

General Board

Business Item # GB-10-0684

Title: Report of Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Tennessee

Origin: Glen J. Stewart, Regional Minister

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

Regional Staff: Glen J. Stewart (M/C), Regional Minister and President
Tawanda Britton (F/B), Secretary
Joan Hale (F/C) Bookkeeper
David Johnson (M/C), Bethany Hills Manager
Sekinah Hamlin (F/B), Minister of Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation
Hope Hodnett (F/C), Contract Staff for Camp and Conference
Frits Haverkamp (M/C), Contract Staff for Congregational Transformation

Number of Congregations: 58

Total Members: 32,804(17,506 participating)

States included in Region: Tennessee and DeSoto County, Mississippi

1. How is the Christian Church in Tennessee a Movement for wholeness in a fragmented world?

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Tennessee is a movement for wholeness and a part of a larger movement for wholeness in a fragmented world by serving the men and women, clergy and lay persons that make up the Christian Church in Tennessee.

The Christian Church in Tennessee is a participant in the SERF Anti-Racism, Pro-reconciliation Ministry. The Reverend Sekinah Hamlin leads the Regions of the Southeast in an effort to end racism first in the Southeast. Disciples of the Christian Church in Tennessee are seeking to bring wholeness to a fragmented world.

The Christian Church in Tennessee serves its pastors and members of the congregations to heal their lives. During calendar year 2009, the Christian Church in Tennessee, in conjunction with the Christian Church in Alabama/Northwest Florida sponsored three colleague groups for pastors to meet on a monthly basis and study together how they can better take care of themselves. Pastors spent time in prayer, Bible study, supporting one another and reading and discussing books that were about self care of pastors or self-care. Pastors gave very positive feedback about these clergy groups. These groups were made possible thanks to grants from the Oreon Scott Foundation, Homeland Ministries and in-kind support from the Pension Fund of the Christian Church. Disciples of Tennessee seek to bring wholeness to the lives of pastors who lead our congregations toward wholeness.

The Christian Church in Tennessee supports groups for women, men, and youth to help those who participate to have a whole life. Retreats are offered and other events for any person in Tennessee so their life might be more whole. Camps and Conferences are offered for young people that bring wholeness to lives seeking to lead whole lives.

The Christian Church in Tennessee is very active in establishing new congregations. I have heard from some of the members of some of the new congregations in Tennessee and they have told me how the congregation has made a great difference in their life. Some of the members have made significant changes in their lives once they felt supported by God and the congregation they were part of. Today the Christian Church in Tennessee has two Spanish speaking new congregations and one French speaking congregation for people from Congo. (The First in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ))

The Christian Church in Tennessee supports congregations and helps them make significant transitions. Regional Minister, Glen Stewart gives significant time to supporting congregations: in times of conflict, while looking for a new pastor, and while they transition. The Christian Church in Tennessee has offered opportunities for Tennessee Disciples to go to Haiti to witness the mission and ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) there and to offer a hand in bringing wholeness in the lives of our brothers and sisters there. Dr. Stewart counsels the ministers of our Region, helping them wrestle with the issues of life as they seek to serve members of the congregation they serve.

The ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Tennessee is varied. Each part of the ministry aims sharing the Gospel of Jesus with individuals, men, women, or young people, with the knowledge that the Gospel heals lives. This ministry to bring wholeness is never ending as the fragmentation never ends in our world. As new efforts are needed, new ministries are created. The leaders of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) seek to bring wholeness to a fragmented world today and always.