

# GB-2208

<b>Name of ministry:</b>	Disciples Women Ministry
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<b>Ministry Executive/Regional Minister name:</b>	Rev. Angele S Johnson
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**In what ways is your  
region/ministry thriving?**

I began serving in the role of Executive Director on August 16, 2021 and immediately felt the spirit of determination and excitement that DWM women have. Both members of the IDWM Executive Committee and many members of the Disciples Women Leadership Cabinet (DWLC) are committed to furthering the work DWM while supporting my work as Executive Director. Although the COVID-19 Pandemic brought many ministries to a screeching halt, women across regions have found ways to recuperate by employing technology as a means of connecting. Many Spiritual Journeys, retreats, Bible studies, and other events have been moved to virtual and/or hybrid platforms, which allowed for a wider audience to participate that might have otherwise been excluded.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Woman 2 Woman Worldwide (W2WWW) has been on hiatus with the last taking place in 2019. Infection and vaccination rates continue to be unpredictable in many countries causing travel restrictions around the world, including for Global Ministries. Nevertheless, I am working with Lorna Hernandez, Director of People-to-People Pilgrimage Programs, to launch 2022 W2WWW as a virtual venture. This will be a great opportunity to resume the program and introduce it to women who might not otherwise be

able to travel. In addition to the virtual W2WWW, we plan to provide several opportunities for women to participate in these programs with the first being a virtual pilgrimage to Bangladesh (January 2022). The 2022 edition of Just Women Bible Study, When Women Connect, has exceeded the previous year's total sales by 58%. The editorial board accomplished production of the study ahead of schedule and for a fraction of the cost and are already working on 2023 and I am excited to see what it will bring.

**What are the biggest challenges facing your region/ministry this year?**

One of the biggest challenges that Disciples Women faces continues to be finances. DWM continues to receive 50% of Blessing Box donations and 20% of DMF. However, as giving continues to trend downward, it is apparent that a fundraising/development strategy needs to be created for DWM that should include multiple avenues of fundraising such as events, re-branded merchandise, and a sustained donor program that includes digitizing giving mediums. Additionally, there is a growing need to begin strategizing around reimagining this ministry into something that speaks to the next generation of women. Many of the DW leaders across regions are aging and are struggling to find replacements as they seek to pass the mantle of leadership. Thus, the chasm between generations of women who have historically held the torch and those who are upcoming leaders but remain an untapped resource continues to widen. Therefore, it is critical that programs, events, and leadership opportunities are made available that pique the interest of younger women. Ultimately, in order for Disciples Women to grow and remain relevant, opportunities for creative leadership and participation must be made available to women of all ages and life stages.

**What is something you hope to accomplish in the next year?**

As I continue to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of DWM while also strategizing around how to grow the ministry stronger, I have come to understand that DWM needs to be reimaged to attract the next generation of Disciples Women. While we honor the past for the foundation laid by our predecessors, we also look forward to being transformed into an impactful ministry that speaks to the needs of women coming forth both now and in the future. Therefore, for the next year, I will be working from the theme Disciples Women: Reignite, Reengage, Reimage where I will focus on reinvigorating Disciples Women Ministries through relationship building, program expansion, and financial growth. Phase 1 will focus on the following reigniting the flame of DWM by:

- Reactivating communication mediums such as the DW Connect Newsletter.
- Having an active presence at various events on the congregational, regional, and denominational levels by myself and/or members of the IDWM Executive Committee.
- Mitigating the debt of Disciples Women Leadership Cabinet travel dues, which was created to help pay for cabinet leaders (DW presidents and regional staff) to travel to the annual DWLC Meeting.
- Creating a fundraising plan that helps to support current and future DW initiatives.
- Reevaluating what skillset is needed to fill the Program Director (merger staff) position so that the current needs of both National Convocation and Disciples Women are efficiently and effectively met.

**What is something you would like the General Board to know about your region/ministry?**

While I have only been in the seat of Executive Director of DWM a few months, it is very clear that there is still a need for a space for both lay and clergy women to claim as theirs to live out their call in this world. It is my aim to build strong working relationships with other General Ministries of the Church as well as external organizations whose work aligns with the mission and vision of

Disciples Women as a way of growing and strengthening the Disciples Women network. Although it is in a transition phase of sorts, this ministry is still a needed place for women to hit the reset button, lean into what God is calling for them to do, and manifest the compassion of Christ wherever they find themselves serving through opportunities of training and care.

**How can we pray for your region/ministry?**

Pray that new life is breathed into Disciples Women Ministries so that it is strengthened as an impactful ministry of the General Church. Pray for an increase in financial resources to help fund impactful programs as well as new, energetic person power that puts hands to the plow in doing the work that untimely uplifts, edifies, and empowers Disciple Women around the globe. Pray for me to have a divine sense of wisdom, discernment, creativity, unabashed boldness to forge ahead and as I continue to navigate my role as Executive Director of this ministry.