Tome and Principe. In December 2022, South African President, Cyril Ramaphosa, attended King Charles III’s first state visit at Buckingham Palace as the reigning monarch. President Ramaphosa’s visit came amid calls for his resignation and possible impeachment due to allegations of corruption and failure to disclose vital information.

On November 1, 2022, Dr. Kahala Cannon began her ministry as the Global Relations Minister for Africa for the Division of Overseas Ministries and Global Ministries. Before permanently accepting this role, Dr. Cannon served as the Acting Executive for the Africa Office.

East Asia and the Pacific
September 21 marked the 50th anniversary of the onset of Martial Law in the Philippines under the former dictator Ferdinand Marcos. The anniversary was made especially poignant—and far from an abstract historical marker—by the fact that in May of this year, Ferdinand "Bongbong" Romualdez Marcos Jr., the son of the former dictator, was elected as the new President of the Philippines. Global Ministries supported two representatives to participate as election observers for an International Observer Mission sponsored by ICHRP and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines. Partners remain highly concerned about threats the new Filipino administration poses in the government's long-standing persecution of human rights defenders and civil society leaders, including church leaders.

While most regional countries are fully open to visit, some, like Hong Kong and Taiwan still have limiting COVID protocols, while China Tight travel restrictions remained in China throughout 2022. A focus has been on nurturing new partnerships with the municipal Baoshan Christian Council and provincial Yunnan Christian Council in China’s mountainous western Yunnan province. These judicatories work heavily with the Lisu, Mao, and other minority communities, providing basic ministerial preparation, public health care, and other diaconal services like drug and alcohol intervention. A special webinar with the Yunnan partners was held in November, focusing on traditional
Thanksgiving celebrations and HIV/AIDS ministries. As China’s COVID policy shifts, travel to China will hopefully resume in 2023.

In Hong Kong, this year saw the reality set in of greater socio-political control by mainland China on the Special Administrative Region, leaving ecumenical partners to navigate the parameters of the new public space tentatively. In 2022, the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM), whose advocacy and service ministries to migrants in Hong Kong were heavily supported by Global Ministries throughout the pandemic, began working more closely with another main partner, the Hong Kong Christian Council.

The Pacific Theological College (PTC) has engaged Global Ministries in supporting a multi-year process of restructuring its curricula to provide a broader array of instruction beyond theological education. A key area for expansion includes developing a new School of Pacific Philosophy that will “teach indigenous philosophical foundations, worldviews and ways of being.” Throughout 2022 Global Ministries supported various research projects at PTC that develop youth and inter-sectional engagement on climate change and related social and development issues facing Pacific communities.

Latin America and the Caribbean
Partners in Latin America and the Caribbean have been working, through 2022, mainly with the social consequences of natural phenomena such as hurricanes, earthquakes, bolts of lightning, and fires. They have been committed to assisting victims and providing their communities with first aid resources. Similarly, they have continued to serve people with other spiritual and social needs, seeking, at all times, to be those “wounded healers.” Hope and solidarity in this "Abya Yala" or Great Homeland reborn from pain and brokenness through participation and mutual healing through each other's sorrows.

In 2022, Cuba dealt with two major disasters. The first was an accident in the first weeks of August. A fire set off by a lightning strike at an oil storage facility raged uncontrollably in Matanzas. Four explosions and flames left one dead, injured nearly 121 people, and 17 firefighters missing. Then, on September 27, Hurricane Ian stormed through "Isla de la Juventud" ("Youth Island") in the south of Cuba. It also passed through Pinar del Río, a province at the west end of Cuba. Ian, then a Category 3 hurricane, hit with sustained winds of 205 km/h and gusts, also causing damage in the surrounding provinces. Much of the infrastructure, housing, agriculture, electrical, and telephone services have been devastated, and the entire country was left without electricity. For the first time, a blackout of the whole national territory caused by the effects of the hurricane added to the energy crisis that the country has been experiencing for several months. The Island has been undergoing a massive socioeconomic and health problem, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the critical energy scenario, and the proliferation of dengue in recent months. The first response has consisted in providing support to the affected people and their families, as well as evacuees with medicines, basic food, and spiritual accompaniment, all from local churches and other nearby provinces and ecumenical member organizations of the Cuban Council of Churches (CIC, acronym in Spanish).
A group of mission ministries in the US, Global Ministries included, have had conversations through the second semester of the year to assess the damages and to coordinate the aid and the accompaniment there. The Reverend Joel Ortega Dopico, CIC’s President and Global Ministries’ International Board Member, assisted the ministries with that assessment.

