

# GB-2201

## General Assembly

### including the Office of the General Minister and President

#### **General Minister and President**

I am grateful to the Church for the gift of a 3-month sabbatical, November 1, 2021 – February 1, 2022. My sabbatical began immediately after the October 2021 Administrative Committee and ended just 10 days prior to the Administrative Committee and General Board meetings of February 10-13, 2022.

My time of sabbatical focused on rest as a priority for ensuring the capacity to do the work and ministry to which I have been called. “The Nap Ministry”’s leader, Tricia Hersey, offers a challenge to those who may be caught up on “grind culture”, experience mental, emotional and physical exhaustion, and often find their time totally consumed by “work”. I took seriously her advice to “get lost in the rest”, and asked for prayers in this regard from the moderator team, my staff and my regional ministry colleagues. As I return, I am re-committed to my own spiritual practices, and will be focused on ensuring that I am not consumed with just “work”, those things that are necessary but not necessarily life-saving or impactful, and that I have, indeed that I take, more time to think, dream, pray and plan.

I’ve continued to reflect and pray about how the church might broaden its vision and realm of possibilities by getting “inside God’s imagination”, a phrase used by Walter Brueggemann. 1 Corinthians 3:3 tells us that God uses things that seem foolish, complex or beyond our imagination. As I often say, if we believe God to be all-powerful, all-loving, ever-present, and that God’s love is indeed limitless, we must embrace, even chase the possibilities that are within God’s ability to deliver. As we move forward in a world in which the COVID-19 pandemic is still a reality, a society in which we continue to be divided along so many ideological fault lines, and a society in which our understanding of ourselves, and of church must continue to change, I pray that we all might pay attention to every seemingly crazy vision or idea, realizing that God is able to complete the work that God has given us to do. God’s imagination and vision for us are, like God’s limitless. So, what might the world look like if we are living into the reign and kingdom of God that Jesus taught about? To bring about that kingdom is truly what God intended through Jesus. It is possible for us to contribute to bringing that kingdom to pass. Let us be prayerful together as we consider how we can live from inside God’s imagination. More to come...

I share here important updates that were shared with the Administrative Committee in its October 2021 meeting:

On August 7, 2021, the whole church showed up for the first-ever Disciples Virtual Gathering. With the cancellation of the 2021 General Assembly, the Virtual Gathering gave Disciples from around the world a way to connect, engage, worship, and celebrate together. Fifteen hundred people registered, with more than 1,000 logging on the day of the event for bible lectures, workshops, worship, a virtual exhibit hall, and much more. A tiered registration system gave people options for paying for on-demand access to sessions after the event, paying a regular registration fee, or paying nothing at all if money was tight. The virtual exhibit hall included 48 booths from related ministries and vendors. The event was supported financially by sponsorships from general ministries and other related organizations, as well as

generous donations from individuals, and ended with a modest surplus that will be put in reserve for future General Assembly planning. While there were some technical glitches throughout the day, as a whole the event was a success that will pave the way for future virtual and hybrid all-church gatherings.

I continue to work with the subcommittees of the Governance Committee, particularly Covenant Education and the Design Alignment team. In order to help the church to develop theological groundings for the work of this committee, the Covenant Education team released a new, multi-media curriculum, "Covenant Conversation", released to the church on our website this summer. A workshop was conducted at the August 7 Virtual Gathering to introduce the curriculum and the importance of re-discovering who we are as a covenantal church. An intern is working to establish a cohort of congregations who have agreed to provide feedback on this curriculum.

The moderator team was in retreat in September in order to prepare for this new biennium. For the first time in the church's history, a moderator team is serving an additional biennium. We engaged in Bible study, reflection and discussion as we began discerning plans for a scriptural and verbal theme that will help focus the church for this 2021-2023 biennium. We also began discussing plans for General Assembly 2023. Work is in progress on materials to launch the new theme, which will be ready to share at this meeting. This retreat was followed by a retreat with the Design Alignment team. This team's further refined ideas and concepts will part of the discussion at this General Board meeting.

I attended the virtual meeting of the World Council of Churches Central Committee. The WCC World Assembly is tentatively planned for September 2022, but this will depend on the ability of all the nations who have member communions being able to meet the requirements for entry into Germany.

I have been elected as Treasurer and chair of the Finance Committee of the Governing Board for the National Council of Churches (NCC) in the US. This slate of officers is historic: for the first time in its 71-year history, the NCC officers are all female. Three of the four are Black women. It is an honor to serve in this way, as we continue our commitment as Disciples of Christ to being a strong witness for Christian unity.

In May 2021, we held a second Transforming Community Conference (TCC), led by Dr. David Anderson Hooker. We have solicited a proposal from Dr. Hooker to work across our whole church to introduce this concept as a way of infusing greater capacity to engage in truth-telling, naming and repairing historical harm, and move beyond just a training mode in our goal and value to be an anti-racist, pro-reconciling church. I believe this work is necessary to shift the narrative of our church into one that honors all of who we are and brings all voices to the table to create a future shared narrative of who we are. I have asked Rev. Yvonne Gilmore, interim Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation and Associate General Minister, and a Reconciliation Ministry core anti-racism trainer, to be the point person on this project for the OGMP. Other ministries, specifically NBA and Week of Compassion, are actively engaged in assessment of their own commitment to equity in their work, staffing, financial investments, and board engagement. Opportunities will certainly exist to leverage and connect this work as well. We hope to begin the work by the spring of 2022. This work is a continuation of my objective to evaluate the work of Reconciliation Ministry and work to uphold the church's commitment to being an anti-racist church.

Disciples Tech Corp was launched in the summer of 2021. Envisioned as a means by which Disciples with technical and creative skills can help serve congregations, there is now a Facebook page where those

with questions can get help from experts. A web page, [disciples.tech](https://disciples.tech), has also launched. Those with technical expertise can register with a profile to indicate what their skills are, and whether they offer services on a fee basis, or as pro bono work. Once we have a strong repository of skilled experts, we will open a search capability to allow congregations to search this database to connect with the expertise they need. Many thanks to Suzanne Castle and Jeff Champeau for their leadership in helping to kick it off, and to Brenda Rossy for her work to develop the website.

Disciples Under 40 is a group of young clergy who have begun to gather, with initial leadership from regional ministers Denise Bell and Joshua Patty, and support from me, Rev. Yvonne Gilmore, and Rev. Stephanie Kendell, current 1<sup>st</sup> vice moderator. This group imagines a series of gatherings to connect clergy in this age group. The goal is to provide space, support and counsel to allow this group to shape what they feel they need from the church and from each other. This is one of the most important uses of our time and resource, and I pray that the message they hear is that the church is not only listening but making space and continuing to ensure that in all the ways we engage to make decisions, we are a multi-generational church.

