



Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia **NEWS**

Volume 45, Issue 1

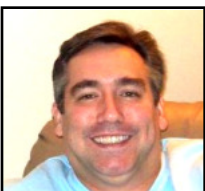
Spring, 2011

Midwinter Joy!

The Word on the Street: Conversations with God's People was the theme for the youth gathered at Cedar Lakes Conference Center, Feb. 11-13 for Midwinter Youth Retreat. About 80 youth, post-high and adult participants were engaged with scripture and life application in creative ways by Rev. Kevin Snow, Associate Regional Minister for Youth and Young Adults and Pastor of Central Christian Church in Huntington, who facilitated the retreat. There were deep discussions and powerful worship, but also plenty of joyful interaction and fun at this annual event.



Photos by: Janie Maitland, Paul Cox, Rachel Arrick, David Chafin



As the faithful have gathered,

the body of Christ has been made known.

How interesting it is that the church has been given the image of "body" as a way for us to know and understand ourselves. Bodies are beautiful and complex. They have many moving parts that are distinct, and yet must work together.

Bodies are adaptable and can move in ways that we might never expect. Bodies experience joy and yet at the same time can feel the effects of pain and brokenness. Bodies are the recipients of healing grace, and are capable of offering grace in so many wonderful ways.

All of these things are subtle and not-so-subtle signs that bodies are alive!

The church, the body of Christ, manifests these signs in many ways. We are alive for the glory of God. We exist to make visible God's grace in the world. We are beautiful and complex. We know we are nothing apart from the other parts of the body.

We are flexible and can move into action—into ministry—quickly, and yet we often suffer and cause others to suffer. Still we can offer grace, forgiveness, and peace because at the heart of it all, we are alive.

In Christ we live and move and have our meaning. What a body! Beautiful, complex and God's.

Love,

WITH OUR CONGREGATIONS

Beckley: First (*Don Snyder, Pastor*) - Elder/Deacon workshop held in Nov. Youth prepared 35 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child and to host Day of Pancakes for Disciple's Men projects.

Bethany: Memorial (*Scott Thayer, Pastor*) Church Christmas Dinner was held on December 19. Window restoration work continues. www.bmcdisciples.org

Charleston: United (*Steven Smith, Pastor*) Christmas Caroling was Dec. 12. Worship leader training was held in Jan. www.uniteddisciples.org

Fairmont: Central (*Joshua Patty, Pastor*) Lincoln Sunday celebration was Feb. 20. The Blue Angel Team is sponsoring a regular monthly prayer group. web.centralchristianfairmont.org

Huntington: Central (*Kevin Snow, Pastor*) A service of Remembrance and Hope was held Dec. 15. Installation of new elders, deacons and officers was held Jan. 23-
www.HuntingtonCentral.org

Huntington: Madison Avenue (*Jamie Gump, Pastor*) At the Harvest Dinner, 22 new members were honored. Children's Christmas program was Dec.19. Teacher's Appreciation Day was Feb. 20.

Logan: First (*Kenny Hardway, Pastor*) Weekly Weds. Luncheons are planned during Lent for the community. Church picnic and worship at Chief Logan will be May 15. www.LoganDisciples.org

McMechen: First (*Rodney Hubbs, Pastor*) Good Samaritans hosted Valentine Dinner for wives. Church to host ecumenical Lenten service and luncheon.

Morgantown: First (*Richard Howard, Pastor*) New adult studies are being offered by the pastor during Sunday School. Congregation participated in several Advent-time outreach activities. www.MorgantownWVDisciples.org

Moundsville: First (*Mike Eskridge, Interim Pastor*) Church Planning Day well attended. Family Fun Night held in Jan. Sweetheart Dinner was Feb. 13. www.MoundsvilleDisciples.com

New Martinsville: First (*Vic Hunter, Pastor*) 270 children received Christmas gifts through church's effort. Care packages sent to students and military. Dinner celebration on Jan. 9 thanked Jayne Chafin for her ministry to the church. nmfcc.com

More in right column...

Gratitude

The Regional Church has been the recipient of many gifts for the Christmas Offering, Annual Fund, All Saints Fund, the William B. Allen Fund for Ecumenical Ministry, the Margaret A. Green Fund, and the Tad Fitzsimmons Fund for Youth Ministry.

We want to better express our gratitude for your support of these funds, and better utilize our publication space in the **News** throughout the year. Therefore, we will be publishing an

Annual Gifts Report.

early in the next year, to recognize donors and to lift up the work of each of our funds.

