

GA-2501

General Ministry Report of the Office of the General Minister and President

GENERAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT

The Covenant Project – Implementation of GA-2343

The Implementation Team (IT) was tasked with developing the necessary processes and procedures to implement the Amendments to the Design approved at the meeting of the General Assembly in July 2023 in Louisville, resolution GA-2343. The IT was appointed and charged by Moderator Clyde Hunt and approved by the Administrative Committee at its October 2023 meeting. Since that time, the IT has been working to propose new Special Procedures for the General Assembly, which will be reviewed at this General Board meeting and then present for consideration at the July 2025 meeting of the General Assembly. Draft versions of the new Standing Rules to govern the General Board and Executive Committee (formerly the Administrative Committee) after July 2025 will be reviewed at this General Board. Final approval will be conducted when the new General Board and Executive Committee meet for the first time in October 2025. The Rules for the General Board and Executive Committee are approved by those respective bodies and not the General Assembly.

Having had an initial retreat in January 2024, the IT met again to share its work to date and prepare for submitting the General Assembly resolution that would offer its recommendations. The IT's task forces (General Board, General Assembly, and Communication and Technology) have worked to draft the new processes necessary to implement the changes to The Design approved in July 2023 by the General Assembly meeting in Louisville, KY. The General Board task force has held focus group discussions with both regional ministers and general ministry leaders, and both the College of Regional Ministers and Council of General Ministries have hosted leaders of the IT at their respective meetings. The Communications and Technology task force has reviewed several options for tools and platforms to help administer the roster of General Assembly delegates and General Board membership, along with a platform to support online meetings of the General Assembly.

Monthly Town Hall sessions were held online from July 2024 through December 2024 to share the developing processes with Disciples across the life of the church. After General

Board, additional Town Halls will be held to help educate Disciples for the 2025 General Assembly. Following GA 2025, there will be ongoing efforts to educate new General Board members and new General Assembly delegates on the new processes and the technology being used.

A full report of the Implementation Team will be made to the General Board at its April 5-8, 2025 meeting, along with the resolutions being submitted to officially implement the new procedures and make necessary amendments to the Design to facilitate all changes approved in GA-2343.

Church Narrative Project

As of March 1, 2025, 15 regions have participated in the Church Narrative Project. I have attended all but 3 of the sessions. Region by region, we are learning how to have honest conversations about difficult topics. Disciples are naming what they see as the problematics in the church, and together they are giving voice to what they want the Disciples of Christ to be like, feel like and act like. Along with storytelling to highlight the multitude of narratives and stories that exist among us, Disciples are finding that the power of truth-telling is necessary for the future of the church. In October 2024, representatives from the 12 regions who had participated to date gathered to share the maps of the problematic and the maps of the preferred narrative that each group had created. It was amazing to note the common themes, both in the problematics and in the vision for the preferred narrative. Realizing how strong certain threads were among so many regions gave each group new insights into the power of this work for the whole church. A more detailed report can be found below. I encourage every region to make plans to engage in the Church Narrative Project. As one regional minister shared, “Miracles happened in those conversations. I pray that the Church Narrative Project takes hold like fire across the Disciples of Christ!”

At each session, we connect the dots between the work of the Covenant Project (making changes to the General Board and the General Assembly) and the Church Narrative Project. The CNP is building capacity to have open and difficult conversations, bringing the best of us along to the future. These conversations are also reflective of the kind of dialogue that the new online meetings of the General Assembly will require as we make space for dialogue and discernment on issues that face our local communities as well as the wider church. Learning to tell the truth and learning to listen are indeed key skills we need in order to be the church we say we are.

The Proclamation Project

The first annual Preaching Retreat was held in October 2024 in Scottsdale Arizona. Nearly 100 Disciples preachers gathered to hear from preachers with a wide variety of styles and backgrounds, and to share in small group discussions about their own hopes and challenges in preaching. The event was so successful that a decision was made to make it an annual event. (The original plan was to hold only one during the life of the grant). I recently attended the Lilly conference for grantees of the Compelling Preaching grants, along with Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Lee Hull Moses. It is always important to listen to other voices and experiences, and we were excited to fellowship with other Disciples who are recipients of the Compelling Preaching grant as well.

A full report is included below, however I will note the success of the cohort groups. New cohort groups will be formed for 2026. Groups have previously focused on storytelling, media and technology, as well as language-focused groups in Spanish and Korean. Bi-vocational ministry grants were quite popular, providing small grants of \$500 for bi-vocational ministers to support continuing education, books, and plans for fellowship and rest. Such demand highlights the growing presence of bi-vocational ministers in our congregations.

General Assembly – Memphis, TN – July 12-15, 2025

All roads lead to Memphis, TN for the meeting of the General Assembly in 2025. This in-person meeting marks the last time that the General Assembly will meet under its current Special Procedures. At the close of the meeting of the General Assembly, the church will begin to operate under the Amendments to the Design as approved in GA-2343 in July 2023, along with any changes approved by the General Assembly in at its July 2025 meeting. The theme, “BEYOND” (Ephesians 3:20) invites the church to stand on its faith in the God of unconditional and limitless love who is able to do far beyond all that we can ask or think. We move forward into the future that will bring with it the embrace of new changes for the General Board and the General Assembly. While we know that change is not always easy or comfortable, we also know that it is necessary in order that we continue to live into our identity as a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world, an anti-racist church, a church for whom Christian unity is our polar star. We walk in the freedom that God alone can give to be the new church we need to be for the new world that continues to evolve each day.

Preachers for 2025 will include the Rev. Dr. Bernice King, youngest daughter of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr; Rev. Brian Kirk, Pastor of First Christian Church, St. Joseph, MO; Rev. April Lewton, Vice President of Development and Marketing, National Benevolent Association (NBA); Dr. Stephen Cady, President, Brite Divinity School. The final night of worship will feature a dialogue between me and my GMP predecessors: Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, Rev. Dr. Richard Hamm, and Rev. John Humbert. We will explore the historical arc of the church and the importance of the Covenant Project and recent amendments made to The Design as we move forward into the future that we have imagined beyond 2025.

Education and orientation for newly appointed congregational delegates to the General Assembly meetings, along with new General Board members will occur during late summer and early fall of 2025. The General Board will begin its semi-annual schedule in October 25, along with the Executive Committee (formerly Administrative Committee). The first annual online meeting with the General Assembly will occur in the summer of 2026, date TBD.

Leadership changes

In November 2024, I officiated the installation of the 15th regional minister to begin service since my tenure as GMP began. There remain 8 regions who are in search and who have interim regional ministers in place. Since the April 2024 General Board meeting, a new interim president and CEO has been called for Disciples Church Extension Fund, Rev. John Powell, and Rev. Matt Rosine has assumed the presidency of the Christian Church Foundation following the retirement of Rev. Gary Kidwell.