The General Commission on Ministry (GCOM) is leading a review of the Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry (TFPCOM). A survey was conducted inviting regional ministers and members of various Regional Commissions on the Ministry (RCOMs) to participate. Those results were shared with the College of Regional Ministers (CRM), and the CRM will be helping to lead this effort. As of January 1, 2022, the Rev. Pam Holt is the new chair of GCOM. Over the past 2 years, GCOM's Response Team has adjudicated 3 complaints against ministers whose standing is with GCOM. Of those 3, an agreed upon course of remedial therapy and training was reached with the minister in one case; in one case, the matter was referred back to the region; and in another case, the minister denied culpability, and per policy, a Formal Hearing was held. The recommendations from that Hearing were approved by GCOM and agreed to by the minister in question. A debriefing of the investigative process resulted in some clarifying instructions and language in the Misconduct Policy. That policy was updated in January 2019 to be in accordance with the work done by the Cabinet of General Ministries, in which I formed a task force to create standards for HR policies addressing harassment of various forms, including sexual harassment, assault, racial and gender bias, and other matters which can create a toxic work environment. That policy language was passed by the 2019 General Assembly, and all general ministries are required to have policies which adhere to that policy language. GCOM has now subsequently revised its policy in January 2021, and again at our recent September 2021 meeting. Online review of GCOM standing forms will happen in 2022 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row. Thanks to Shannon Pope in the OGMP for leading the effort to develop this system.

Our new Director of Communications, Cara Gilger, is working to enhance our social media strategies, including the ways in which I connect with the church and wider public through social media platforms. The "Imagine With Me" video interview series has continued, and is being received well across the church. I have enjoyed these conversations, and several have been pre-recorded and were rolled out while I was on sabbatical. I will continue to reach the church nearly every week, either in a solo video, an Imagine With Me video conversation, or a written word. I will resume the Wednesday Facebook Live Prayer with Terri on March 2, 2022, which is Ash Wednesday, a good time to refocus and reconnect. In 2022, I will re-launch the weekly clergy prayer time, moving it from Friday to Tuesday to align with more clergy schedules.

I want to express my deep gratitude and appreciation for the entire OGMP staff. They have supported the work of the church and collaborated with the moderator team ably and well in my absence.

Finally, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the whole church, in all its expressions, for the many warm expressions of sympathy, prayer and support in the recent passing of my beloved mother, Alice Harris Hord, in September 2021. My brother, sister, and our whole family are eternally grateful. The overwhelming love of the church was visible and felt by us all. Thank you!

## Communication

Over the course of 2021 the Communications Ministry continued to strengthen its digital presence in the midst of an ongoing pandemic, increasing engagement across existing and new platforms and continue to foster collaboration across general ministries.

- The continuation our four targeted emails—Disciples New Service, Disciples Together, Disciples Justice Newsletter and Dear Disciples—saw an increased open and click through rate this year.
- An ongoing video series, “Imagine with Me,” features interviews with our General Minister and President and leaders from across the church, highlighting important and innovative ministry.
- Communications Ministry worked in collaboration with Week of Compassion and the National Benevolent Association as part of the larger innerfaith work of Faiths for Vaccines to develop [a series of videos](#) encouraging people of faith to seek vaccination against Covid-19.
- In collaboration with the justice ministries across the church Communication Ministries helped develop and distribute the [Being Brave Together/Facing Brokenness](#) conversation series.
- Communications Ministry worked with the larger team to pivot from an in person gathering to hosting the Virtual Gathering in August, including developing a marketing and social media strategy to generate registration and connect registrants to a larger experience.
- In addition to continuous posting on existing social media platforms [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#), we added a social media presence on [LinkedIn](#) as well.
- This year also saw the addition of a part-time communications staff, partially filling a position that had been vacant since spring 2020. In 2022, that role will be expanded, increasing the capacity of the OGMP to communicate to, for, and on behalf of the whole church.

## Disciples Mission Fund

Disciples Mission Fund continues to be the common funding system that allows the many expressions of the church to work together. While not back to pre-pandemic levels, DMF contributions have surpassed 2020, indicating that Disciple support is still strong. Notably, gifts from individuals have increased in recent years, thanks in part to the growing success of DMF Day. It is clear that individual donor engagement, as well as legacy giving, will need to be a part of the strategy of DMF moving forward, in addition to increased congregational outreach, particularly in communities that have not been traditionally well connected to DMF. The Mission Finance Committee has also been meeting regularly to discuss Disciples Mission Fund and will offer its own report to the General Board.

# Yearbook

The final paper version of the Yearbook was produced midyear 2021, reporting on 2020. The book also included regional reports to give a full version of the pandemic effects on the church.

## **ALEX continues**

The first year of collecting Yearbook data via ALEX ended the Yearbook reporting period in April 2021 with 1,704 reports of 3,049 congregations (56%), a percentage nearly identical to March 2020 (57%). This was only possible due to the support of every regional office, and especially the regional administrative staff who fielded the calls and emails from congregations.

In addition to the Treasury Services figures feeding into the congregation records, any address updates submitted by congregations are automatically updated in the Treasury Services database.

## 2021 improvements

- ALEX feeds the disciples.org find-a-congregation feature with ALEX data so there is little delay in a congregation's updated contact information being available to potential visitors.
- Data connection from the Ministers Directory managed by Disciples Home Missions was added to provide up-to-date information in ALEX's congregational directory
- Searchable minister's directory (only ministers with standing, retired or active) available for subscribers - The clean-up of this data is ongoing, aided greatly by the regional staff.

## Statistical changes in 2021

- 8 new congregations in formation
- 1 congregation re-starting
- 5 moved from "in formation" to fully chartered
- 2 additional congregations added as existing congregations affiliating
- 31 closed
- 6 removed for inactivity
- 19 withdrawn

<b>Name of ministry</b>	Christian Church Services
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	Terri Hord Owens
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	thordowens@disciples.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	Christian Church Services (CCS) continues to serve as the umbrella organization for the ministries who rent office space in Landmark Center in Indianapolis. CCS manages shared services such as mail delivery, phone systems, and the relationship with building management.
<b>What are the biggest challenges facing your ministry this year?</b>	The biggest challenge for CCS is the ongoing pandemic, which has most ministries still working remotely and leaving most of the two floors at Disciples Center mostly empty. As ministries imagine what comes next, many are realizing that they don't need as much office space as they have. With several years left on the Landmark Center lease, the CCS board has explored the possibility of subleasing parts of its current space and downsizing office space needed for some Disciples ministries, but there are currently no concrete plans to do so.
<b>What is something you hope to accomplish in the next year?</b>	If a sublease possibility presents itself in the next year, CCS will manage the downsizing and transition. If not, CCS will continue to help the Disciples Center ministries work together in sharing resources as efficiently as possible.
<b>What is something you would like the General Board to know about your ministry?</b>	Christian Church Services has been a source of support for the ministries of Disciples Center as they have navigated through the pandemic, and provides an ongoing opportunity for collaboration and cooperation among the ministries.
<b>How can we pray for your ministry?</b>	Please pray for the courage to imagine new ways of doing the work of ministry, and the wisdom to make difficult decisions when needed.