Other upcoming issues:

New Member Recognition

will be included in our Summer issue (please send us names of all who joined your congregation since June 2010), and be sure we have addresses for them all.

The Big Issue

In the Fall will highlight the many ways in which the Region works with congregations and ministers.

Next News Deadline:

June 15, 2011

WEST VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) NEWS
Published by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia, in the interest of Christ in the West Virginia Region.

Phone: 304-428-1681 Fax: 304-428-1684

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Joel A. Potts, III—Men's Coordinator

Jayne L. Chafin
Search & Call Assistant

Pamela Reed
Receptionist

WITH OUR CONGREGATIONS

Parkersburg: First 14 attended youth lock-in. Two baptized on Christmas Eve. Angel Food ministry continues. Homeless ministry supported by women. www.movpdoc.org

Princeton: First (*Bill Pollack, Pastor*) The choir and youth held Christmas programs. Installation Service for Rev. Pollack was Feb. 6. The first Souper Chili Cook-off huge success. www.PrincetonDisciples.org

Proctor: Proctor (*Mark Crow, Pastor*) - 50 attended the Living Christmas Tree near-Columbus. Church bought Christmas presents for 3 REM residents. Food and friendship baskets were given in the community. Annual chili dinner success. Sent 7 kids and counselors to Midwinter.

Weirton: First (*Kevin Bowers, Pastor*) Mark Mayer, of Island Christian Church preached Nov. 28. Sponsoring Haitian children continues. Sweetheart Dinner and "Man Dinner" held Feb. 24. www.WeirtonDisciples.org

Wheeling: First (*Bonnie Thurston, Pastor*) Christmas Luncheon and Caroling was Dec. 19. The search committee has been selected and has begun their work. New Website: www.fccwheeling.com

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Upcoming Events

March

- 5 Regional Board
- 9 Ash Wednesday—*Lent Begins*
- 11-13 Ministers & Mates Retreat
- 13-16 Men's Lenten Gatherings
- 15 Commission on Ministry
- 18-19 Women's Cabinet Meeting
- 21 United Methodist Dialogue
- 25-27 Gen. Conference of Disciples Men
- 28 Roman Catholic Dialogue

April

- 5 Commission on Ministry
- 17 Palm/Passion Sunday
- 24 Easter Sunday
- 30 Women's Spring Gatherings begin

May

- 1-4 Women's Spring Gatherings
- 2-3 Scott Lectures - at Bethany
- 10-12 NIRF Assembly
- 16 United Methodist Dialogue
- 28-29 Madison Avenue Centennial

June

- 4 Regional Board
- 12 Pentecost Sunday
- 12-17 ChiRho/Junior Camp
- 15-17 Kid's Camp
- 19-25 CYF Conference

Access the regional calendar for the latest at www.WVDisciples.org



**Report of the
Regional Minister to the
General Board**

Feb. 26—Mar. 1, 2011

OUR STATEMENT OF MISSION

Our Calling

Through the grace of God, the mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia is to glorify God by sharing the gospel and love revealed to us in and through Jesus Christ. As people of God we are called to model faithful servanthood and live in the covenant that binds the Church of Jesus Christ together in all of its manifestations.

Our Identity

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia claims and affirms its Appalachian heritage and values in light of the Christian gospel. God continues to bless us as a Region with dedicated leaders, faithful stewards and a variety of human, spiritual and physical resources.

Our Purpose

God calls and directs the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia to empower its members and congregations

- To make disciples
- To grow spiritually
- ◆ To develop leaders.

In order to

- Engage in ministries of love and reconciliation
- To acknowledge sin and oppose evil
- To promote Christian unity
- ◆ To minister together in worship, community and mission.

The West Virginia Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) seeks to be faithful to God and to our mission in a variety of ways. 42 congregations and Bethany College share ties that bind us one to another as church. Additionally we serve with and along side of our brothers and sisters of the faith through churchly endeavors such as the West Virginia Council of Churches, the oldest state council of churches of which we are among the major participants. In 2010 we finished the year with a financial surplus and have several congregations leading the way for the denomination in matters of stewardship. Our assets are over one and one half million dollars. The region has a long tradition of

receiving an annual audit. We continue in assisting our congregations in fiscal matters. We currently have five congregations engaged in the search and call process. We shared in a wonderful assembly in Weirton, WV in the Spring of 2010.