Regional engagement

During the fall of 2024, I spoke at the regional assembly gatherings of the Pacific Southwest Region, the Christian Church in the Southwest, and the Greater Kansas City region. I have also visited and preached at numerous congregations highlighting milestone anniversaries. Each visit has afforded me the opportunity to share with Disciples congregations and regional churches about the vision and changes that are coming to the General Board and General Assembly. Earlier in 2024, I attended the National Convocation's gathering and the Obra Hispana Assembly. I was unable to attend the NAPAD Convocation because of an invitation to be part of a gathering of interfaith leaders meeting with then-Second Gentlemen Douglas Emhoff and the Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships in the White House under the Biden Administration.

In the last year, I have facilitated regional women's retreats, and the Arizona regional clergy retreat. The regions of Illinois/Wisconsin and Michigan have chosen to merge and form a new region, the plans and governance for which will be considered at their 2026 regional assembly, at which I will preach. I continue to be an active member of the College of Regional Ministers, participating in their monthly online meetings and thrice a year in-person gatherings.

In October 2024, I preached for the installation of Rev. Cherisna Jean-Marie, the new Dean of Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt Divinity School. Rev. Jean-Marie is the first woman to serve as the settled dean of the DDH at Vanderbilt and the first person of color to serve in this role.

Ecumenical Leadership

I continue to serve as the Treasurer/chair of the Finance Committee on the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches in the US. Along with former GMP Sharon Watkins, I am serving on the Committee to plan the NCC's 75th Anniversary in October 2025. A commemorative Bible, (NRSVue) will be published by the NCC's Friendship Press. Included will be a short history of each member communion and its relationship to the NCC and the wider ecumenical movement. I am grateful for former GMPs Dick Hamm and Sharon Watkins for jointly writing the Disciples of Christ history for that Bible. As part of the audio Bible project known as the People's Book, I have recorded the Book of Jeremiah. All readers are persons of color. Each book is being released as it is recorded. I will be sharing the release date for Jeremiah as I have it.

I continue to serve as a member of the Central Committee for the World Council of Churches. The Central Committee will meet in Johannesburg, South Africa in June 2025. Recent actions by the current presidential administration have generated concerns from Christians around the world, particularly the dismantling of USAID, and the drastic reduction of funding to Church World Service. Dr. Jerry Pillay, General Secretary of the WCC, will be the guest speaker for the joint dinner of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society and Christian Unity and Interfaith Ministries during the meeting of the General Assembly in July 2025. We are delighted that he will be with us for the dinner and will also offer words of greeting to the General Assembly during our Monday night recognition of our ecumenical guests. We will once again host a reception following worship for our ecumenical guests.

As part of an ecumenical and interfaith gathering in Memphis, TN on the evening of Inauguration Day (January 20, 2025) I was asked to offer a response to the inaugural address. Several leaders of mainline Christian organizations, including the GMP of the United Church of Christ, Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, and Disciples' minister Bishop William J. Barber II also provided responses, as well as several local Memphis Disciples pastors. On Ash Wednesday, I participated in a prayer vigil and rally in front of the Supreme Court as the Repairers of the Breach and the ecumenical gathering delivered policy proposals to both the House of Representatives and the Senate, with data supplied by the Institute for Policy Studies. Each Wednesday in March and April, Sojourners, another ecumenical justice organization, is holding prayer vigils on the Capitol lawn. I offered a closing prayer at the event on Ash Wednesday.

Justice and public engagement

The General Board vote unanimously for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada to join a lawsuit to oppose an executive order that rescinds the longstanding "sensitive locations" policy which for many decades offered exemption from immigration enforcement activities at churches, schools and hospitals. We joined 26 other plaintiffs, including several Jewish and Christian organizations, denominations and groups within denominations. The legal effort is being led by the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection (ICAP) at Georgetown Law School, in collaboration with the Center for Faith and Justice at Georgetown University. The lawsuit focuses on the 1st Amendment protection of freedom of religion and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) which also guarantees freedom to practice one's religion as one chooses. The church seeks to protect the freedoms of all congregations to worship as they choose in their own spaces, serve whom they choose, and welcome whom they choose into their worship and ministry facility spaces. The suit does not state that each plaintiff is making a statement about supporting a particular immigration policy. Rather, it seeks to protect the rights of all congregations to worship and serve as they choose. If the freedom to worship without fear of intrusion or the fear of detention is infringed upon, there could be other freedoms for which churches have enjoyed Constitutional protection, such as the freedom to offer Christian education, community services, etc., which could be taken away in the future. Whether you agree or disagree on any immigration policy or approach, we believe these constitutional protections must be restored for all religious bodies.

The General Assembly has previously approved the following resolutions, with calls to action that are consistent with our stance as a plaintiff in this lawsuit:

- **GA-1723** calls the church to action and authorizes the AC to assist congregations offering sanctuary protections. See words in bold below. The whole resolution is attached.

GA-1723 ON BECOMING IMMIGRANT WELCOMING CONGREGATIONS

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in this prophetic and historic moment, the 2017 General Assembly, meeting July 8-12, 2017, in Indianapolis, Indiana, encourages the church to deepen its commitment to building unity and integration among all our Disciples congregations by issuing a call to congregations to become “immigrant welcoming congregations;” and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada and their respective Disciples ministries consider: (1) engaging in congregational prayer, listening conferences, and action around immigration policies; (2) offering mental health training and resources to immigrants and immigrant families, and to those from communities providing support and solidarity to these immigrants and immigrant families, such as clergy and other leaders;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that churches of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada seek to: (1) build solidarity between immigrant and non-immigrant congregations; (2) consider becoming or assisting congregations offering sanctuary protections to immigrants; (3) develop community protection and response models for families facing separation due to detention or deportation;

- **GA-2341** Calling the church to oppose Christian Nationalism affirms the separation of church and state, and provides authority to act boldly against policies and actions that treat the church as an agent of or vehicle for the state

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Church calls on its leaders and members to take every possible opportunity to speak out and **act boldly against Christian Nationalism**, ensuring that the love of God known to us in Jesus Christ may not be distorted by this ugly and false appropriation of our faith, but proclaimed with generosity and grace to all peoples, from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.

The church was invited to sign on as a plaintiff to secure a temporary injunction to restore protection of sensitive locations. We were advised that there was a chance that only plaintiffs will experience the benefit of the injunction if it is granted. By not signing, we risked not being able to claim protection under the temporary injunction. The suit is focused around those religious groups where groups are engaged in worship in their spaces on a regular basis and use those spaces to provide services to the community as part of their ministry. Therefore, a single ministry such as the OGMP or DOM would not be suitable plaintiffs to join the case.

Across the wider church, many Disciples, both lay and clergy have communicated their support of this action. And for those who may disagree, we again assert that the church has not taken any steps to declare a position on any immigration policy or commit any congregation to doing so. We simply seek to protect the rights of our congregations to worship and serve as they choose. The initial hearing in the suit will be held in District of Columbia federal district court on April 4, 2025.

I am personally proud of the Disciples of Christ for taking this important step to seek protection of core constitutional freedoms for all of our congregations.