<b>Name of ministry</b>	Center for Faith and Giving
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	Bruce A Barkhauer
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	bbarkhauer@disciples.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	<p>Sometimes, it is very hard to judge the impact you are having in ministry. We hear anecdotal reports from congregations and pastors that use our materials telling us of the success it generated, but this is hard to dashboard on a larger scale. Our peers in other denominations and institutions such as the Lake Institute point people to our resources and invite our leadership to participate in conversations about stewardship related issues as they make plans and preparations to create materials and curriculum. Our director was invited several years ago to join the Lake Institute adjunct faculty for the ECRF (Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising) and Creating Generous Congregations educational service.</p> <p>A recent review of our website metrics indicate that as many as 1,000 people/congregations each week visit our lectionary resource page which offers lectionary based worship resources at no charge.</p> <p>Our stewardship curriculum "Overflowing" (which is meant to support the Stewardship Study Document received at the 2017 General Assembly) has been downloaded over 900 times.</p> <p>The free stewardship resource page had 167 hits in December of 2021 alone, with the average length of visit being over 9 1/2 minutes. (December is our "slowest month" on the website overall, but especially for stewardship programming materials!)</p> <p>There were 237 downloads of "Created to be Steward" (free annual stewardship invitation for 2021).</p> <p>Our site generates about 8,500 hits a month. Even with a bounce rate of 50%, that means over 4,000 visits every 30 days from people who intended to visit our pages.</p> <p>The Board of Stewards is engaged in the work of this ministry and participates at a high level of financial and</p>

program support.

Our ministry is engaged in seminary education at two Disciples seminaries on an on-going basis. We have taught a course in the core curriculum at Lexington Theological Seminary twice a year for over 10 years. We recently joined the Phillips Theological Seminary community to teach in the CMLT program.

The CFG Director still thinks this is the greatest job he has ever had and loves going to work each day!

The greatest evidence however, is that we continue to study the changing landscape of stewardship and are creating ways to help congregations of all sizes grow in generosity. Workshops, web hosted events, and articles for journals and our own resource page to help churches find their way in this new terrain continue to be a priority.

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

Despite the numbers we noted above, our greatest challenge remains visibility! It continues to surprise us how many people say "We didn't know about you!" when they finally discover us. We hope that regions and general church ministries will look for ways to point to our resources and seek ways to make us more "visible" across the life of the church.

Given the way our finances are structured, I will remain imperative that the Center find alternate income streams to replace what is lost each year as DMF giving declines. Generosity Plus as a fee for service product is our best way forward to sustainability beyond DMF. It would be a tremendous help for us to have the whole church promote the availability of this program. You can learn more about it here:  
<https://centerforfaithandgiving.org/generosity-plus/>

We also continue to struggle to find more entry points for engaging Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander communities. Our efforts to find support, guidance, and participation from leaders in these constituencies remains a challenge. This remains a growing edge for us, which we are pursuing with due diligence.

**What is something you hope to accomplish in the**

Our goals this year include:

Produce stewardship materials for a late January release. This is a year round version of "From Bread and Cup to Faith and Giving and is being co-released with the

**next year?**

United Church of Christ. It will have the potential of adding \$25,000 of unanticipated income from when our 2022 budget was prepared.

Create, in partnership with the UCC's, stewardship materials for 2023, with production completed by early fall of 2022. The suggested theme is "Because of You". More details will emerge after a February meeting with our UCC counterparts.

Complete a video series on financial best practices to be released mid 2021. The design includes short, (five minutes or less) videos with downloadable PDF summaries on over 40 topics. This will be available via the CFG website.

Enlist at least 6 individual congregations in Generosity Plus service contracts, and at least one Region doing a "cadre" style GP service (Similar to our Ohio model which ran in 2018/19.)

Our new governing documents do not identify a succession/transition plan for leadership. We hope to have a plan approved and in place by our fall meeting.

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

History: The Center for Faith and Giving was created as a part of the restructure of a portion of the church's financial ministries when Church Finance Counsel was dissolved. CFC's primary mission included the promotion, receiving, and distribution of the Disciples common fund for mission (then, Basic Mission Finance) and the creation of resources that supported the general work of stewardship in local congregations. It was the recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Committee On Finance that the formula for distribution of BMF monies be "fixed", (no longer requiring expressions of the church to compete for percentages of available funds) and that components of CFC would take life in the creation of DMF Promotion (within OGMP), Treasury Services (for receipt, distribution, and accounting of funds), and an Office for Stewardship Education (which became the CFG). The Center for Faith and Giving was given the vision to "Create a culture of generosity across the life of the church" and the mission to provide resources that teach stewardship as spiritual discipline.

The present members of the General Board may not be aware that when the Center for Faith and Giving was established in 2010, it was done so with a deficit budget. Our early assessments were that the reserve fund would be fully expended before the end of the fifth year if

additional income streams were not created. In that scenario, the CFG would have not been financially sustainable after 2015. Additionally, CFG was created with the provision that the ministry would undergo an extensive review by the Administrative Committee at the end of its first five years. This evaluation would assure that the Center (and its director) was having an impact across the life of the church consistent with Center's stated goals and the expectations set by the Blue Ribbon Committee on Finance.

We now will finish our twelfth year (February 1), having completed our review process (in 2015) and been proclaimed "an ongoing and vital ministry of the church" by the Administrative Committee in that same year. It is important to note that rather than having depleted the reserve fund, it is projected to be at more than half of our 2010 starting balance at the end of 2021 (\$115,000). We have forged partnerships within the Christian Church (DoC) and collaborated with ecumenical institutions that both affirm the value of our contribution to the larger stewardship conversation and that create financial sustainability for the Center now and in the future.

Our new organizational documents (approved by the Administrative Committee in 2020) provide the CFG Board of Stewards with more autonomy to effectively oversee this ministry and to better reflect the diversity of the wider church. We report to the church through the Office of General Minister and President. Our Board of Stewards internal nominee selection process is reviewed by the General Nominating Committee regarding its inclusiveness and ability to fairly represent the diversity of the church with considerations for age, gender, lay/clergy status, race/ethnicity, and geography.

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

Pray that we might continue to gain insight into the changing landscape of the church and the way its members elect to support its ministries and missions. Pray that our ministry is providing the best resources for the church in this time and place. Pray for the encouragement of our ministry's leaders and those who use our resources.