We seek to facilitate “wholeness in a fragmented world” in a variety of places and ways. Our primary roles, caring for congregations, caring for the ministers of the church, and being the body of Christ in this locale all seek to bring wholeness, health, life and peace to the ones and the one we serve.

We have sought to offer wholeness to our congregations through a variety of ways and at different points of their lives. We are present with our congregations, in our teaching office, doing studies on a variety of topics. We are doing ministry in times when congregations become conflicted. We are present as congregations seek to find a way forward faithfully, and we are facilitating wholeness when pastoral transitions and search and call are happening.

We seek wholeness within and among the clergy of the church. Certifying standing, receiving and nurturing candidates for the Order of Ministry, interpreting new policies and criteria, providing Buffalo Seminary and being pastoral at all times is indeed “wholeness” business. When ministers present reason for care, our staff and Commission on Ministry are ready to work. And we most certainly rejoice in the good and grand things of ministry that are ever present in our diocesan life. This is a good place to serve in ministry.

We still hold fast to our calling to be a leader in the ecumenical movement. Christian Unity (wholeness in a fragmented world) is still our polar star. A quick glance around the region’s life will find us in dialogue and on retreat with other traditions. We are active with the WV Council of Churches, and our local clergy can be found at ministeria all over West Virginia and Western Maryland.

We seek wholeness with our members at times of critical change. We work with young people and accompany them in ministry as they grow. We are ready and willing to be with the sick and the poor. We seek wholeness with our flock as people discern which way life should unfold. We continue to seek wholeness through Reconciliation, and with our fellowship groups. When pastoral care is called for, we give it freely to one another.

Continued, bottom of Page 8

Disciples Men's Lenten Gatherings

at 6:30 p.m.—Registration
7:00—Dinner & Worship

DISTRICTS:

- 2 & 5: **Sunday, March 13:** Charles Street Christian Church, Shinnston
- 1 & 2: **Monday, March 14:** Community Christian Church, Beech Bottom
- 4: **Tuesday, March 15:** Matoaka Christian Church, Matoaka
- 3: **Wednesday, March 16:** Central Christian Church, Huntington



\$12 includes meal
Reserve 1 week in advance
by calling the Regional Office:
 304-428-1681



Speaker: Rev. Aaron Watkins
Pastor—Bluefield First Christian Church

Disciples Women's Spring Gatherings

April 30—May 4, 2011

District III: Sat., April 30 at 11:30—First Christian Church, St. Albans
Call Pat Harris by 4/23 at 304-727-1696

District IV: Sun., May 1 at 3:00—First Christian Church, Beckley
Call the church by 4/24 at 304-252-8597

District V: Mon., May 2 at 6:00—Charles Street Christian Church, Shinnston
Call Debbie Toth by 4/25 at 304-592-5695

District II: Tue., May 3 at 6:00—First Christian Church, Parkersburg
Call Susan Arbogast by 4/26 at 304-373-3825

District I: Wed., May 4 at 6:00—First Christian Church, Wheeling
Call church (304-252-1520) or Susan Gaus (304-336-7505) by 4/27

\$10
Includes Meal



- Wonderful fellowship meal
 - Connect with area women
 - Inspiring worship and music
 - Encouraging keynote based on top selling book: **Wild Goose Chase**, by Mark Batterson.
- Order from our Amazon store.
 Visit wvdisciples.org*



Featured Speaker: **Judie Church**
 Beckley, WV

When you need books,
or any of 10,000 other items,
visit www.wvdisciples.org and
click on our **Amazon** banner.

A portion of all Amazon purchases
that begin at our regional webpage
will benefit the Christian Church in
West Virginia.



The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in West Virginia is pleased to present:

Lenten Prayerscapes

created by the Order of Ministry for 2011

You can find copies of this devotional
guide in your local church by March 6, or
online at prayerscapes.wordpress.com



Ministers & Mates

Retreat

March 11-13 Cedar Lakes

Buffalo Seminary

2011



for Continuing Education of
Commissioned & Ordained
Ministers
and Laypersons

June 20-22

Renner Visitor's Center
at the Campbell Mansion
Bethany

Other workshops and further
information available from
Rev. Dr. Larry Grimes
Office of Church Relations

2011

Oreon E. Scott Lectures

May 2 - 3, 2011, at Bethany
College. This year, our lecturer
is Rev. Bruce Epperly.