Sabbatical plans

I will be on sabbatical beginning November 1, 2025, ending February 1, 2026. Rev. Yvonne Gilmore, VP and Chief of Staff and Associate General Minister will lead the OGMP staff in my absence, along with new Moderator. Cindy Kim-Hengst, who will be available for matters where moderator team input and decisions are required.

WEEK OF COMPASSION

2025 General Board Report

Kristine A. Culp, Week of Compassion Board of Stewards co-chair

Claretta Witherspoon, Week of Compassion Board of Stewards co-chair

Rev. Vy T. Nguyen, Executive Director

www.weekofcompassion.org

MISSION *As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world.*

VISION *A world where God's people transform suffering into hope.*

CORE VALUES	connection	<i>Partner with individuals, congregations, and organizations to serve the needs of the world.</i>
	integrity	<i>Honor the commitment to faithful stewardship, ensuring gifts entrusted to Week of Compassion are making the most impact.</i>
	accompaniment	<i>Embody God's grace by committing to a long-term presence with communities in need.</i>

Week of Compassion continues its critical work addressing refugee crises, domestic and international natural disasters, and global sustainable development programs focused on girls' education, women's health, and building resilient communities. Many of the programs we support through our partners have been significantly impacted by reductions in foreign aid from governments, including the U.S. and several European countries.

The post-World War II safety net infrastructures that once provided stability for vulnerable communities are beginning to erode. This shift is forcing Week of Compassion and our partners to rethink how we provide global relief when these traditional support systems are no longer in place. While the long-term effects remain uncertain, we continue to work closely with our

partners to provide humanitarian aid, refugee assistance, and sustainable development support where it is needed most.

The disruption caused by the war on Ukraine remains a major focus as we provide aid to internally displaced people and refugee families in surrounding countries. Our longstanding church partners through Global Ministries—such as Hungarian Reformed Church Aid and Hungarian Interchurch Aid—have transitioned from emergency relief to long-term integration efforts. Since the start of the war three years ago, Week of Compassion has provided close to \$800,000 in grants to partners for their critical work. In response to declining government support, Week of Compassion is working with partners in the region to develop a multi-year ecumenical strategy to ensure sustained funding and assistance.

The ongoing conflict in the Middle East has created a dire humanitarian emergency. Since the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel, the Israeli military response has resulted in massive casualties and the forced displacement of nearly all of Gaza's 2.3 million residents. Through ACT Alliance and Global Ministries partners, such as the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees and the Middle East Council of Churches, we are providing critical support to affected families.

Global forced displacement has reached a record 120 million people, driven by conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, Myanmar, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as climate-related disasters. The indefinite pause of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program and stop work orders issued to resettlement agencies have had devastating impacts on tens of thousands of refugee families in the US and internationally.

For decades, church-supported programs have played a crucial role in resettlement efforts, but recent policy changes are reshaping these systems. Refugee camps in Kenya and Indonesia—where Week of Compassion provides livelihood support—are now struggling due to cuts in U.S. State Department funding. This has forced our partners to take on emergency infrastructure support that was previously provided by the government. Week of Compassion is actively collaborating with ecumenical partners to navigate these challenges, both within the U.S. and globally.

Women's health and girls' education remain key priorities in lifting communities out of extreme poverty. In Afghanistan, our partners continue to support girls' education despite Taliban restrictions. Since the Taliban's crackdown disrupted online education programs, we have redirected funding to support Afghan refugees in Pakistan. In Pakistan, we also provide critical medical care and hygiene support for women.

Through the Office of the General Minister and President, we continue funding our partnership with the World Council of Churches, seconding Rev. Alexa Dava, an ordained Disciple, to work on health and reproductive rights for girls and women. Her work strengthens Disciples' engagement in global conversations on these pressing issues.

Week of Compassion is committed to equipping young leaders with real-world experience in humanitarian and development work. In 2025, in collaboration with Higher Education and Leadership Ministries (HELM), we will:

- Send young Disciples to the World Council of Churches' Global Ecumenical Theological Institute and Central Committee meeting as Stewards, providing opportunities to engage with global faith leaders, particularly from the Global South.
- Support three seminarians this summer in a ten-week internship with our partners in disaster recovery efforts in Pakistan and the Philippines.
- Work with HELM undergraduate fellows to engage them in global justice issues during their studies.
- Support 10 seminarians in year-long engagement with our global partners, including an immersion program overseas to learn from churches responding to crises firsthand.

A particularly exciting partnership is the Arizona Disciples Border Initiative, a collaboration with the Arizona Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This program provides essential support to asylum seekers through local partnerships, a shelter on the Mexico side, and educational experiences about border communities. However, with the current administration's ban on asylum applications, the program faces significant challenges. Local Disciples and regional leadership are exploring new ways to continue serving these vulnerable communities despite policy shifts.

As climate change intensifies, the frequency and severity of natural disasters continue to rise. FEMA reports alarming 2024 statistics surrounding the US:

- 108 disaster declarations (Major Disasters and Emergencies), averaging one every three days (compared to the 30-year average of 67).
- 90 Major Disaster declarations related to weather events—nearly double the 30-year average of 55 per year.
- 137 million people (41% of the U.S. population) lived under a Major Disaster or Emergency Declaration in 2024.
- 267 out of 366 days had at least one active Major Disaster incident, meaning disasters were ongoing for nearly 73% of the year.

Potential FEMA funding cuts would severely impact long-term recovery efforts, as FEMA plays a crucial role in repairing infrastructure and supporting disaster response. While the full implications remain uncertain, Week of Compassion is actively working with partners to strengthen collaboration and ensure effective disaster response.

To bolster disaster preparedness and response efforts, we have established key partnerships:

- Great River Region: Created a Regional Disaster Response Coordinator, with Rev. Ronny Nowell leading training efforts and strengthening response capacity.
- Kentucky: Partnered with Second Christian Church of Mayfield to establish a Disaster Response and Resilience Coordinator, filled by Tineka Fitzgerald, to support congregations and local response networks.
- Puerto Rico (ICDCPR): Established a Stabilization Community Coordinator, held by Julio Benito Cabrera, to enhance local recovery efforts, coordinate volunteer teams, and train churches for disaster response.