<b>Name of ministry</b>	College of Regional Ministers
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	LaTaunya M Bynum
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	lataunya@ccncn.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	<p>The College of Regional Ministers which includes the executives for NAPAD, Obra Hispana, the National Convocation and the General Minister and President has continued to meet via Zoom at least two times a month during the Pandemic and on other occasions. We have also continued to do the work of Regional Ministry - being present with pastors and ministries, helping congregations seeking new pastors, leading retreats and gatherings, and keeping our churches and ministers connected with one another.</p> <p>We continue to pray, plan and laugh together. Several Regional Ministers and ministry executives were on sabbatical leave at various points during the year. The time away for rest and renewal was good for those on sabbatical and for the ministries we are called to do.</p> <p>We celebrated that Kansas, Mid-America, Kentucky, and Ohio welcomed new Regional Ministers in 2021. The Regional Minister of Michigan has retired, and the Regional Minister of Florida is scheduled to retire early in 2022. The Illinois/Wisconsin and Michigan ministries will begin collaborating in ministry leadership next year.</p> <p>Finally, the College wrote and offered online an Advent Devotional for the church based on the theme of the Christmas special day offering, "Imagine God's Love Revealed".</p>
<b>What are the biggest challenges facing your ministry this year?</b>	<p>One of the continuing challenges for the College has been that due to the pandemic we have not been able to meet face to face since March 2020. We hope to be able to do so in 2022.</p> <p>Regions continue to face financial constraints and that impacts the ministry we are able to do.</p> <p>People are exhausted after nearly two years of having to make drastic adjustments to their ministry.</p>
<b>What is something you</b>	In the coming year, we hope to meet face to face; revise our bylaws; and continue to help congregations and the

**hope to accomplish in the next year?**

ministries in our region to survive, grow, and thrive. How that is accomplished will vary from region to region, but it is a common goal.

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

We are a good team that respects and supports one another. We are able to work, pray, love, and learn together. We often use our time to "crowd source" information about best practices as we navigate the changing nature of ministry and of the church and at the same time continue to develop and maintain the beloved community.

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

Please pray for the regional moderators and boards as they use their gifts to help lead our congregations.

Please pray for the spiritual and physical health of members of the College as we offer pastoral care and ministries of service in our Regions.

Pray for the spiritual and physical health of our members and friends of our congregations.

Pray for a revival of stewardship so that our vital ministries will have the support they need.

<b>Name of ministry</b>	Disciples Center for Public Witness (DC4PW)
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	Rev. Dr. Ken Brooker Langston Ph.D.
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	revkenbl@yahoo.com
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	We have better coordinated the different areas of our ministry in such a way that there is much better team communication and shared decision-making. We have invested in new platforms and new spaces for digital communication, education, and advocacy. We have begun to better streamline our involvement in public policy advocacy by prioritizing those issues that deal more directly with racial and economic justice. And we have more thoughtfully entered into strategic alliances with other ministries, groups, and coalitions-alliances that allow us to overcome our limited capacity while also better positioning us to expand our ministry's presence and effectiveness both within and outside our denomination.
<b>What are the biggest challenges facing your ministry this year?</b>	In 2021, the Center (DC4PW), like most ministries and nonprofit organizations, was forced to deal with the fallout and the changes required in the transition from the "new normal" world of COVID-19 and Zoom to the new "new normal" world of COVID variants and hybrid events. And so, just as we have had to transition to more reliance on digital communication, we are now navigating a newer situation: bringing back, in the right way, the right amount of physical communication and interaction.
<b>What is something you hope to accomplish in the next year?</b>	We hope to better inform, inspire, and involve (educate, encourage, and engage) more Disciples ministries, organizations, and congregations regarding their increased faith-based understanding and informed ethical response to the laws and public policies that affect us as individuals, communities, nations (the U.S. and Canada), the world, and, indeed, the earth itself.
<b>What is something you would like the General Board to know about your ministry?</b>	The Disciples Center for Public Witness (DC4PW) was founded by Dr. William Christ Hobgood and Dr. Alvin O'Neal Jackson, and began as a partnership between National City Christian Church Foundation and the Christian Church Capital Area. The invitation to be founding congregations went out to seven congregations, and all seven accepted, including Light of

the World in Indianapolis and Ray of Hope in Decatur/Atlanta. Since then, other congregations have joined as congregational partners and we continue to reach out to more congregations.

The Disciples Center for Public Witness (DC4PW) is now a recognized organization through the Office of the General Minister and President, a partner in ministry with Disciples Home Missions, and maintains a very close working relationship with the Division of Overseas Ministries / Global Ministries. DC4PW is increasingly becoming a justice advocacy ministry for the entire denomination.

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

At the end of 2021, Dr. Alvin O'Neal Jackson, co-founder and President of the Center (DC4PW), stepped down as DC4PW President in order to give more time, energy, and focus to the Poor People's Campaign: National Call to Moral Revival, a broad coalition in which he has an important leadership role. (Fortunately, we will continue to work closely with Dr. Jackson as our involvement in this truly historic movement greatly increases). Dr. Robert Perry will be serving as Interim President until new leadership can be chosen at the DC4PW Board meeting in the Spring of 2022.

Please pray that we identify leadership of the calibre of our founders, and that the new leadership will contribute in a very positive way to shaping the vision and general direction that will help us more thoughtfully, prayerfully, and effectively move into the future, whatever it may hold.

Also please pray that we will increase our income to such an extent that we can better financially compensate the simply amazing young adults and other amazing people who make up our incredible advocacy team.

<b>Name of ministry</b>	European Evangelistic Society
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	Dr D. Anthony (Tony) Twist
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	tony@tcmi.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	<p>The Covid pandemic required the ministry to adapt in several ways. One of these ways was to begin to conduct the regular English-German New Testament Colloquium that is held in conjunction with the Protestant faculty at the University of Tübingen online using Zoom. This has enabled a larger and more diverse group of scholars to participate in the Colloquium during each session. Before the most recent surge of Covid, the Colloquium was held in a hybrid format, allowing scholars who were in residence at the University of Tübingen to participate in person while others joined from abroad online. The reception of this hybrid format was very positive, and we anticipate that the Colloquium will continue to be held in a hybrid format even after restrictions abate.</p> <p>In addition, additional time and resources were available over the last 18 months to finish preparations of the compilation of the papers presented at the Symposium on the Lord's Prayer, which was held in October 2018 into a format to be published. This publication is expected to be released soon by Mohr Siebeck Publishers.</p>
<b>What are the biggest challenges facing your ministry this year?</b>	<p>The ministry is undergoing a leadership transition because the current Institute Director, Dr. Beth Langstaff, has been unable to fulfill this role due to significant health issues. She has been on medical leave for much of 2021. The individual selected to assume the Institute Director role, Dr. Dennis Lindsay, is currently serving as the Board Chairman for the ministry.</p> <p>In addition, the pandemic has impacted the ministry in many ways, and navigating the uncertainties and unexpected events of the pandemic has created challenges for the ministry. For example, the Theological German and Theological English classes have not been offered due to the pandemic restrictions and visiting</p>

research fellows have been few.

