



## Report of the Christian Church in Indiana

to the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
in the United States and Canada 2010

**Richard L. Spleth, Regional Minister**  
**Pam Ditson-McCall, Regional Moderator**

[www.indianadisciples.org](http://www.indianadisciples.org)

### Regional Staff

Richard L. Spleth, Regional Minister	M
Carolyn Casey Reed, Associate Regional Minister	F
Dean Phelps, Minister of Church Multiplication	M
Becki Nunnally, Minister for the Commission on Ministry	F
Cheryl Cloar, Minister of Mission and Women's Ministries	F
Sharon Stribling, Executive Assistant	F (until 3/10/10)
Kecelyn Gelisse Santiago, Administrative Assistant	F (beginning 3/8/10) Hispanic
Vonnie Cloud, Events Coordinator	F
Melissa Carlson, Accountant	F
Terry Best, Co-Manager, Camp Barbee	M
Jill Best, Co-Manager, Camp Barbee	F

Number of Congregations: 185

Total Participating Members: 33,000

States included in Region: Indiana

### Our mission is

**to energize and connect congregations**  
**to proclaim the gospel and**  
**make disciples of Jesus Christ**

We accomplish this mission by equipping congregations to  
promote health and growth  
cultivate spiritual formation and discipleship  
call out and develop passionate leaders  
plant new congregations  
claim God's unique mission for them

## **How is your Region a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world?**

Some voices from our Region:

The Christian Church in Indiana continues to extend its witness into a fragmented world through the planting of new congregations. The region's newest congregation, New Revelation Christian Church, began holding worship services in September of 2009 and was recognized as a congregation in formation in November. Only months old, the congregation recently made a significant gift to Week of Compassion for Haiti earthquake relief. They share the Good News with 125 persons in worship each Sunday. New Revelation joins nine other congregations in formation in the region.

**Dean Phelps**, Minister of Church Multiplication

The Luke 10 transformation process continues to be a presence for wholeness in a fragmented world as congregations engage Scripture, one another and neighbor. Five congregations have worked for almost three years in this process and are extending welcome to others in many ways. Four congregations engaged the process over a year ago in a second cohort group and are working on ways to extend hospitality and ministry as they listen to the call of God in their context.

**Carolyn Reed**, Associate Regional Minister

- I am impressed with the amount of work that is accomplished with such a small staff at the Regional Office.
- The women are very active planning the Spring Events and in that process being creative and trying to plan for all age groups. The Region provides wonderful leadership for our women's ministries.
- The women are raising money to further our partnership with the Congo by bring a Congolese woman to Quadrennial in June.
- The Region has many resources and help for our local congregations; all we need to do is let them know our needs.
- All of the meetings I have attended at the Regional level are Christ centered and are a worshipful type meeting.
- The communication between the Region and the local congregation is excellent. There are a large number of pieces of information that come by email. This makes the local congregation more of a part of the whole church. The prayer concerns are a great part of the email.
- I am also impressed with how our Region responds to disaster type situations; locally and globally.

**Sue Sprinkle**, Women's Commission President

The Indiana Men's Commission sponsored and conducted two Men's Retreats in 2009. The retreats served over 100 men at Bedford Christian Camp in Southern Indiana and Barbee Christian Camp in Northern Indiana. The study portion of the Retreats centered on speakers addressing topics growing from the scripture Isaiah 6:8, "Whom shall I send And who will go for Us? And I said, Here am I Send Me" Men were encouraged to seek the areas in which their strength lay and engage those strengths in their families, their congregations, their communities and the world. Men and their families were also brought together for the Annual Men's Softball outing giving men an opportunity to have fun with other men in the Region.

**Jerry Gill**, Men's Commission President

One way our region is a movement for wholeness is by consistently gathering with the United Church of Christ in Indiana through our joint ecumenical commission to dialogue, grow closer and witness in Indiana and beyond through actions of justice and peace. We attempt to embody the belief that we Christians already belong to one another because we commonly belong to God through Jesus Christ.

While unity is admittedly hard, both in the church and in society, we believe this is precisely the time to bear witness that God is a source of reconciliation that can hold us together despite our differences.