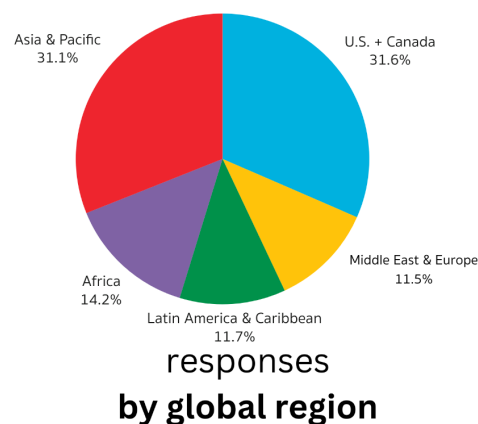
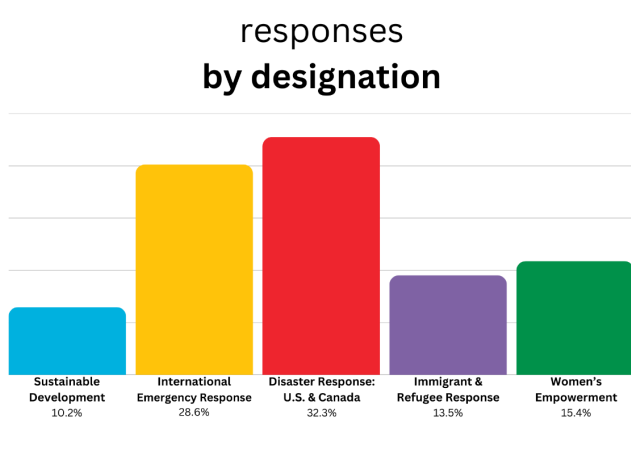
Week of Compassion is deeply grateful for the generosity of Disciples who entrust this ministry to carry out the church's mission of relief, refugee assistance, and sustainable development.



As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world.

In 2024, Week of Compassion provided \$3.1 million dollars in response grants.

Every gift enables partners to transform suffering into hope.



For the first time in our history, investment and endowment returns fully covered our administrative costs and more in 2024. This means that 100% of all donations—both designated and undesignated—go directly to our partners for mission, providing critical support where it is needed most.

Week of Compassion prioritizes long-term recovery efforts, working with partners to implement multi-year funding strategies that maximize impact. Research shows that nearly most of all disaster-related donations are received within the first 4–6 weeks after a major event, but by month six, donations have almost entirely stopped. This reality underscores the importance of planning sustainable recovery efforts that extend beyond the immediate crisis.

As global crises continue to evolve, our mission remains steadfast: to bring relief, resilience, and hope wherever it is needed most. We will continue strengthening partnerships, equipping faith communities, and adapting our strategies to meet the pressing needs of our time.

Report to the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Center for Faith and Giving
Prepared by Rev. Melissa R. St. Clair
March 26, 2025

Generosity is a source of deep joy. Perhaps it's not surprising then that serving as the Minister for Faith & Giving and as the Executive Director for the Center for Faith & Giving is also joyful!

The ministry of the Center for Faith & Giving has been in a period of transition over the past two years as the first Minister for Faith & Giving, Rev. Bruce A. Barkhauer, shared his intention to retire in 2024. A celebration of his full and vital ministry was held in August 2024, and members of the CFG Board of Stewards shared the following:

“We have so appreciated the ways Bruce has invested himself in inviting us into a faithful understanding of stewardship, and we are looking forward to the ways this ministry will continue to grow and impact the church under new leadership.” - Rev. Jill Cameron Michel, CFG Board of Stewards Member & Search Committee Chair

“We are so grateful for Bruce's leadership in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). His enthusiasm and dedication to the CFG is inspiring. We wish him well in his retirement and the next adventure God has in store for him.” - Rev. Tanya J. Tyler, Chair of CFG Board of Stewards

Thanks to the wisdom and discernment of the search team, the dedicated leadership of the Board of Stewards, and the generosity of the retiring Executive Director, this transition has been as smooth and effective as possible. Our new director, Rev. Melissa R. St. Clair, began her tenure on August 28, 2024.

Opportunities & Challenges

In many ways, the ministry of the Center for Faith & Giving has continued on its faithful trajectory. Our new Executive Director is grateful to have been invited to keynote at recent regional assemblies and events and to provide educational resourcing to regions and congregations. We continue to review and develop free resources that are available on our website. We are currently working with four congregations in our fee-based program, Generosity Plus, and anticipate adding at least three additional congregations before the end of 2025. We will partner with Cultivating Generous Congregations again this year. We remain deeply grateful for the generous and steadfast support of the Christian Church Foundation, and the ways they invest in our shared ministry.

In other ways, we are expanding our partnerships and our means of communication. We are very excited to announce in the coming months a new partner in developing our annual Stewardship Theme Materials. (We will continue to work with the United Church of Christ in producing and marketing these materials.)

We are strengthening our presence on social media, seeking to practice what we preach: We have a story that's worth of telling about what God is doing through our ministry! According to Meta metrics, we went from 0 views from January 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024, to 22,861 views since September 1, 2024. (Please follow, like, and share our content on Facebook and Instagram!)

We will launch a quarterly email in the second half of this year that will help connect people to the scope of our resources and share stories of generosity from across the life of the church.

We will travel to Toronto in May to be with the leadership team of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada and to meet with our stewardship counterparts in the United Church of Canada.

We anticipated a deficit in our operating budget in 2024 due to the cost associated with leadership transition. That came to fruition, with both our expenses and our income coming in under budget. As Disciples Mission Fund giving continues on its current trajectory, we must make up that difference through our fee-for-service program, Generosity Plus. We anticipate expanding this offering to the United Church of Christ through an initial grant from their Office of Philanthropy to support the participation of three UCC congregations in the Indiana-Kentucky Conference.

We have been meeting with denominational leaders in multi-cultural contexts to imagine how we can make our existing resources more inclusive and culturally relevant. Our Executive Director has also sought to meet with each regional ministry personally to learn more about the needs, challenges, and opportunities for mutual support and partnership between CFG and the regional expressions of our church.

Goals & Prayers

In 2025, we seek to meet in-person as a Board of Stewards in conjunction with the 2025 General Assembly. We have a strong board that combines the experience of members who are completing full terms and the insight of members who are serving for the first time. Additionally, General Assembly will afford us the opportunity to connect with more people one-on-one, develop additional social content, and present in two workshops.

By the end of 2025, we anticipate having six congregations actively engaged with Generosity Plus, which will allow us to more fully explore onboarding an additional Generosity Coach. (In 2024, we grieved the loss of Rev. Janet Long, who faithfully served in this role prior to her unexpected death.)

We will continue to enhance and add value to our annual Stewardship Theme Materials, incorporating feedback from both Disciple of Christ and United Church of Christ congregations. We will also seek sponsors for the development of these materials, which will allow both greater access to this resource and result in increased revenue.

We would covet your prayers for our creativity in working towards financial sustainability for this ministry, for congregations receptive to Generosity Plus, and for a spirit of generosity and a generosity of spirit to steep our current national and global realities and discourse.

Thank you for your support of the Center for Faith & Giving and for your personal commitment to leading generous lives in response to our most generous God!

Insurance Board

RE: 2024 General Board/General Assembly Report

Dear Reverend Owens:

Pursuant to the request of the Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP), I am pleased to provide the report of the United Church Insurance Association (dba Insurance Board) in support of our Recognized Ministry Partner status with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The past several years have proven extremely challenging for churches trying to navigate the commercial property and liability insurance marketplace. A veteran religion writer, Bob Smietana, noted in an article in July 2024, “How a Perfect Storm Sent Church Insurance Rates Skyrocketing.” Also, a February 2024 *Business Insurance* article was titled, “Property Insurers Strike Down on Churches.” A convergence of factors has created challenging conditions in the property and liability insurance marketplace, particularly for churches. Despite the turmoil, Insurance Board has continuously provided insurance solutions to members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) community since 1991, and are now celebrating our 40th year of incorporation.