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

The goal is to reinstitute many of the course offerings that were put on hold or cancelled due to the pandemic and the health issues of Dr. Langstaff. It is expected that Dr. Dennis Lindsay will relocate to Tübingen, Germany in fall of 2022. Based in Tübingen, Germany, Dr. Lindsay will assume the role of Director for the EES-sponsored Institute for the Study of Christian Origins. In this leadership position, Dr. Lindsay will partner with members of the Protestant Faculty of the University of Tübingen to ensure the ongoing research program of the Institute, including the bi-weekly graduate Colloquiums in New Testament, course offerings that support international theology students, and the planning and execution of future international symposia. Dr. Lindsay will also continue his own research activities that focus on a biblical theology of faith.

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

The mission of EES is focused on the 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). EES views its priorities in terms of developing Christian leaders and future Christian leaders for significant service, especially international students who are coming in increased numbers. This is done through providing practical assistance, counsel, and hospitality when they arrive on site in order to establish relationships; then through prayer, fellowship, and studies as they get more involved.

Through the Institute for the Study of Christian Origins in Tübingen, Germany, 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 national articles, books, and other materials

- To help encourage the establishment and development of churches, colleges, and agencies focused on evangelism and disciple-making.

Although 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. EES seeks to be an international witness for the Christian gospel in one of the most significant 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.

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 effect 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 passing of 70 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.

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

Please pray for the strength, recovery, and healing of Dr. Beth Langstaff as she continues to struggle with health issues.

Please pray for the new Director, Dr. Dennis Lindsay, and he and his wife Karen make plans to move from the US to Germany in the fall of 2022.

Please pray for the leadership transition of the Institute

and for Dr. Lindsay as he assumes the role of Director in fall of 2022.

Please pray for the relief of the Covid pandemic and a return to more activities of the Institute, particularly a return to in-person encounters.

**Constitution and  
bylaws**

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/uxpw5dxkh3wt4xn/115840331\\_116515044\\_EESGoverningdocuments.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/uxpw5dxkh3wt4xn/115840331_116515044_EESGoverningdocuments.pdf?dl=0)

**Most recent  
year-end financial  
statement**

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/r5zn2x1o4w6olem/115840331\\_116515045\\_EESFinancialInformation.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/r5zn2x1o4w6olem/115840331_116515045_EESFinancialInformation.pdf?dl=0)

**Signature of  
executive**

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/ux15qp7k2c4qlg3/115840331\\_Signature\\_116515046%20%288%29.png?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/ux15qp7k2c4qlg3/115840331_Signature_116515046%20%288%29.png?dl=0)

<b>Name of ministry</b>	General Commission on Ministry
<b>Board Chair/Moderator name</b>	Pamela G. Holt
<b>Board Chair/Moderator email</b>	pholt@okdisciples.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	<p>1. The General Commission on Ministry (GCOM) of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is composed of members appointed by the General Minister and President in consultation with various constituencies across the life of the church. In 2021, the following gifted people served on GCOM: Greg Alexander, GCOM Chair; William Almodovar, Indianapolis, IN; Linda Brown, Parker City, IN; LaTaunya Bynum, Regional Minister for Northern California; Yvonne Gilmore, National Convocation; Pamela Holt, Regional Minister for Oklahoma (Search &amp; Call Sub-committee Chair); Eugene James, Regional Minister for Michigan; (Standards Sub-committee Chair); Chung Seong Kim, NAPAD; Valerie Melvin, Regional Minister for North Carolina; Sheila Spencer, DHM; Elizabeth Dilley, UCC representative; Terri Hord Owens, General Minister &amp; President; William Rose-Heim, Regional Minister for Greater Kansas City; Matt Rosine, Pension Fund; Lori Tapia, Obra Hispana; D. Newell Williams, Brite Divinity School. In addition Warren Lynn, Director of Office of Christian Vacation and Shannon Pope, Executive Assistant to GMP.</p> <p>2. Despite the continued pandemic, GCOM met virtually in January and in October of 2021. In January, GCOM granting standing to 175 clergy who are serving as missionaries, in the military, and in General Units of the church. The members of GCOM blessed and prayed for all those under GCOM's care, and the Support team responded to any specific requests identified on the standing forms. We celebrate every gift given to pastoral leadership in the church, world-wide.</p> <p>3. We also celebrate the new ministry partnership with the United Church in Canada. In order to fully enact this partnership, necessary protocols are underway.</p> <p>4. The Misconduct Policy was revised and approved by GCOM.</p>

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

1. Greg Alexander's term as chair ended at the end of 2021, and Pam Holt was named as the next chair of GCOM, for 2022 and 2023. GCOM has a large turnover in membership in 2022. GCOM will have an orientation at its February 2022 meeting.

2. Shannon Pope has been working with Dean Phelps and Dominic Dorsey to transition the standing process to be fully online and approved by GCOM virtually. With their determination and expertise, this process has been enhanced greatly. For 2022, all Application for Standing were received online and forms will be reviewed virtually by the Support sub-committee. Standing cards will go out by email by April 1, 2022. Also, provisions have been implemented to grant standing throughout the year for clergy who transition to be under the care of GCOM.

3. The Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry document continues to be the guiding document for GCOM. It is in the process of undergoing review for relevance and clarity in our changing world. This is a monumental task.

4. The process for Search & Call is also under examination for relevance to all clergy in our denomination. This is also a monumental task.

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

1. To work together to provide clarity and consistence in the work of GCOM

2. To continue to enhance the abilities of our virtual platform which will improve the Standing process.

3. To provide resources to clergy who need Healthy Boundaries and PRAR training.

4. To enrich the Search & Call process to somehow address any inequality to serve in a congregational setting

5. To complete the reimagining of the Theological Foundations document

6. To update the GCOM web presence both visually and with current resources

7. To work with the College of Regional Ministers to update the Ministerial Code of Ethics

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

GOM is an enormous ministry for the life of the church. It provides the history and standards for ordained and commissioned clergy in our denomination. It oversees Search & Call and thus has a touchpoint with every clergy person who is seeking an accountable ministry site in congregational pastoral ministry. We continue to make the process accessible to our ministry partners and to our ethnic ministries with language needs and equality for consideration. GCOM is always aware of the joys of ministry as well as the challenges of ministry. These last two years have been overshadowed with grief and demands on clergy, many of whom are wrestling with fatigue and trauma in some instances.

There is a remarkable decline in clergy seeking new ministry calls, which means Regional Ministers are struggling to help congregations seeking new pastoral leadership.

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

In light of the previous response, please pray for the members who make up GCOM. We are gifted, courageous, hopeful, and faithful. Please pray for our resilience and for the Spirit to help us reimagine how GCOM can be enriched and transformed to serve the whole church in the best way possible for this season of the journey.

