

**Report of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Montana
Ruth Fletcher, Regional Minister**

OUR MISSION: To strengthen congregations to effectively share Christ's ministry with the world

Regional Staff

Regional Minister: Ruth Fletcher, female Caucasian
Part-time Administrative Assistant: Kathy McKerrow, female Caucasian
Part-time Caretaker, Cane Ridge West: Judy Johnson, female Caucasian
Disciples Women Staff (volunteer): Jean Muir, female Caucasian

**Established Congregations: 12
Total Members: 1,823**

**Congregations in Formation: 2
States Included: Montana**

Here are some highlights of the ministry of the Montana Region since the 2009 General Board:

CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Four congregations completed a New Beginnings assessment and are now into the implementation phase of that process. Two more are working through the three-year transformation process with the Center for Parish Development. Several churches are making use of the Unbinding the Gospel series to reach out to their communities in new ways. I worked with two congregations over a period of several months as they discerned the next steps in their future. The Rev. Dr. Ben Bohren spoke on the topic of Transformation at the 2009 Festival of Faith.

LEADER DEVELOPMENT

The Montana Region currently has seven students who are taking classes in the Lay Ministry Institute sponsored by the Montana Association of Churches. Those students anticipate being commissioned as licensed ministers at the end of their course of study. Four individuals who completed that program in the past are currently serving as ministers in our churches. Several Disciples pastors teach in this ecumenical program.

CELEBRATION

In September, 2009, the Montana Region came together with former Regional Ministers Fred Evans and Karen Frank-Plumlee to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the construction of the Lodge at our Conference Grounds called Cane Ridge West.

UCC/DOC PARTNERSHIP

A joint team of people from the DOC Region and the UCC Conference have been meeting regularly to discuss how the Disciples and the United Church of Christ might intentionally partner to more effectively support congregations in Montana and Northern Wyoming. That team hopes to have a recommendation to take to the Regional and Conference Boards this spring.

HOW IS THE MONTANA REGION PART OF GOD'S MOVEMENT TOWARD WHOLENESS?

Our congregations share Christ's ministries with the world by

- Providing programs for at-risk youth
- Ministering with Native Americans and learning from them
- Providing a spiritual home for those with mental and physical disabilities
- Providing hot meals and community for those in the neighborhood
- Reaching out to non-Christians and/or to those who no longer participate in a church
- Reaching out to the gay, lesbian, transsexual, bi-sexual community through several open and affirming ministries
- Donating food to local food banks

- Empowering children to take leadership roles

The Montana Region supports and equips congregations for such ministries.