

Title: Report of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in South Carolina

Origin: Regional Minister: Sotello V. Long

The following is provided for information to the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Regional Staff:

Regional Pastor: Sotello V. Long, male, African American
Associate Regional Pastor: Don Morris, male, European American
Associate Regional Pastor: Deveta Brown, female, African American
Disciples Women Coordinator: Ms. Gloria Gilliard, female, African American
Administrative Assistant: Ms. Alma Turner, female, European American
Secretary: Ms. Claire Travis, female, European American
Assistant: Barbara Williams, female African American

Number of Congregations: 41

Total Members: 5600

States included in Region: 1

Please answer the following questions:

1. (par. 54.b.) What are your long range planning goals and how are they integrated into the mission and vision of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)?

We are living into the fifth year of a major unification of the operational ministries in South Carolina as a witness to living in true community as the body of Christ. What were once two distinct operational systems are merging into one unified organizational design. It is an unparalleled endeavor in our denomination.

2. (par 54.d.) Knowing that the current priorities of the church are to start new congregations, transform existing congregations for mission, nurture leadership for these new and renewed congregations, and become an anti-racist/pro-reconciling church, what is the role of your ministry in fulfilling any of these priorities?

Becoming an anti-racist/pro-reconciliation church

SC is among the forefront of the antiracism/pro-reconciliation ministry as witnessed the training of a regional anti-racist/pro-reconciliation team. We are in partnership as the Southeast Regional Fellowship (SERF) cluster of regions in the call of a staff position to coordinate intentional collective effort in this priority. We experienced a first class antiracism presentation by the SC chair of the Pro-reconciliation team, Pastor Torrie Osgood, at our retreat at the Christmount Christian Assembly in January 2008.

Establishing 1000 new congregations

We launched more new churches in 2007: Andrews Christian Church, Andrews, SC with Pastor Mary Ann Goodman; Path of Life Christian Church, Columbia, SC with Pastor Lula Samuels; and accepted by affiliation the New Beginning Fellowship Christian Church, Columbia, SC with Pastor Angela Smith. Minister Joseph Cobb exercises extraordinary leadership in coordinating the efforts of the region in New Church Ministry. We recognize the training offered by Church Extension's New Church Ministry Team to enhance the efforts of these ministers.

The current list of new churches and affiliations include:

Andrews Christian Church, Andrews – Pastor Mary A. Goodman
The Church House of Ministries, Summerville - Pastor Jeannette Jordan
The Church House of Ministries, Moncks Corner – Pastor Martha L Watson
My Father's House Ministry, Ladson – Pastor Melvin Brown
New Beginnings Christian Fellowship CC – Pastor Angela Smith
Path of Life Christian Church, Columbia – Pastor Lula Samuels
The United Christian Church, Summerville – Pastor Randolph Felder

Transforming 1000 existing congregations

We continue to engage the use of certain strong district fifth Sunday weekend gatherings to do leadership development sessions for clergy, elders and other congregational leaders.

The congregational worship experience has a rich diversity that is being shared as we engage in doing ministry under each other's roof so to speak with the unity movement under way in SC. One Region-wide initiative is to encourage a cross-cultural pulpit exchange on the initial Sunday of Ministerial Appreciation month the last Sunday in September. We continue to support a region-wide effort of outreach ministries through New Beginnings Outreach.

The congregations experiencing transformation in SC provide ministries that communicate with real human issues such as parenting, singleness, marriage, motherhood, fatherhood, relationships, senior adulthood, youth, young adulthood and children's ministries. There are a myriad of cross connections including after school support, recreational ministries and work projects that lend themselves to transformative ministry with the key to enjoying them in Christ.

In a word the real transformation occurs when churches are vitally connected with God doing what God has called them to do. Thank God for this initiative!

Forming and re-forming leadership for these ministries

We conduct ongoing leadership development sessions for clergy, men, women and youth.

Our youth are organized congregationally and there is a need to develop a coordinated regional connection. We have certain congregational youth groups that are second to none in their spiritual activity and preparation; again we need to develop connections with other congregations. We know where we want to go ...note that organizational movement is tedious work. We have an emerging coordinator in the person of Gwen Walker.

3. (par.25) In what ways are you partnering with the other expressions of the Church and with other general ministries?

We have partnered through the SERF cluster to fund a Director of Reconciliation and Anti-racism Ministries. The search is under way at the time of submission of this report. The services of New Church Ministry via planter training; Church Extension via ministry planning around facility buildings and renovations; Global Ministries missionary partnership with John and Dawn Barnes and Division of Overseas representative, Julia Brown Karimu; Church Finance Council via Development Conferences and clergy sessions on stewardship, Disciples Men and Women networks.