At year-end 2024, Insurance Board provided insurance to 576 Disciples of Christ churches all across the country, representing a 5.3% increase over 2023. Given the dislocation in the insurance marketplace, it is very possible that, without Insurance Board, many Disciples of Christ churches would struggle to find adequate property and liability insurance for their ministries. Insurance Board has regularly attended events such as National Convocation and General Assembly, and continues to support Global Ministries through annual gifting. There are currently three Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) representatives on our board of directors including Rev. Dr. LaTaunya Bynum, Belinda King, and Rev. John Powell (newly appointed to replace Rick Reisinger who recently termed off of the board).

Our relationship with our churches is one based on Covenant. Covenant obligates us to support and protect participating Disciples of Christ congregations through the provision of insurance products and facilitated access to risk mitigation resources. Covenant also obligates our participating churches to work with us in taking the necessary steps to protect their ministries, people, and property. In 2024, Insurance Board paid out more than \$4.2 million dollars in property claims for Disciples of Christ churches, or roughly 26.6% of all property claim dollars spent. Since 2015, Insurance Board has paid out more than \$41.6M of property claims for Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) churches affected by the unexpected financial consequences of insurance losses. Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) churches that do not purchase insurance through us may still access risk mitigation resources we provide (the bulk of which are at no cost to them) through our website at www.insuranceboard.org/safety-central. We offer these services because our overarching goals are to make churches safer places for ministry, and to serve our churches in a way that preserves their ability to serve God.

Despite much of the noise being raised today about DE&I, Insurance Board remains committed to the principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In fact, we are increasing our DE&I efforts around our workforce (people), workplace (environment), and our marketplace (our forward-facing activities). Our work also extends to our board of directors, including intentionality around our vendor pools. Insurance Board utilizes a socially responsible investment policy which is identified on the “About Us” page of our website under “Who We Serve” in keeping with the principles of the denominations with whom we work.

Should there be additional information that you require of us, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly. We remain grateful for the relationship we maintain with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

In the spirit of Covenant,



Timothy Harris, CPCU
President & CEO

Insurance Board

CHRISTMOUNT CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

Christmount is the national conference center for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denomination. Located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina, the mission of Christmount is to provide a place for all to discover community, acceptance, and purpose.

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Leigh Ann May, Guest Services Director
Jeremy Hopkins (Moderator), North Carolina
Rev. Megan Huston (Vice Moderator), Kentucky
Rev. Beth Thomason (Secretary), Alabama/Northwest Florida
Gordon Hamlin (Treas.), North Carolina
Gwen Myers (Asst. Treas.), North Carolina

Report for the year 2024:

2024 was a year for the books. On September 27, 2024, a small storm named Helene sat atop the mountains of western NC, dumping more than 30 inches of rain within two days. The saturated ground along with the 80-mile-per-hour winds brought down thousands of trees and washed out hundreds of roads across the area. More than 400 roads were closed in western NC, 200 people had to be rescued, and over 100 casualties were reported.

In addition to serving as a camp & conference center, Christmount is situated in the midst of a neighborhood consisting of 90 private homeowners, providing water, trash, and road services to the neighborhood. Christmount was without power for several weeks and without clean water for a month. No casualties or significant injuries were reported at Christmount.

Christmount sustained an estimated \$2million in damages, including six roads completely washed out, a dozen roads compromised, multiple landslides, four buildings with water & mud damage, dozens of broken water lines and sewer lines, loss of the playground, and destruction of significant portions of our nine hiking trails.

As of the writing of this report (6-months post-Helene), and with the help of many volunteers, we have made significant progress in the rebuilding process. Two temporary bridges have been built, all affected buildings have been cleaned, the majority of trees have been cleared, and the water system has been restored. Projects remaining include construction of six bridges, repairs to seven roads, reconstruction of the hiking trails, and restoration of the creeks and streams. Much of this work will be completed with the help of groups attending a Service-Learning / Disaster Recovery trip in 2025. All summer camps and other programs are fully operational and expected to take place this year as normal. We are grateful for the financial, physical, and spiritual support from the regions, churches, and individuals across the denomination.



Disciples Peace Fellowship 2025 General Board Report

submitted by Rev. Brian Frederick-Gray
Director of Mission Support & The Peace Intern Program

At Disciples Peace Fellowship our mission statement says we are “**Living Out the Gospel Imperative for Peace and Justice!**” We bring this mission to life by embracing three verbs that compel everything we do: Equipping, Connecting, and Advocating.

We **equip** individuals, congregations and organizations to pursue peace and justice work through education, support, and collaboration.

We **connect** people and organizations who share in the work of fighting injustice and oppression throughout the world while working for peace.

We **advocate** for positive change in the world and walk alongside those who are working for peace and whose voices have been ignored for too long.

In the summer of 2025 Disciples Peace Fellowship will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Peace Intern Program! The Peace Intern Program was born in the aftermath of the Vietnam War when Disciples leaders asked the question, “How will we develop the next generation of peace makers?” In the summer of 1975 the answer seemed plain – we will train and equip a young adult to go around the country to church camp after church camp where they will lead workshops on peace and justice. When Bruce Ervin was called as the very first Peace Intern in 1975 the program was born!

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Peace Intern Program it is worth remembering the initial impetus for its creation – This was not simply about staffing church camps. In 1975 church camps were the obvious places to reach youth and young people. The program was born for more than just camps and conferences though. The Peace Intern program was about developing the next generation of peace makers. To that end, DPF continues to modify, reshape, and evolve the Peace Intern Program to meet the current challenges in the world while keeping our primary focus on that founding ideal – Developing the Next Generation of Peace Makers.

To accomplish this goal, the Peace Intern Program has grown into a Hybrid Model. This was first developed during the COVID-19 impacted summer of 2020 when all of our church camps were closed and our three Peace Interns spent their time as “Ambassadors for Peace and Justice” by working remotely in partnership with other Peace and Justice Ministries. Even once church camps were reopened in 2021 and Peace Interns were able to serve in-person with youth and young adults at camps and conference we still built in Remote Work Weeks in order for Peace Interns to work collaboratively with partner. In the last several years those partnerships have continued to grow and in recent summers Peace Interns have worked directly with local congregations, spent time serving with Be The Neighbor at their mission sites, and in one instance been in residency with Blue Theology for the majority of the summer. This is in addition to the Remote Work Week projects that have developed in partnership with our siblings in faith at Green Chalice, AllianceQ, the Disciples Center for Public Witness, Reconciliation Ministry, Refugee and Immigration Ministries, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Inter-Religious Taskforce on Columbia and Central America, Disciples Justice Ministries, Week of Compassion, Disciples Women’s Ministries, Disciples Men, and Disciples Home Missions.

Remarkably, in the 50 years of its existence the Peace Intern program has not missed a single summer – not for economic recessions or declining church attendance or even a global pandemic. The program continues to call, equip, and send young adults to spend

a transformational summer living out the Gospel-imperative for Peace and Justice by developing the next generation of peace makers.