<b>Name of ministry</b>	National City Christian Church Foundation
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	Rev. Steven Baines
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	Sbaines@nationalcitycc.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	<p>National City Christian Church Foundation is responsible for the maintenance, oversight, and fiducial responsibility of the Disciples' "national church," National City Christian Church. The Foundation, despite being in the middle of a global pandemic, has finished the fiscal years 2019, 2020, and assuredly 2021, with budgeted annual reserves exceeding \$50,000. Our donor database is growing and giving is strong while expenses have been curtailed to manage the rapidly changing environment of congregant settings due to COVID.</p> <p>After four years of work and construction with the oversight and enormous benefit of the National Fund for Sacred Places and Church Extension, the NCCC-Foundation successfully completed in July of 2021 the demolition of existing 60-year-old HVAC systems and installation of modern, energy-efficient chillers and boilers that will now be facility-zoned to help better regulate the overall facilities' temperatures.</p> <p>The Foundation is now poised to begin a three-year capital campaign to repay the \$1.4 million loan from Church Extension. The Campaign team is in place and more than \$900,000 has already been raised through local and national foundation grants and major donor gifts. The NCCC-Foundation is excited that with the completion of this new capital campaign, it will have successfully raised more than \$3 million in deferred maintenance expense to make the "national church" of the DOC shine brighter as she approaches her centennial in 2030.</p> <p>NCCC-Foundation has also seen remarkable visibility and as the "go-to" place for high-profile public witness actions due to the visionary leadership of Interim Senior Pastor and Foundation President, Rev. Dr. Amy Butler. Pastor Amy has called the congregation and the Foundation to live into its mandate to be a prophetic witness of Christ in the nation's capital holding leaders and elected officials accountable for their actions or inaction as the case may be. The Foundation has been</p>

supportive of these efforts realizing that as the local National City congregation continues to grow and thrive, the Foundation must provide ample financial and institutional resources for this vital mission leading us boldly into the 21st century.

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

The biggest challenge facing NCCC-Foundation will be the launch of Capital Campaign II - Renew and Transform while facing the uncertainties of the ongoing COVID pandemic. Much of the success will depend on the successful implementation of the National City Ambassador program that will send dozens of "ambassadors" out across the country to hold listening sessions with potential donors and sustainers for the Campaign. While the Team has figured in contingency plans to scale back the travel portion of the Ambassador program, we are praying that successful small group meetings in churches and community homes can continue sometime in 2022. While the initial success in fundraising and the completion of HVAC installation are strong footing on which to begin, as we have seen in recent months, this virus and its complexities can change in a day's if not minute's notice. The ability for the team to quickly and effectively make adjustments and pivot to alternative programming while not losing focus of the long-term strategies and ultimate goal of \$1.7 million in secured funds for this project.

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

The NCCC-Foundation hopes to increase the public witness of National City Christian Church, not only across the denomination as the "national church" and house of the Disciples Center for Public Witness, but also as the prophetic voice of the church offered through collaborations with the Refugee and Immigration Ministries; Poor People's Campaign led by Rev. Dr. William Barber and the Rev. Dr. Alvin Jackson; the Coalition for Increasing the Minimum Wage; and national coalitions for the passage of legislation for secure and accessible voting rights across the country.

As mentioned, our proximity to the White House and US Congress has enabled us many opportunities to use the steps of National City for outside, socially-distanced rallies, prayer vigils, and public calls to action and demonstrations. The NCCC-Foundation hopes to continue raising funds for the quarterly installation of banners from the front columns of the Sanctuary for high-profile visibility and earned media. It is hoped that the increased knowledge and prophetic witness of National City Christian Church will have rippling effects for the entire Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denomination and its unwavering call for respect,

inclusivity, and justice for all people.

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

The National City Christian Church Foundation is incredibly blessed and encouraged to have strong and seasoned leadership under the helm of Mr. John Arterberry, Chair, and Rev. Dr. Richard Hamm, Vice-Chair. These two gentlemen have long institutional and congregational ties that have seen both entities weather internal conflicts, struggle, financial hardships, and leadership transitions. The thriving financial health and continued donor-base expansion of the Foundation is testament to their steady and outcome-oriented leadership.

The Senior Minister Search Committee has resumed its work during the fourth quarter of 2021 and will have developed a thoughtful and visionary congregational profile for its next Senior Minister by March of 2022. As the Foundation and Congregation leadership continue to hold small group discussions with community stakeholders, it is hoped that the profile will be available for circulation in the spring of 2022 with candidates researched and examined during the summer months. Until the search is completed and the next settled, Senior Minister selected, the congregation and Foundation are grateful that Rev. Butler has agreed to continue in the Interim Senior Minister position until such time as a permanent call is issued.

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

The National City Christian Church-Foundation is enormously grateful for the financial gifts and support the OGMP provides our ministries every year. We ask that the DOC continue to pray for the strong and effective public witness of our "national church" in the nation's capital as forbearer Alexander Campbell envisioned. It is difficult to help sustain and maximize all of the opportunities provided to us being in the world's central places of power - just mere blocks from the White House, US Congress, Supreme Court, the International Monetary Fund, and World Bank. We ask for prayers for prophetic Christ-like witness through efficient fundraising and maintenance of the "national church" approaching 100-years of sustained public witness, while always enhancing the rich and effective pastoral and community outreach ministries of this loving, inclusive and affirming congregation.

<b>Name of ministry</b>	Reconciliation Ministry
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	Rev April G Johnson
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	ajohnson@disciples.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	<p>Our Special Offering receipts have increased year-to-date (October 2021) by 11% over the full year of 2020. The training receipts and collection of those receipts have also improved with the addition of dedicated staff to project manage or training program. Requests for training also increased as three regions, PSWR, CCSW, and Indiana have completed Level One and Level Two education programs for clergy and lay leader certification. We report a 42% increase in facilitated and requested educational events. Our training cohort and partners are to be applauded and are a proven asset in supporting this need as well as accompanying new facilitators in their skills development.</p> <p>In spite of the downturn in receipts in 2020, Reconciliation Ministry awarded \$14K through our General and Legacy granting programs to Scarritt-Bennett Center's White Co-Conspirators' Conference, National City Christian Church Banner program, and Eden Theological Seminary student scholarships to Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, as well as Disciples Historical Society's Kirkpatrick Lecture Series. Through a grant to Lexington Theological Seminary, we were also able to facilitate continuing education program for new Disciples anti-racism educators.</p> <p>The executive staffed two working groups in 2021. The working groups were for the revision and updating of the ministry's Standing Rules and the development of the process for certifying congregations for an anti-racist/pro-reconciliation identity. Both groups have completed their work and will implement their recommendations in January of 2022.</p> <p>Staffing - Reconciliation Ministry added a part-time Administrative Assistant staff person this year in June and it has improved the ministry's performance in key areas - donor communication and engagement, training coordination and receipts, Special Offering management. The efficiencies realized are equivalent</p>

to the staff expense quantitatively, as well as qualitatively. The ministry also benefitted from the gifts of a ministry intern from the IL/WI School of Ministry from April through November of 2021. We also re-initiated intentional dialogue and regular convening of Regional Ministers of Reconciliation with CRMR, CCSW and will be adding Indiana and UMW in 2022. These staffing additions in Reconciliation Ministry and the Regional expression strengthened the interpretation of our anti-racist identity in each expression of the Church and capacity to resource congregations for mission and ministry.