Registration opens at 8:30
a.m. Monday at the Mountain-
side Conference Center. The
day's events begin at 10 a.m.
with a greeting, followed by Dr.
Epperly's first presentation. At
Monday's Luncheon, partici-
pants will hear from Dr. James
Johnson, president of Lexington
Theological Seminary.

During free time, you can
tour the Campbell Mansion and
Old Main. Dinner will be served
at 5:30 p.m. in Bethany
Memorial Church, followed by a
worship service and sermon at
the Church.

Registration and payment at
www.bethanywv.edu.

News of the Ministry

Rev. Jayne L. Chafin has concluded 16
months of interim ministry in New
Martinsville. The congregation cele-
brated her time in their midst with
great appreciation in January.

Rev. Dr. Victor L. Hunter, formerly of
Colorado, has received the call and
begun his ministry at the First Chris-
tian Church (Disciples of Christ) in
New Martinsville. We welcome Dr.
Hunter to the Region.

Rev. Magdalyn Sebastian concluded
her tenure at the First Christian
Church (Disciples of Christ) in Whee-
ling on Dec. 31, as she and husband
Tim Graves prepare for relocation.

Rev. Dr. Bonnie Thurston of Wheeling
has been serving the congregation of
First Church since the beginning of the
year, as they seek an interim pastor.

Rev. Douglas Richardson, pastor of
the First Christian Church (Disciples of
Christ) in Cameron, was ordained at
the church on Jan. 2. He has served
the congregation since last year.

Rev. William Pollack was installed as
pastor of the First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ) in Princeton on
Feb. 6 with great celebration.

Rev. David Chafin, Deputy Regional
Minister, attended the Disciples
Development Conference in San
Deigo last month. The conference,
presented by the Christian Church
Foundation, focused on fundraising.

Rev. Rodney Hubbs, pastor of the First
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in McMechen and **Rev. X. Rae
Browning**, pastor of the First Christian
Church (Disciples of Christ) in Cumber-
land, MD, have each been granted
standing by the Regional Board as
Licensed Ministers (now to be called
Commissioned Ministers of the
church. **Services of Commissioning**
have been scheduled for Rev. Hubbs
on June 5 and for Rev. Browning on
August 7. Watch the regional calen-
dar for updates for service times.

2011 GENERAL ASSEMBLY
 JULY 9-13, 2011 NASHVILLE, TN



Tell It!

Repete yo! • ¡Dilo! • 들러 주어라!

 REGISTER NOW!

Take advantage of deepest discounts on registration and housing until **4/1/2011**
www.disciples.org/ga

Mark your calendar now:



A Gathering of Disciples Men

July 13-15, 2012 at Bethany College

Students Explore Justice

Rev. Scott Thayer, Pastor of Bethany Memorial Church and Chaplain of Bethany College, leads group of students from a Bethany J-term class called "How Can I Make a Difference" in a pilgrimage to Charleston and to the Upper Big Branch mine disaster site. The group met with others concerned with social justice issues and involved in work that makes a difference. Regional Minister Thad Allen joins the group for a photo during the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial event in Charleston.



THE ALL SAINTS FUND

CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
 IN WEST VIRGINIA

"All Saints Fund" Grows

In November, Mrs. Lois Drum, long-time member of Wheeling First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) gave a generous gift to honor the memory of her beloved late husband, Jim. This gift established the *All Saints Fund*, in which anyone can create a named memorial fund for a

loved one with an initial gift of \$25 or more. Additional gifts to any existing fund may be made in any amount.

The fund is managed by the Christian Church Foundation and the proceeds used for regional ministry. Thus far, gifts have been given in memory of:

- Madison Ann Allen
- Douglas Butts
- James D. Drum
- Margaret Ann Green
- John Grimes
- Janice Hassig
- Dr. Coleman Hatfield
- J. Thomas Higgins
- Nellie Thurman

If you have any questions, just call Rev. Thad Allen or Rev. David Chafin for more information.

Regional Minister Emeritus Gives Thanks



Dear Friends,

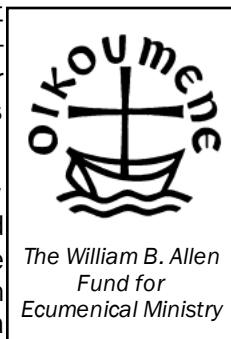
I have received the list of those who have contributed to the William B. Allen Fund for Ecumenical Ministries since it's establishment at the time of my retirement. I was honored by the action of the West Virginia Region in instituting this endowment for a cause that has always central in my ministry and which holds a primary place in our Disciples witness.