In the remainder of this report you'll find stories from last summer's cohort of Peace Interns, an introduction to this summer's Peace Interns, and some of the hopes and challenges that DPF sees moving forward.

Impact

Our 2024 Peace Interns (Allison Nash, Ella Gordon, and Maggie Lewis) spent two-thirds of their time working at in-person Church Camps and one-third working with specific ministry partners outside of church camp settings. Here is a quick breakdown of Allison, Ella, and Maggie's experiences by the numbers:

- 15 In-Person Camps Attended across 11 different states and 1 province;
- Over 10,000 Miles Traveled in the name of Peace and Justice;
- 27 Denominational Ministry Leaders met with in-person or remotely over the course of Peace Intern Training Week;
- 1 Peace Intern Playlist on Social Justice created;
- 21 Blog Posts from the summer sharing real-time reflections on their experiences;
- Our first ever partnership with Be The Neighbor where each Peace Intern spent one-week on staff supporting Be The Neighbor trips at three different mission sites;
- Two Peace Interns accompanying the youth group from Allisonville Christian Church on their weeklong Mission Trip in North Carolina;
- One Peace Intern joining their HELM cohort for their Junior Year trip abroad – in this case, going to Japan;
- Peace Interns also had Remote Work Week projects serving with our partners from Disciples Home Missions, AllianceQ, and the Disciples Center for Public Witness;
- 2 new calls to ministry and one earlier call to ministry that was reaffirmed;
- 3 Amazing Peace Interns who did Incredible Work this summer!

And here is a quick rundown of some of the online resources that recent Peace Interns have created as a part of their summer experience:

- **Peace Intern Playlists** disciplespeace.org/playlists
Peace Intern Playlists allow DPF to take the social justice workshops that Peace Interns lead at camps and share them with the world. Every Playlist offers a series of resources around a specific social justice topic, and is broken down into easy to navigate sections with specific headings like "Something to Break the Ice", "Something to Watch", "Something to Talk About", and "Something to Pray."
- **"Follow the Interns" Blog Posts** disciplespeace.org/follow-the-interns
You can read all about Peace Interns' reflections on Training Week, their various roles at different Church Camps, their work with partner ministries, and their closing thoughts after the summer was completed.
- **Peace Practices PDF's** disciplespeace.org/singing-to-the-lions
For years DPF Peace Interns have been trained to use "*Singing to the Lions: A Guide to Overcoming Fear and Violence in Our Lives*." Peace Interns have also translated several of the "*Singing to the Lions*" peace practices into easy,

downloadable, one-page PDF's that folks can use with youth groups, Sunday School Classes, or as personal devotions.

Collaboration

As previously mentioned, in 2024 DPF and Be The Neighbor partnered for the very first time. This was a mutually beneficial relationship that brought further benefits to the wider church as well. On weeks when DPF had more Placement Requests than we had Peace Interns, instead of saying "No" to that in-person camp we were able to offer them a Be The Neighbor intern to serve on staff at their camp. And on weeks when Be The Neighbor needed an additional person at a mission site, DPF was able to provide a Peace Intern for that week. We also shared time together (and Trainers!) during our Training Weeks at the beginning of the summer. What's more, we are seeing our two programs cross-pollinating each other with former Peace Interns serving as Be The Neighbor Interns and former Be The Neighbor Interns serving as Peace Interns!

Additionally, DPF is proud that our Mission Director, Rev. Brian Frederick-Gray, continues to embody the spirit of collaboration by serving as one of the Co-Facilitators (along with Rev. Dr. Laurie Pound-Feille) of the Disciples Justice Ministries group. Now that Brian is serving fulltime with Disciples Home Missions (and continuing very parttime with DPF) that spirit of collaboration across the denomination has only deepened.

Challenges

COVID continues to be a very real challenge for our program. DPF has built in certain safety protocols and practices for our Peace Interns. Each summer at least one Peace Intern has had to come off the road for a recovery week after testing positive for COVID. We have also seen Camp sessions cancelled because of COVID outbreaks in or around the camp.

The changing political climate in the United States is also a challenge for the Peace Interns. Working against injustice is never easy, but is even more complex and complicated in these fraught political times. Plans are already underway to adapt certain Training Week Core Classes to address potential obstacles Peace Interns may face from individuals (campers, staff members, or even strangers at airports) who may confront them about their work for justice. While Peace Interns bring a spirit of compassion, empathy, and community-building they are also addressing difficult and sometimes uncomfortable justice issues.

Opportunities

DPF is using this 50th Anniversary Year to celebrate the past work of the Peace Interns and to pave the way for the future of the program. We have contracted with Ben Saunders (a former Peace Intern!) of Adelia Media Company to create a new video resource that will share stories about the mission and ministry of the Peace Intern Program.

We have worked hard to reach out to our network of former Peace Interns and re-engage them in the work of DPF and in supporting the Peace Intern Program. One way we did this was by hosting a “Former Peace Interns Zoom Call” where they got to be the very people to find out who will be serving as Peace Interns this coming summer! From there, the previous Peace Interns were given the @disciplespeace.org email addresses of the incoming Peace Interns so that they could flood their inboxes with words of welcome, support, and blessing! We’re hoping to make it an annual tradition.

Finally, the 50th Anniversary Planning Team is working to increase financial support for the Kirby Page Endowment Fund which underwrites part of the Peace Intern Program each summer. Currently the Kirby Page Fund has enough money to completely underwrite the salary of one Peace Intern each summer...and the 50th Anniversary Planning Team is working to build that Fund up to such a level that it will underwrite the salaries of all three Peace Interns for each summer going forward! As of the writing of this report, thanks to leadership gifts/pledges received, we are already a quarter of the way to reaching that goal!

In Conclusion

I am grateful to share that the 2025 Peace Interns are Ruthie Weeks, Chrys Beckley, and Ella Johnson. They are remarkable young adults, leaders in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and passionate about bringing more peace and justice to the world. You’ll have the opportunity to meet them at General Assembly this summer in Memphis and maybe they’ll be on staff at your Region’s church camp or partnering with a Disciples Ministry that you are plugged into.

Disciples Peace Fellowship continues to be involved in the vital work of living out the Gospel-imperative for Peace and Justice. With our watch words of equipping, connecting, and advocating we are working to make a difference in this world in the name of Jesus the Christ, the one we dare declare the Prince of Peace, the King of Kings, the Savior of the World. We pray that God’s peace be with you during the General Board Meeting. Blessings!

EUROPEAN EVANGELISTIC SOCIETY

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Tony Twist, Ph.D., D.Min., President

2024 General Board Report

The European Evangelistic Society (EES), was incorporated in 1946. The Institute for the Study of Christian Origins was established in Tübingen, Germany in the early 1960s. Its purpose is to encourage and guide research in the earliest church and to focus the application of that research on the church today.