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

As a mission fund, Reconciliation Ministry has to increase its annual receipts and large donor gifts in order to fund mission through our education, granting, and resource development programs. In 2022, our operating budget is sourced from the 2020 receipts which were down 40% from the previous year. Cultivating new and existing donor engagement remains a priority during 2022 as well as Annual Fund receipts. We are better equipped to develop metrics to share with the broader church because we have access to the donor management database, staffing that allows for efficient and effective communication regarding our church wide Reconciliation narrative.

The implementation of a process for congregational certification will have a financial component to its commitment. We have ten congregations ready to embrace this financial and identity challenge. We will also increase our fees for anti-racism education out of necessity by 20%. We believe this will level out as more Regions and General Ministries increase their capacity to provide level one anti-racism education. By that assertion we anticipate these training receipts to remain even in this first year.

We want to hold with intention the introduction and implementation of the congregational certification process, as well as, the relaunch of our communications plan to include our Podcast What's the Tea and our Be One in a Thousand Annual Fund. As we use this vehicles with greater intentionality, we believe we will achieve our quantitative and qualitative goals.

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

We want to increase congregational financial participation by 25%. This will bring the number of congregations participating in the Special Offering up to 40% over 2020.

We want to shift our narrative from reporting on

General Reconciliation grants to telling the stories congregational ministries and Regional ministries embracing their anti-racist analysis, conversations, and efforts toward accountability to anti-racist communities of color. In collaboration with our ministry partners, it is our goal to disseminate their stories through our social media networks and partner networks. More specifically, we want to connect the anti-racist congregation participants to facilitate resource development and access to resources in real time.

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

Reconciliation Ministry asks the Church to address the ethical and theological dilemma of racism toward the end of disrupting a culture of white supremacy that reinforces human hierarchy. Our work as an equipping ministry of the Church is not readily concretized into a quantitative formulaic for example, your \$10 donation equals 100% culture shift. Yet, we are more than the story we tell about ourselves and we can measure transformation by stated goals and metrics such as the number of Regions with Anti-Racism Commissions, goals to increase giving year over year, number of community partners and collaborators that inform your anti-racism witness and work. It is a delicate balance of process and transformation that can seem overwhelming for a predominately White denomination and its congregations. We want the General Board to share its own growth in its effort toward assuming an anti-racist identity, its involvement in its local Congregational ministries so that this work opens up opportunities for increased willingness to be transformed by Christ's ministry of reconciliation.

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

We ask that every member of the General Board will pray with their hands and their hearts for the revealing of the children of God in our Church and the communities we serve through our anti-racism witness. Pray with every member of the General Board will be a donor to Reconciliation Ministry.

<b>Name of ministry</b>	Treasury Services
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	John J Goebel
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	jgoebel@disciples.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	Have added Kansas as one of the ministries we serve with accounting services. Learning to operate with little paper as possible and working remotely.
<b>What are the biggest challenges facing your ministry this year?</b>	Staff member resigned September. (Our third year in a row dealing with a staff member resignation during the year.) Learning how to operate and communicate when remotely working.
<b>What is something you hope to accomplish in the next year?</b>	On boarding of new accountant. Assist other ministries with their accounting needs depending on our capacity.
<b>What is something you would like the General Board to know about your ministry?</b>	We have grown from a staff of 3 in 2008 to 8 in 2021. Investing time and resources in our staff must be our priority to sustain our level of services.
<b>How can we pray for your ministry?</b>	To keep our staff energized, challenged, compensated, growing their skills, and focused on our mission of serving the church.

<b>Name of ministry</b>	United Christian Missionary Society
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	Rev Sheila P Spencer
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	sspencer@dhm.disciples.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	The United Christian Missionary Society provides vital support for Global Ministries (Division of Overseas Ministries and Disciples Home Missions. Both ministries have impacted our Disciples Community in the United States, Canada and all over the world.
<b>What are the biggest challenges facing your ministry this year?</b>	There are no challenges.
<b>What is something you hope to accomplish in the next year?</b>	The United Christian Missionary Society provides vital support for Global Ministries (Division of Overseas Ministries and Disciples Home Missions. Both ministries have impacted our Disciples Community in the United States, Canada and all over the world. The United Christian Missionary Society will continue the legacy.
<b>What is something you would like the General Board to know about your ministry?</b>	In 1920 the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, the American Christian Missionary Society, and the Christian Woman's Board of Mission became The United Christian Missionary Society. So, the history of The United Christian Missionary Society comes from early connections of people who gathered themselves together, pooled their resources, found ways to raise money in order to create mission-both in North American and around the world. The legacy of The United Christian Missionary Society is over a century. This legacy that we have in The United Christian Missionary Society continues to bring forth ministry.
<b>How can we pray for your ministry?</b>	Please continue to pray for the ministry of The United Christian Missionary Society. Pray for the investments that The United Christian Missionary Society sows into the ministries of Global Ministries (Division of Overseas Ministries) and Disciples Home Missions. Pray for the Staff that is represented within both of these ministries. Pray for all of our Board Members. We are grateful for their commitment and service.

<b>Constitution and bylaws</b>	<a href="https://www.dropbox.com/s/8zq96r3m1lww713/115840331_116515044_UCMSByLawsRevised.Sept2019.pdf?dl=0">https://www.dropbox.com/s/8zq96r3m1lww713/115840331_116515044_UCMSByLawsRevised.Sept2019.pdf?dl=0</a>
<b>Most recent year-end financial statement</b>	<a href="https://www.dropbox.com/s/qf9piyxk3pnf525/115840331_116515045_TheUCMSFinalFinancialsandIndependentAccountantsReview.pdf?dl=0">https://www.dropbox.com/s/qf9piyxk3pnf525/115840331_116515045_TheUCMSFinalFinancialsandIndependentAccountantsReview.pdf?dl=0</a>
<b>Signature of executive</b>	<a href="https://www.dropbox.com/s/v05dzelz0mlqxvw/115840331_Signature_116515046%20%289%29.png?dl=0">https://www.dropbox.com/s/v05dzelz0mlqxvw/115840331_Signature_116515046%20%289%29.png?dl=0</a>