Nearly 80 participants from 20 US, Latin America, and Caribbean theological institutions participated in two virtual gatherings (Students Forum, January 24-25, 27-28; Women Theologians Forum, May 23-24) throughout the year. One of the main tasks of those forums was to reflect on how theological education could respond to the social challenges in the continent. They also shared contextual analysis of the social and theological realities and explored partnerships and mutual accompaniment. They reflected on ideas like personnel and student exchanges, joint programs, and other creative ways of walking together in the reflection and praxis of the theological effort of the institutions. In 2023, the process will resume its activities with a Professors Forum and a Continental Event, also in virtual mode.

Middle East and Europe
In February 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an invasion of Ukraine that quickly became a full war. The incursion has led to massive displacement of Ukrainians and non-Ukrainian residents – inside the country and as refugees in neighboring countries. Disciples and United Church of Christ leaders responded to the crisis on March 3, drawing attention to the complexity of the consequence of the war.

Two partners who have received direct support are the **Reformed Church in Hungary**, working closely with its neighbor, the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia, and the **Evangelical Church in Greece’s Perichoresis**. The Reformed Church in Hungary coordinates closely with the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia due to their historical connection and current collaboration. This relationship has allowed for direct aid provision in Ukraine through a program called “Helping the Helpers.” This initiative welcomes, hosts, and cares for thousands of internally displaced persons in western Ukraine in schools, diaconal institutions, and local congregations of the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia. Perichoresis, in northeast Greece, is providing housing and holistic care to refugees who have arrived there, including rent for a furnished apartment, utilities, food, hygiene, and COVID supplies, in addition to English and Greek language lessons, computer and sewing lessons, and psycho-social support for children and for families, all of whom have experienced the trauma of displacement. Perichoresis covers these services six months at a time. The Reformed Church in Hungary/Transcarpathia and Perichoresis have received support through Global Ministries.

Following an outpouring of concern and support during this crisis, the Disciples have responded to those in need through the ACT Alliance global ecumenical network of which the UCC and Disciples are members and bilaterally with partners in the region, which is
offering a meaningful response. Even so, the massive displacement of people and destruction of cities and properties continue to garner attention. What is often lost is the direct impact on other parts of the world, including countries in the Middle East like Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria, which rely on Russia and Ukraine for up to 80% of their grain and cooking oil imports as other staples. Due to the war and international sanctions, these imports have been reduced or cut off altogether. The war in Ukraine has compounded with struggling economies, widespread poverty, refugee migrations, and the lingering reality of the Coronavirus and its variants. It has also exposed inconsistencies in applying international and human rights laws. Our partners in various places continue to respond to needs, be they direct or indirect consequences of such geopolitics, and our engagement with partners remains robust.

Amid a debilitating financial/economic crisis, a political stalemate, and the continuing effects of COVID and the Beirut Port explosion (Aug. 4, 2020), partners remain resilient but are adapting to the contextual challenges. Among our partners engaged in life-changing ministries are the Middle East Council of Churches as well as its Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees, the Fellowship of the Middle East Evangelical Churches, the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, and Haigazian University, the Near East School of Theology, and the Forum for Development, Culture, and Dialogue (FDCD). We are pleased to be present through the appointment of mission co-workers serving in Lebanon, Nishan and Maria Bakalian (Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East and Haigazian University), and Leda Zakarison (FDCD), who have been in Lebanon since before the pandemic began and have accompanied partners in exceptional ways through this period of unexpected and exceptional challenges.

The MECC, the FMEEC, and the FDCD have also continued to respond to the needs of Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons due to the simmering war in Syria, which began in 2011. Their steadfast care for the most marginalized and forgotten segments of Syria’s population has been supported by Week of Compassion through Global Ministries.

**Southern Asia**

2022 marked a transition in Global Ministries’ Southern Asia office, with the departure of the Rev. Dr. Deenabandhu Manchala as Area Executive in mid-year after eight years of service in this capacity. The context of the region is complex, given its vast geography and immense diversity. A variety of issues present themselves in the region. The ruthless suppression of dissent, misuse of sedition laws, incarceration of scores of human rights activists, and abuse of democratic institutions have become commonplace in India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. Furthermore, those involved in advocating for human rights, social justice, environmental rights, and the right of religious minorities are also intimidated and dissuaded by many cumbersome regulations in receiving foreign funds. The challenges of neo-fascism, COVID-induced social and economic disabilities, anti-human trafficking, casteism and racism, violence against religious minorities, increased domestic violence, and further impoverishment of women, and the impact of climate change continue to be the core points of engagement with all partners and their projects.
Advocacy
The pandemic shifted the Advocacy Staff’s work to virtual gatherings, and there were some unexpected advantages to this time of working virtually. It has allowed the Associates, based in Indianapolis and Cleveland, to participate more fully in working groups based in Washington, DC, and New York City. Another welcome shift was the number of video updates received and shared from partners and the opportunity for partners to engage in virtual webinars and even virtual pilgrimages. A cornerstone advocacy event Global Ministries sponsors annually is Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD). This conference continued to be online in 2022, and the Associates are involved in planning for another virtual EAD, scheduled for April 25-27, 2023, with the theme "Swords into Plowshares: Achieving Enough for All & Pursuing Peace." In addition, the Advocacy Associates led four Quarterly Advocacy Focus campaigns in 2022 focused on: Human Rights, Israel/Palestine, Climate Justice (related to the Mission Dash Virtual 5K), and the Thursdays in Black campaign.

