

No. 1114

Disciples Women of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Disciples Women are grateful for the ministry of Adonna Bowman and all she has guided them to accomplish through January 2011. Adonna completed her ministry in Office of Disciples Women (ODW) as she helped to prepare Patricia Donahoo to take on the role of executive director. The executive director works closely with Sheila Spencer, the Program Merger Staff Director.

Disciples Women have been active on many fronts and face opportunities and challenges in the time to come. As we move forward we are in search for a part-time staff person who will be dedicated to managing advocacy programs and initiatives, an executive assistant, a Quadrennial Assembly Coordinator, and a Quadrennial Assembly Assistant.

In November 2010, Disciples Home Missions (DHM) and Disciples Women (International Disciples Women's Ministries, the governing body, and Office of Disciples Women, the administrative arm) revised Principles of Mutuality to ensure Disciples Women and DHM may continue to respond effectively to God's mission in the world through the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. At the present time Disciples Women relates to the General Board and General Assembly of the Christian Church through DHM and its Board of Directors with its activities being communicated in both verbal and written form. Disciples Women partners with DHM in ministries with and by women, and is one of the constituencies with whom DHM works "to fulfill its mission of connecting people to the life-changing love of God by developing partnerships that strengthen congregations and leaders to make a difference in the world by revealing the light of Christ." Close working relationships are maintained between Disciples Women and DHM through the staff of the ODW. The work and ministry of ODW will be determined and directed by the Executive Committee of Disciples Women.

Historically Disciples women have contributed, on average, 10% annually of all Disciples Mission Fund giving. Funding for Disciples Women's Ministry is through 20% of the Disciples Mission Fund received by DHM. Additional funding is through a portion of the giving through Blessing Boxes. These funds are budgeted and administered by the Disciples Women Executive Committee.

The Leadership Apprentice Program is a leadership development program aimed at equipping all Disciples women of color to serve in their home congregations, in regional, and in general areas of church life. Participants are encouraged to discover their God given gifts and talents, receive leadership training opportunities, and learn the rich history of the ministries of the Disciples women. This ministry has affected the lives of

many women and has prepared them for leadership all over the country. These leadership positions include officers and leaders for Christian Church Foundation, Disciples Home Missions, Regional Women's Ministry, Office of Disciples Women, Disciples Mission Fund, Chapman University, National Convocation, NAPAD, and Hispanic Women's Ministries.

Human Trafficking is the advocacy priority for the quadrennium. Trafficking in persons is a global, widespread and illegal practice which violates basic human rights through the use of force, coercion, fraud or abduction to exploit the person for profit or service. Trafficking is the fastest-growing and currently tied with arms dealing as the second largest criminal industry in the world today and claims up to 27 million adults and children worldwide. Disciples Women will continue working to provide resources for education and advocacy through a multitude of organizations to seek an end to this criminal and abusive practice.

Disciples Women has produced the first in a series of DVD studies with printed guides entitled "*Wisdom of Women*" to capture the history of women in the denomination, share the wisdom gained, and empower us to live into the future. This study is designed to be used by women and men in a variety of settings.

Just Women is the official study resource for Disciples women provided by International Disciples Women's Ministries and the ODW and is a quarterly publication. After the previous publisher ceased operations, Disciples Women took over the task of publication for this much needed resource. As of the fall of 2010, a complete cycle of the magazine has been published under this ownership.

Woman-to-Woman Worldwide (WWW) responds to the call for church women to experience solidarity with one another, to affirm the unity of the church in Jesus Christ and to join the common struggle for justice and peace in the world today. These international, ecumenical and personal mission field experiences encourage faithful women to see the world through new eyes and bring that perspective back to their congregation and community. The 2010 experience in Turkey was an opportunity to identify critical issues and suggest ideas to initiate action in partnership with Turkish women. In 2011 the WWW trip will be to the Congo.

Disciples Women addresses the four priorities of the 2020 Vision by informing new congregations about resources for women's ministries; providing resources to strengthen and transform women's ministries in existing congregations; training and developing leaders in women of all ages including tweeners (14-17) and young adults; encouraging and seeking to assure diversity through all aspects of women's ministries.

The General Board has reviewed Report No. 1114 from the Office of Disciples Women. The report is submitted to the General Assembly for consideration and discussion. No action is required. (Discussion time 12 minutes)