4. (par.20) How have you been involved in congregations to fulfill their mission and ministry?

We are engaged in congregational development through leadership training sessions coordinated through regional districts, congregationally initiated and our regional conference.

5. The Administrative Committee/General Board would be interested in knowing what barriers you experience in carrying out your ministry as well as other information that is important as a matter of record for the church.

The change in the management of Camp Christian in Hampton, SC has proven to be an excellent move. Sandra Browning, who chairs our Property Team, demonstrates effective and outstanding oversight in this ministry. She has a service connected with her passion.

We ask you to join in prayer for us as we embark on a deeper level of commitment to the unification of the governing entities in the South Carolina Region at this year's Regional Conference.

If you choose, you may also include:

6. Special concerns of the region

We have recognized districts with varying levels of communication, ministry and organizational effectiveness. One immediate objective toward each district having equitable coordination in communication is via a District Coordinator. This would enhance communication and opportunities for limited organized districts to participate in ministries of more organized districts.

7. Other items of interest

As you know, for the last few years, in addition to the regular reporting on Regional programming and participation in the denominational mission, the General Board has requested more insight and in-depth reporting by Regions about their finances. A sense of uniformity will be important in such reporting, so we are asking each region to respond to the following questions in its General Board report.

8. Financial Information, Concerns, and Reports of the Region:

A. What type of accounting method do you use? Cash Accrual

B. Is a professional audit done annually on your books? Yes No
If not, please explain. A non-professional examination is done monthly on the checking account by a professional mathematician. A professional audit is done approximately every three years.

C. For the last three years, with regard to your OPERATIONS BUDGET ONLY, Please provide the following information:

	2007	2006	2005
Total Income	\$142,589	\$159,659	\$160,567
Total Expenses	\$148,460	\$183,882	\$161,533
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (5871) \$(24,223)	\$(966)	

Note: Camp income and expenses were included in 2005 and 2006, but not in 2007.
 The camp is now operating autonomously.

D. Currently, what is the total amount of Permanent Funds the Region has from which an “Annual Draw” of endowment earnings income is used to support your operations and programming? What is that percentage of draw and how is it calculated? Approximately \$31,000. No planned “Annual Draw” from permanent funds has been made.

E. If your Region has had insufficient income or deficits in Part 6 C above, how has your Regional Board and Finance Committee been trying to balance your budgets (e.g. staff reductions, program cuts, larger draws from permanent funds, initiative postponements, new streams of income, etc.)? Portions of the deficit have been recovered from sponsored regional programs. The remainder has been taken from permanent funds. Efforts are currently being made to educate and encourage congregations to increase giving.

F. What are the key financial issues and concerns currently facing your region’s life and vitality? Rising costs and getting more churches in the Region to consistently participate.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in South Carolina
Min. Sotello V. Long, Regional Minister
“Treating You with Love Because Jesus Loves You!”
Regional Minister’s Email: newsCRM@aol.com
1293 Orange Grove Road Charleston, South Carolina 29407-3947
P.O. Box 32064 Charleston, South Carolina 29417-2064
Telephone: (843) 852-4537 or (800) 637-2718 Fax: (843) 852-4538
Office Email: ROCCSC@AOL.COM Website: WWW.SCDisciples.org
“Thank God and Think Great in ‘08!”

The Regional Council of South Carolina announces the celebration of
the 5th *“Regional Conference of the
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in South Carolina!”*

The Conference theme: “Freed in Christ to Love and Serve...God, Your Neighbor and Yourself!”
The Conference Text: Galatians 5:13-18

It will be held Thursday October 2 at 7pm through Sunday, - October 5, 2008 at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Aiken, SC
900 Kerr Drive, Aiken, SC 29803 *Phone: (803)648-4523*

The Conference Hotel is the Country Inn & Suites www.countryinns.com
3270 Whiskey Rd, Aiken, SC 29803 Ph. (803) 649-4024

The keynote speakers are Barbara Jones, Executive Regional Minister, Great River Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Eugene Fisher, Assistant Vice President/ Director of Membership for the Pension Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

For info call 843.852.4537 or 800-637-2718;
email: roccsc@aol.com or go to website at: www.scdisciples.org

Enjoy the Celebration! Grow Spiritually! Be Inspired!

Ken McDonald
Host Pastor

Sotello V Long
Regional Pastor