The essential mission of EES in its history has not changed. It remains: To develop Christian leaders for significant service through higher learning. The vision of EES is that every nation has effective leaders of disciple-making movements who make a global impact on their churches, cultures, and countries for Christ. This vision reflects the common mission priorities of the Disciples of Christ as a movement for wholeness that welcomes all to the Table, and fulfills the last command of Jesus – “. . . as you are going, make disciples of all nations immersing them into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching obedience to all that I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).

The mission of the EES is focused on this concern of leadership development necessary to realize the Four Priorities of the Church as outlined in the 2020 Vision of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The EES views its priorities in terms of developing Christian leaders and future Christian leaders for significant service, especially among international students who gravitate to the University of Tübingen for theological studies. EES staff and partners provide practical assistance, counsel, and hospitality when students and visiting scholars arrive on site in order to establish relationships. This initial assistance is complemented through prayer, fellowship, and studies as students become more involved.

Through the Institute for the Study of Christian Origins in Tübingen, Germany, the EES is actively involved in promoting research and publication. This mission expresses itself in three primary areas of ministry:

- To develop international leaders through advanced studies,
- To assist emerging leaders in research and publication of relevant articles, books, and other materials in their respective global settings,
- To help encourage the establishment and development of churches, colleges, and agencies focused on evangelism and disciple-making.

The Institute for the Study of Christian Origins is being positioned to help develop dedicated leaders for significant service throughout Europe, Russia, Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and beyond.

The educational ministry at The Institute for the Study of Christian Origins, currently led by Director Dr. Dennis R. Lindsay, continues to function alongside the Protestant Faculty of Eberhard Karls University in Tübingen, Germany. The Institute has a long and productive relationship with the prestigious and influential University. The influence of this ministry has been felt all over the world, as international students and scholars have come to Tübingen for research and study. The Institute promotes research, offers colloquia throughout the academic year, organizes international symposia every three or four years, provides highly specialized library resources in Early Christianity, and engages in continuing dialogue with scholars and students from around the world.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS The English-German Colloquium in New Testament (offered in partnership with Prof. Michael Tilly from the Protestant Faculty) The English-German Colloquium (EGC) in New Testament is increasingly popular. The EGC meets weekly throughout the academic year and serves as a forum for visiting professors and scholars to present research work in progress. The EGC also provides an opportunity for doctoral students to present their work (dissertation proposals, a chapter from the dissertation, conference papers, etc.) and to receive feedback. Moreover, it offers an opportunity for scholars at all levels—master's students, doctoral candidates, post-doctoral fellows, and professors—to meet and to discuss current research with one another. The EGC continues in hybrid format (in person and online), making it possible for scholars from various parts of Europe and all over the world to participate and present papers at the meetings. Participants and presenters from as far away as the US, India, South Africa, and Australia took part in the Colloquium in the course of the year.

A sampling of presentations in 2024/2025 included:

- May 2024 Edward Wong (New College University of Edinburgh): *The Samaritan Woman as a Perpetual Foreigner: An East Asian Immigrant Reading of John 4*
- July & Nov Jonathan Hirschberger (Tübingen Doctoral student): *Gebrauchsspuren in der Wittenberger Bomberg-Bibel (Venedig 1517)*
- Nov Blake Wessels (Australia): *The sacrificial cult of Jerusalem and the Romanitas of The Jewish War*
- December Prof. Hermann Lichtenberger (Tübingen): *Judaism, Messianism and Apocalypticism in David Friedrich Strauß: 'Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet' I (1835), II (1836)*

- January 2025 Annette Potgieter (South Africa): *Reflections on Spatiality in 2 Cor 7:4-16*
- January 2025 Daniel Schumann (Tübingen): *Tragedy and Myth: Recounting Adam's Fall in 2 Baruch*

Theological German and Theological English

Listed in the University catalog, these “Übungen” (exercise) courses are offered by approved EES staff in the seminar room at the Institute. **Theological German** offers non-German international students the chance to read and discuss theological texts written in German, while **Theological English** attracts mostly German students, some of whom are preparing for an exchange semester/year abroad. Both courses include readings from a rotating selection of prominent Christian authors and a variety of topics. The classes are designed to enable students to: 1) develop and hone language skills for reading and discussing theological texts in the respective languages; 2) engage in theological reflection on important topics related to biblical theology; and 3) deepen relationships with God and others. These classes, offered as they are in the University setting, attract students from both religious and non-religious backgrounds, representing a range of involvement in the local church, from pastors to nominal church members, to members of other faith traditions, to professed agnostics and atheists. A common discussion of theological texts and ideas within this circle often leads to stimulating conversations and insights about the Christian faith.

Cooperation with the Protestant Faculty:

International Symposia and Publications: In addition to the joint sponsorship of the EGC, the Institute partnered once again with the Protestant Faculty to host an International Symposium from October 6-8, 2024. Planned and executed in cooperation with Professor Michael Tilly (University of Tübingen) and Professor Loren Stuckenbruck (University of Munich) this symposium in Tübingen addressed the topic: “The Great Commandment; Das Doppelgebot der Liebe.” Dennis Lindsay is now working with research assistants of Prof. Tilly to gather and edit the Symposium papers for publication in the WUNT series (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck).

Supporting TCM International

Institute Educational Program Institute Director, Dennis Lindsay, also serves as a member of TCM's faculty. In the spring session 2024, Dennis taught the course BS 640 Missions in the New Testament with both online and in-person segments.

RESEARCH AND SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

Institute Director, Dennis Lindsay has engaged in the following activities over the past year:

Dennis presented a paper in Tübingen at the EGC in January 2024 entitled “Hypostatic Faith: Pistis as ‘Foundation’ in Hebrews 11:1.”

- Dennis presented a paper for the International Society of Biblical Literature meeting in July 2024 entitled: “The Opposite of Pistis in the New Testament.”
- In October 2024 Dennis presented the “Chi Rho Lectureship” in Eugene, Oregon, sponsored by Central Lutheran Church in partnership with Bushnell University. The series of five lectures addressed the theme: “I believe; Help my Unbelief: (Re)Discovering Faith for Moments of Crisis.” The lectures were video recorded and are available for viewing at the Central Lutheran Church website: www.connecttocentral.org (menu: ministries/chi rho lectures)
- In November 2024 Dennis provided the keynote address: “You are Christ’s Letter” for the Nordic-Baltic III Prayer Breakfast hosted in Tallinn, Estonia.
- While in Estonia in November, Dennis also delivered a special guest lecture: “The Opposite of Faith and the Rehabilitation of Doubt” at the Estonian Methodist Seminary

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PROTESTANT FACULTY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TÜBINGEN

The Institute continues to work with the Protestant Faculty on ongoing programs such as the New Testament Colloquium and on special events and projects such as the periodical international symposiums. In May 2024, EES President Tony Twist, along with Christian Witzmann and Dennis Lindsay, met with the Dean of the Protestant Faculty, Prof. Dr. Weyel, as part of our routine commitment to maintain a healthy and productive relationship with the University. Prof. Weyel was eager to learn about, and was very supportive of, the ongoing relationship between the Institute and the Protestant Faculty. She posed the leading question of how the faculty could support the Institute.