**Nathan Wilson**, Ecumenical Ministries Commission Chair

### **Other items of interest**

The **Women's Commission** hosted a series of Spring gatherings in 2009 under the theme "Tag You're It" inspired by the General Minister and President's Inauguration sermon in Washington. They are preparing to host Mama Nzeba from the Democratic Republic of Congo who will be a guest of the Indiana Region in the summer of 2010 attending the Quadrennial Assembly and touring Indiana congregations.

The Indiana Region entered into a **Global Missions Partnership** with the Mbandaka District of the Disciples Community in the Congo in 2008. A Vacation Bible School Curriculum, *Congo Connection!* was created and used by many congregations in the Region and across the denomination. The Region hosted **Rev. ILUMBE Ndjongo and Mama Rosette Matezolo** for five weeks in the summer of 2009. Rev. Ilumbe is the Principal Supervising Pastor of the Mbandaka District.

The Region held 17 **summer camps and conferences** in three sites in 2009. Hundreds of children, youth, and adults participated in these events under the theme "Body Building, One Body, Many Parts." A new camp to be held in 2010 will be a "Tech Camp" for youth grades 6

through 12. Participants will be equipped to use a variety of media to support and assist the ministries of their home congregation.

The Region was pleased to serve as the host Region for the **General Assembly** of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada which was held in Indianapolis in July. One thousand volunteers were recorded as assisting with the effort which not only assisted with the success of the Assembly but created new partnerships and relationships among Indiana congregations.

The Region received grants of \$7,000 from the Oreon E. Scott Foundation and \$5,000 from Disciples Home Missions to engage in studies around the **transformation of the Region** as a middle judicatory and to work on development of the Regional staff as a team. As a result a Board retreat was held in September 2009 with Alan Roxburgh as a consultant. Rev. Roxburgh had engaged in some phone interviewing with key leaders of the Region prior to the Retreat. He also oversaw a 360 leadership survey for each of the ministerial staff and for the ministerial team. The initial work that was contracted for came to end in December 2009. The Region at its November Board meeting voted not to continue this consultant because of funding issues and a lack of consensus about the project's direction. The Board, nevertheless, remains committed to engaging in a process to re-imagine the Region's life for the benefit of our congregations.

The **2010 Regional Assembly** will be held at Geist Christian Church using their two campuses in Fishers and Indianapolis, Indiana on October 1 and 2. The theme for the event is "The Way of the Wilderness" taken from Exodus 13:18.

### **Financial Information, Concerns, and Reports of the Region**

- A. *What type of accounting method do you use:* \_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_ X Accrual
- B. *Is a professional audit done annually on your books?* \_\_\_ X \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No.
- C. *For the last three years, with regard to your OPERATIONS BUDGET ONLY, please provide the following information:*

	2009	2008	2007
Total Income	\$897,549	\$1,001,461	\$974,430
Total Expenses	<u>\$906,990</u>	<u>\$979,263</u>	<u>\$928,362</u>
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$9,941)	\$22,198*	\$46,068*

\*Note, net surplus or deficit numbers includes all end of the year audit adjustments including depreciation.

- 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?*

Total Endowment Fund balances from which we take a draw to support our Operational Budget---\$852,829 [Total of all Designated and Endowment Fund balances as of 12/31/09 is \$1,948,764.]

We currently draw 5% off of the 12 quarter rolling balance. We take no draw from the principal amount, only from growth in the endowment funds.

E. *What are the key financial issues and concerns currently facing your region's life and vitality?*

Overall decline in giving to Disciples Mission Fund has hampered our ability to faithfully address the mission priorities of the church in congregational redevelopment, leadership development, new church establishment, and clergy/congregational care. We continue to live at the edge of our ability to respond to basic congregational needs with the staff reductions we have had to absorb.

Indiana continues to offer financial support to the whole church disproportionate to our size. Our 185 congregations, representing 5% of the whole church, provided \$1 million in funding for Disciples Mission Fund in 2009, which represented 8.5% of all DMF giving. Hoosier Disciples provided \$1.6 million to all Disciples outreach causes last year.