

**General Board Report: Great River Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**



<b>Staff Supported by Disciples Mission Fund</b>						
<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>FT / PT</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Barbara Jones	Executive Regional Minister; Disciples Women	Professional	FT	F	C	CEO, Vision, Leadership, Regional focus, Disciples Women
Rick Hamilton	Regional Pastor; Director of Development	Professional	FT	M	C	Care to clergy & congregations, District III, development, evangelism, new church stewardship
Vance Moore	Regional Pastor; Director of Missions	Professional	FT	M	C	Care to Clergy & congregations, District II, mission, director of Westside Mission Center
Michael Elmore	Regional Pastor; Director of Spiritual development	Professional	FT	M	C	Care to Clergy & congregations, District I, spiritual formation, worship
Wendy Paquette	Regional Administrator	Support	FT	F	C	Bookkeeping, Disciples women support, Program coordination
Tina Jones	Administrative Assistant	Support	FT	F	B	Phones, Web support, newsletter, mailings
<b>Staff supported by Permanently Restricted Endowment</b>						
Sara Rozzell	Youth Co-Coordinator	Youth	PT	F	C	Oversee youth cabinet, camp & conference, youth mission projects, etc
Jesse Lane	Youth Co-Coordinator	Youth	PT	F	C	

**Reflections on Staff significant to share:** When the Great River Region began in 2002, we came together with three executive pastoral staff, one associate pastoral staff, five full time support staff, three contract program staff and three offices all supported through Disciples Mission Fund. We had one part time youth staff person supported by the endowment – it is recent that the position was divided further for half of the original cost. In the first year, 2002-2003, two offices were closed, four full time support staff were released, and one executive position completed her transitional ministry. Though our intent was to immediately implement the plan we agreed, God did not see it that way, and previous general board reports have addressed that history. At this moment in time, I bring this up because we recently had a change of staff and had a reduction through which we lost our one professional staff person who was female, ordained and African American. This is a personnel issue that I will discuss privately, but not in this report. Her duties were redistributed, thus we are not where we will be in the future. I have taken on the Disciples Women and our regional administrator attends what I cannot.

We still have reduction in staff to go. Two of our professional staff persons are in their sixties, one is married to an executive and his wife has likely avoided a move away from Arkansas as long as possible.

Our region was blessed by an influx of Disciples following disastrous hurricanes, and we ourselves were not able to implement “our plan” for the Great River Region. These Disciples brought to us a Critical Presence of Christ’s love in a time of human need. Through these four years, God has transformed us from what we guessed we should be to what we discovered we were being led to be: a region of Critical Presence. The turning point was my trip to the Dominican Republic and Haiti in February of 2009. \*I\* and \*we\* did not have \*words\* to describe “where we were”...

As I travelled with Felix Ortiz and Bob Shebeck, and as my former mentor and friend Bill McKnight passed from this world to the next the day we passed into Haiti – and there was not a thing I could do – I learned that what we had become was a region of Critical Presence.

This was not a program we signed up for. This was not a name we adopted as a “Global Mission Partner”. We, as 127 congregations, had been radically affected in our infancy by forces beyond our control, hard for us to understand and accept.

As I walked in Santo Domingo and Port au Prince I saw the French Quarter and for the first time it made sense why our region – our people – rebel so \*irrationally\* to anything that smacks of colonialism. We are part of that history. Felix stood with me as I cried and shook my head in amazement.

The fish farms of our delta and the farmers learning to build fish farms in the bayou of the DR...

The bags of rice from Stuttgart Arkansas, and yes, the politics that bind us together.

Whether the US is aware of it or not, there are reasons that AR, LA and MS are our “third world” and rank 48, 49, 50. I learned that our affinity to the Dominican Republic is that of Critical Presence. What they could bring us – solar technology perhaps? What we could bring them – sewing teachers? What we bring each other – Christ’s love.

Most of all, we are moved that our the Great River Region has an identity and a mission and a calling – within the region, beyond the region, within every congregation. And our goal is that every congregation identify what God is calling them to do and be where they are. What is the critical human need where they are? Nothing new. Just imperative.

I wanted to share our charts and graphs of our new streamlined board structure, etc, but alas, I cannot find it in electronic form. Please accept this statement as an accurate account of where we are and who we are as a part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edward J. Jones". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "J".