STUCKENBRUCK LIBRARY

We are grateful to Loren and Lois Stuckenbruck for their recent contribution to the Earl and Ottie-Mearl Stuckenbruck Library of several boxes of valuable historic texts. Most of these books stem from the personal library of Earl Stuckenbruck, who founded the Tübingen Institute over six decades ago. The volumes are directly related to the history and heritage of the StoneCampbell (“Restoration”) Movement and provide an important supplement to our existing collection. In our integration of these books into our library, we have created a

new section of shelving where these, along with other books related to the Stone-Campbell heritage, form a discreet collection that is easily accessible for scholars interested in the background and theology of the founders and sponsors of the Institute for the Study of Christian Origins.

HOSPITALITY

The Institute facility includes a simple, semi-private guest room for two persons (with shared kitchenette and WC/shower facilities down the hall) in order to provide overnight guest accommodation for Colloquium presenters and visiting scholars within our research network. Being able to offer this accommodation has enhanced our ability to attract students and visiting scholars outside of Tübingen to participate in face-to-face presentations. In January 2025, we 4 - 8 General Board Report have now installed an outdoor key safe to allow our guests access to the guest room if they arrive or depart outside regular office hours. Guests in 2025: Mihail Bojonka (IT support); Luke Ogden (Colloquium presenter).

EES Goals:

Develop relationships between EES and other universities to help provide access to resources and research opportunities for the growing number of graduate students needing advanced studies.

Provide doctoral mentoring, supervision, and opportunities for graduates and others through the EES networks.

Provide opportunities for ♦ Mentoring doctoral students ♦ Teaching theological English and theological German to students at Tübingen University ♦ Preparing students from Eastern Europe and Central Asia to conduct research, write, and publish quality materials in their own languages.

Conduct the German-English Colloquium in conjunction with Protestant Faculty at Tübingen University.

Although the EES does not work specifically in any one congregation, it seeks to promote the cause of reconciliation throughout the world by developing leaders who will demonstrate our commitment to the idea of a faithful, growing church that exhibits true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice. The EES seeks to be an international witness for the Christian gospel in one of the most influential theological

settings in the world. In keeping with the original vision of the European Evangelistic Society, the goal is to see churches thriving and flourishing throughout the world by equipping capable leaders to serve.

The EES is characterized by a deep and abiding interest in the oneness of the Body of Christ. The original purpose of the organization was to create a channel through which it might cooperate in accomplishing the divine mission transmitted to the Church through the New Testament, and that its fraternity in this cause should be recognized as a fellowship for advancing the Christian mission. That interest has not changed with the years of ministry. The European Evangelistic Society is one of the few ministries among Stone-Campbell churches that has historically sought to work among all three streams of the American expression of this ideal. For over half a century, the dream of a united Church, bound by its commitment to the New Testament as the revelation of God about the person of Jesus Christ, has been the unchanging focus of its mission.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH SERVICES

Christian Church Services (CCS) is the umbrella corporation that coordinates the shared services of the Disciples Center including coordination with building ownership and management, phone system, reception, insurance, and other facilities related matters. The board of Christian Church Services is comprised of the heads of the ministries which lease space in Disciples Center. It meets twice a year.

CCS contracts with the OGMP and Treasury Services to provide bookkeeping, management, and daily operations. In 2023, some of the ministries in Disciples Center have come back to the office nearly full time, though most continue to work on a hybrid schedule.

The CCS board continues to explore possibilities for decreasing costs to ministries given new office space realities, including considering subleasing office space. A three-year sublease agreement for a small private office space on the 7th floor began in July of 2023. CCS renegotiated the operations agreement with the OGMP for 2025.

Todd Adams served as board chair in 2021-2022; Gary Kidwell served as the chair in 2023-24 until he retired in October 2024. Todd Adams began serving as chair at that time. Yvonne Gilmore serves as staff liaison, John Goebel manages finances, Inga March serves as front desk receptionist, and other OGMP staff provide additional support.



Reconciliation Ministry 2024 General Board Report

"Reconciliation Ministry advances the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)'s journey toward wholeness by strengthening each expression of the Church to implement structural change to address historic fractures caused by racism and the systems that perpetuate it."

Overview

Reconciliation Ministry advances its mission through three key programmatic areas: **Fund Development, Granting, and Education**. Below is a summary of our activities, impact, and current challenges in each area.

Fund Development

In 2024, receipts continue to demonstrate incremental increase, although have not exceeded our pre-pandemic. Levels. In light of this reality, we have stewarded existing funds responsibly and with great care, leaning on our complimentary funds including our annual funds and interest from our permanent funds. We continue to seek new and creative avenues for donor engagement and growth.

This year's budget reflects our deepened commitment to sustaining our annual fund campaigns. These funds are essential to the ongoing success of our programmatic components, particularly the **granting** initiatives that lie at the heart of our ministry's outreach and impact.

Granting

This year, we are excited to highlight two impactful grants made possible through a combination of donor gifts and grants funding:

- **Partnership with Bright Divinity School – Center for Theology and Justice**

We launched a new partnership with Bright Divinity School to support the Center for Theology and Justice. We are enthusiastic about continuing this collaboration and are actively working with them to co-author grants that will extend their efforts to prepare leaders for activism—

grounded deeply in theological understanding. Reconciliation Ministry was pleased to participate in their opening colloquy, which brought together scholars from diverse theological backgrounds to explore pathways for lay and clergy engagement in social justice activism.

- **Racial Justice Summit – Greater Kansas City Region**

For the second consecutive year, we funded the Racial Justice Summit in the Greater Kansas City Region. We value this ongoing partnership, which also includes support for their seasonal devotional video series during Lent and Advent. These resources continue to be a powerful tool for spiritual reflection and social engagement across the church.

Education

Reconciliation Ministry exceeded its projected number of education events in the first quarter of 2025 year over year from 2024. Request in the first quarter of 2025 exceed 50% more than the entirety of events facilitated in 2024. This presents opportunities for expanding our cadre of facilitators, as well as, curriculum offerings. Highlights of 2024 include:

- Certification of **four new trainers**, with **two additional trainers pending certification** at the regional level, who will provide Level One and Level Two anti-racism education in their respective regions.
- Addition of **one new core trainer** to our national training cadre.
- Establishment of **quarterly gatherings** for anti-racism educators and regional anti-racism team leaders, providing opportunities for collaboration, sharing of best practices, and ongoing resource development.

Opportunities for the Ministry

As we look to the future, Reconciliation Ministry sees significant opportunity to:

- Expand our **donor base** by engaging new givers and re-engaging past donors with transparent communication and clear outcomes from their investment.
- Develop **strategic grant-writing partnerships** that strengthen our collaborative initiatives and ensure sustainable funding for justice-focused, theologically based education and community engagement.
- Build **wider educational networks** that embed anti-racism practices and training more fully into the fabric of our Church—across regions, congregations, and affiliated organizations. This work includes development of a Disciples-centric curriculum.