I am amazed and humbled by the scope of those who have supported this fund and the size to which it has grown significantly and is continuing to grow with regular, generous gifts throughout each year. This will certainly enable our Region to be a vital factor in the many ecumenical endeavors in which we are a partner.

I want to thank every one of my dear friends who have participated in this important undertaking. The work of the West Virginia Region has been and always will be a source of great joy and I am certainly honored that this part of our work bears my name and will continue in strength because of gifts like yours.

Thanks and God bless you.

Faithfully yours in Christ,
+ *William B. Allen*



Madison Avenue Centennial

The Madison Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has prepared a year-long celebration to commemorate 100 years of faithful service to the residents of Huntington. Madison Avenue was established in 1911 after what was said to have been one of the best revivals ever held in Huntington. The faithful congregation has continued to grow and adapt to the changes and needs of the community.

The year-long celebration began Jan. 16, with the Pastor, Rev. Jamie Gump welcoming to the pulpit Rev. Dr. William B. Allen, WW Regional Minister Emeritus who is currently serving as Regional Minister in Pennsylvania.

Centennial Celebration Guests Speakers & Activities:

- 1/16 Rev. Dr. William B. Allen
- 2/13 Rev. James H. Trader, II
- 3/27 Rev. Ray Hite
- 4/10 Kenneth Hardway
- 5/28 Rev. Thaddaeus B. Allen - Dinner
- 5/29 Rev. Thaddaeus B. Allen
- 6/19 Rev. Dr. Todd Adams - Church Picnic
- 7/24 Rev. Steven Bond - Men's Fellowship Cookout
- 8/14 Rev. Patty Chambers - Ice Cream Social
- 9/18 Rev. Martha Rucker - Disciples Women Group
- 10/23 Rev. Russell Smith - Chili Fest at Heritage Farm
- 11/20 Rev. Kevin Snow
- 12/11 Christmas Cantata - Jesus' Birthday Party



Got Spirit?

Finding God in the Everyday

Mark your calendars now for
2011 Camps & Conference:

Junior Camp *(completed 3-5):* June 12-17

ChiRho Camp *(completed 6-8):* June 12-17

Kids Camp *(completed K-2):* June 15-17


Cedar Lakes

CYF Conference *(completed 9-12):*
June 19-25
Bethany College

The Annual Fund

→
of the

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia



The Annual Fund

is a means for individuals to support
the ongoing ministries of the Regional Church.

We are grateful for your generous and faithful stewardship.
Call Rev. Thad Allen or Rev. David Chafin at 304-428-1681

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in West Virginia
1402 Washington Avenue
Parkersburg, WV 26101

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Permit # 158

Online giving through **Network for Good** may be accessed from our website: www.WVDisciples.org/support.

Regional Minister's Report, ... from Page 3

We seek wholeness in a fragmented world, first and foremost, by loving one another and loving God. This is what Christ has revealed to us, and charged us with. It is our ministry of wholeness. And in it, may all be made whole.

The priorities of the church are before us in a variety of ways. We continue to lift up the vocational nature of being a reconciling people. We participate generously in the Reconciliation offering. The church's Minister of Reconciliation was an important personality at our regional assembly. Through NIRF we participated in the Ambassador experience for young people in Washington, DC. Our work with the West Virginia Council of Churches is important in our call to dismantle racism. Finally, some important work is being facilitated through our efforts on college campuses in our region. This is a priority indeed.

We have several congregations that are modeling faithfulness (transformation per se) in many exciting ways. Their work is engaging, life giving and contextually relevant. The stories are many and we welcome the opportunity to share them.

Leadership Development continues to be a priority. In our gatherings, assemblies, meetings and workshops, we seek to recognize, call out, and support the leaders that God has given the church. In some respects this is in our DNA, and yet we are working on a couple of new initiatives aimed specifically at church leaders with an emphasis on the Spiritual Gifts that are alive and well within us. This is a priority.

We continue to grow and grow in love for one another. We give God thanks for this ministry and for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of which we are a part.

122nd

Regional Assembly

of the
Christian Church
(Disciples of
Christ)
in
West Virginia

**April 26-28
-2012-**

First
Christian
Church
Parkersburg