<b>Name of ministry</b>	Week of Compassion
<b>Ministry Executive name</b>	Rev. Vy Nguyen
<b>Ministry Executive email</b>	vy@weekofcompassion.org
<b>In what ways is your ministry thriving?</b>	<p>Despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, the progress of the past year has allowed for greater mobility and freedom to gather. Many global sustainable development projects that had to be put on hold in 2020 cautiously resumed operations in 2021, as did in-person volunteering for domestic disaster recovery. And through it all, Disciples have continued to support and give generously to Week of Compassion, sustaining and even growing our wider church's capacity to alleviate suffering.</p> <p>Mindful of the particular challenges of this time, Week of Compassion leadership established a set of priorities early in 2021 that have guided mission and resource distribution throughout the year:</p> <p>Domestic:</p> <p>Strengthening our relationship with racial-ethnic ministries and POC communities and congregations</p> <p>Expanding our congregational Disaster Preparedness and Response framework</p> <p>Reengaging Disciples with opportunities for volunteering in disaster recovery settings</p> <p>Global:</p> <p>Working with global partners for fair distribution of vaccines</p> <p>Working toward ending Gender Based Violence and supporting girls' education and women's empowerment (regaining losses due to pandemic)</p> <p>Protection of refugees and migrants</p> <p>In each of these areas, Week of Compassion has identified programs and partners in which to invest-those who are working to meet urgent needs while also looking ahead to the future. Through ongoing sustainable development work, support from Week of Compassion empowers communities around the world to thrive.</p>

Week of Compassion has also begun an equity analysis of its domestic disaster program in the hopes of providing better support and resources to marginalized communities and achieving greater racial equity in our disaster response and recovery work. This ongoing work continues to strengthen Week of Compassion's mission in serving the most vulnerable.

Disasters continue to grow in frequency and severity, and Disciples are stepping up to meet the needs of their local communities in times of crisis. Week of Compassion continues to work with and strengthen the capacity of congregations to respond to disasters, while also supporting long-term recovery. Equipping church leaders for the work of disaster preparedness is a growing element of this work, and one that will expand even further in 2022 with the addition of a new staff member.

In the midst of the pandemic, refugees and internally displaced people are among the most vulnerable populations. Many of our partners continue to find ways to ensure that these families are protected and cared for. The pandemic will only further exacerbate the challenges of responding to the needs of refugees all over the world. But because the church has been supporting refugee work for over seven decades, many of our partners are already responding to needs with creative solutions. Further support and collaboration will be critical for continued work in the season ahead.

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

Throughout 2021, the ongoing challenges and uncertainty of the pandemic continued to affect every area of the work of Week of Compassion. Domestic and international disasters are complicated by the realities of COVID-19. Our global partners continue to struggle under the burden of limited resources and mobility as they serve some of the world's most vulnerable people. The worldwide refugee crisis—already at an all-time high—continues to escalate as the realities of a pandemic impose even more obstacles for people on the move.

Meanwhile, the crisis in Afghanistan has created a complex, multi-layered network of needs, both on the ground and here in the U.S. Week of Compassion continues to support our partners in the region as they work to meet the needs of those who are most vulnerable. At the same time, newly arriving families in the United States are in need of support that the existing national and local infrastructures do not yet have the capacity to meet.

All of this is happening as the U.S. rebuilds the refugee resettlement program, since the previous administration reduced the resources for local resettlement agencies. Despite

these challenges, we have seen tremendous presence of and hospitality from local churches as they coordinate with local agencies to welcome Afghan families. This has become a high priority for Week of Compassion: strengthening local Disciples churches' capacity to respond to local disaster and refugee needs. The Board of Stewards recently made a decision to further invest in this ministry's work of refugee response and to prepare the church for refugee ministry for the next decade.

The ongoing uncertainty of the pandemic has kept Week of Compassion staff grounded for all of 2021, eliminating many of the usual opportunities to connect with congregations. As churches continue to navigate changes and inconsistency with in-person gatherings, the ways in which people hear about and partner with Week of Compassion have been affected as well. However, this does not mean that the ministry has slowed down—in fact, the opposite has happened. We have learned to adapt in different ways to engage with local churches and ecumenical partners, strengthening our mission and collaboration during the pandemic.

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

With the growing needs of those arriving in the U.S. from Afghanistan, Week of Compassion is committed to supporting local congregations in the ministry of hospitality. WoC leadership has named as a priority for 2022 a greater investment in equipping Disciples to welcome Afghans to their local communities. The goal is to establish and grow a new program, supported by a full-time staff position, that will be solely focused on this priority. In early 2022, Week of Compassion will bring a new full-time staff person on board dedicated to promoting congregational involvement in local resettlement ministries. This work will complement and intersect with our domestic disaster response, as we support congregations to increase their capacities to respond to multiple crises and humanitarian needs, including disaster response and refugee resettlement. Given increasing demand for the involvement of the faith community and the increasing overlap between sectors responding to natural/climate disasters, human-caused disasters, and human displacement, this intersection within Week of Compassion's work will allow for better coordination of resources and support, further strengthening Disciples' ongoing response to myriad urgent crises and needs.

During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteer operations ceased at most disaster recovery sites across the U.S. Week of Compassion continued to support long-term recovery through partnerships with and grants to local recovery organizations and Disciples congregations. Throughout 2021, Week of Compassion has worked with partners to re-launch

volunteer opportunities for Disciples at several sites where rebuilding is ongoing. In the year ahead, we hope to re-engage Disciples across the country in the work of volunteering at disaster recovery sites. Early in 2022, more resources and additional capacity within Week of Compassion will enable more robust coordination with congregations for disaster-related volunteering, as well as for disaster preparedness.

The compound disasters that our communities have endured throughout the pandemic have highlighted the realities of racial and economic disparity in disaster response. With support from a grant from the Oreon E. Scott foundation, Week of Compassion is in the process of working with outside consultants to examine our systems and processes. Through this assessment, we are exploring the ways in which this ministry can be intentional in the work of recognizing and addressing those disparities, both within our own operations and with partners and communities with whom we work in disaster recovery. Our leadership is excited to continue this process in the year ahead and take next steps towards becoming a pro-reconciling, anti-racist ministry.

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

Along with our partners, Week of Compassion is working to respond to the myriad crises facing the world today—from the pandemic to a historic refugee crisis to the impacts of climate change. Despite these challenges, Week of Compassion is experiencing a season of financial health thanks to the generosity of Disciples congregations and donors. Furthermore, this is an exciting time, with the prospects of an expanding staff and opportunities for resumed staff travel. The coming year should bring many opportunities to extend the reach and presence of this ministry of our wider church.

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

We pray that the entire world will come together out of the pandemic, and not just a privileged few; that communities around the world will know healing and be empowered to not just survive, but thrive. We pray that as we come out of this challenging season, our communities might be strengthened to care for each other and to do great ministry together. This is the active hope of Week of Compassion that drives our work during this time.

Transition is happening in the world and within the church; we pray that together, we may listen to the pain of the world and discern where God is calling Disciples to respond. We pray particularly for the needs of refugees and for those who cope with the growing burden of natural disasters.