The DOM President, Rev. LaMarco Cable, General Minister, and President Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens, and Rev. Sheila P. Spencer, Interim President of Disciples Home Missions, signed Compelled to Witness: A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Pastoral Letter Affirming Justice, Rights, and Accountability in Promoting Peace in Israel/Palestine. From the letter: "In this time when a resolution to the conflict in Israel/Palestine seems as distant as ever, and advocacy for a particular kind of solution may not be effective, we support a rights-based approach that will ensure the rights, equality, and dignity of all people concerned, especially the most vulnerable, based on principles of peace and justice, human rights, and international law."

Resource Development
Global Ministries’ inaugural Mission Dash Virtual 5K for Climate Justice occurred in August 2022. The three main objectives of the race were:
1. Fundraising for climate justice projects of international partners.
2. Advocate for climate justice efforts.
3. Engaging with new donors/followers.
Three hundred twenty-seven individuals registered for the event, 96 of whom held their own personal fundraisers. There were 45 teams registered for the event, including regional and conference ministries, congregations, and families. There were 418 donors and 201 first-time donors to Global Ministries. All proceeds from the Mission Dash will be divided evenly among the Area Offices for climate justice projects.

Global Ministries called Jake Brooks to be the new Program Associate for Resource Development and Disciples Women. This new collaboration between DOM and Disciples Women created an opportunity for the two ministries to share staff.

Child and Elder Sponsorship
In 2022, a new Program Manager, Rev. Phyllis Richards, was hired to oversee the program after the retirement of the former Program Manager, Linda Lawrence, who had
been the administrator of the program for nearly 30 years. A Program Associate, Jane Duncan, was also hired (mid-year) to increase the program’s ability to grow -- adding more children, sponsors, sponsorship centers, partners, and opportunities to be engaged with the program.

Sponsorship centers continue to find incredible ways to make their programs better. Children and elders thrive and become physically and emotionally healthy as they are wrapped in the love, consistency, and sheer resiliency that the programs offer and teach. Children with sponsors are more likely to stay in school and complete their education, and elders with sponsors engage in their society and are able to offer their gifts to the community.

In Jamaica, young men are being helped with education through the Child and Elder Sponsorship Program and Mt. Olivet Boys Home. After graduation, some of the young men go on to attend college, but many do not. The Center wanted to help the young men learn a trade and get the tools needed to earn a living wage. This program is being developed and in 2023, will receive a grant offered by a sponsor who, after visiting Family Village Farm in India, pledged support to assist children after they aged out (at age 18) of the program. Family Village Farm will also benefit from this sponsor’s generosity. They have received funds to assist aged-out students with fees and other expenses related to getting into college.

**Mission Personnel**

Through the Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, mission co-workers are participating in ministries of critical presence worldwide. They are engaged in various ministries, including theological education, leadership development, community and development work, human rights, health, children’s, and pastoral ministries.

96 mission co-workers served in 42 countries in 2022, serving in the following categories:

- 30 fully supported mission co-workers
- 16 global service co-workers (long-term volunteers)
- 10 global mission interns
- 40 global associates

The distribution of mission co-workers by area: Africa, 12; East Asia and the Pacific, 23; Middle East and Europe, 36; Latin America and the Caribbean, 20; and Southern Asia, 5. In addition, we had two short-term volunteers due to continuing travel restrictions from COVID.

Due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus, the following people were evacuated from their sites of service: Kahala Cannon (Eswatini); Mark and Danielle Murry-Knowles (Lesotho); Andrew Larsen (Philippines); Victor and Sara Makari (Israel/Palestine).

One person was appointed to church and/or church-related institutions around the world, including ten re-appointees.
Terms varied from Fully supported, Global Service Workers, and Global Mission Interns. This distribution by area of total appointments was Africa 1; East Asia and the Pacific 4; Europe 2; Latin America and the Caribbean 3; Middle East 1; Southern Asia 0.

One Global Service Co-Worker (one year or longer) was appointed or re-appointed in 2022: Guangyu Lou, China. One global mission intern was re-appointed: Abigail Reed, Korea. Two people were appointed to the short-term volunteer program in 2022: Tracy Hughes (Senegal) and Kimberly McKerley (Zimbabwe) as short-term volunteers.

The General Board receives this report and forwards it to the 2023 General Assembly for consideration and discussion.