

Ohio Regional Newsletter - July 2021

Sign Up Now For August 7th Disciples Virtual Gathering

You are invited to participate in the 2021 Disciples Virtual Gathering, on **Saturday, August 7, 2021!**

What is the Disciples Virtual Gathering? We are glad you asked! It's a one day event on August 7 where Disciples from across the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in United States and Canada will gather virtually to:

- Hear Bible lectures with dynamic teachers
- Worship together, celebrating that NOTHING can separate us from the love of God
- Attend interactive and engaging workshops on relevant leadership and ministry topics
- Engage in a virtual exhibit hall that is informative and interactive
- PLUS a virtual lounge where participants can connect and chat with each other

You can see the full line up of speakers and a schedule the website at <https://disciplesconnect2021.vfairs.com/>.

It's all happening live on August 7, but you will have access to the exhibit hall and platform a few days early so you can browse, get a feel for the experience and prepare for a day of reflection, study, worship and learning.

We can't wait to see you there and celebrate that NOTHING can separate us from the love of God!



Across The Region And In My Heart

Rev. Allen V. Harris, Regional Pastor & President, Christian Church in Ohio

One of the lesser-known "celebration months" is July which is Disability Pride Month. I find such monthly designations help our society, in general, and the church, specifically, deepen our understanding of the rich diversity of God's creation and call us to advocate for and be invested in justice for more and more of our family members, friends, neighbors, and colleagues in our personal and communal lives as well as our institutions' and congregations' mission and ministries.

July was chosen because it was in this month that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. This document was the "world's first comprehensive declaration of equality for people with disabilities." And while there are many legal exceptions for religious institutions for many of the law's requirements, as people of faith we nonetheless maintain the moral imperative to make our facilities and, more importantly, our hearts and perspectives, accessible to all people.

When I was serving as Associate Pastor at Park Avenue Christian Church in New York City, we had an accessibility audit done on our facility. One of the things that was impressed upon us most strongly by the auditor was that too many churches think about the most expensive or the most difficult things needed to make their building more accessible (quite often the installation of an elevator) and give up before they begin. Rather, they really could begin with simple things which were attainable and that may, in fact, make a huge difference for more people. The auditor, who was standing on a slight slope from one level of the building to another, motioned to the wall next to her. "For example," she told us, "a handrail here on this slope would make it much safer for persons who were elderly or had mobility issues to navigate what we think is an insignificant incline but may be anxiety-producing or dangerous for them." That simple example shifted our efforts significantly and for the better.

When I was Senior Pastor at Franklin Circle Christian Church in Cleveland and we were deepening our justice commitments we decided that we would not simply vote on becoming an Open & Affirming Congregation, but to commit ourselves wholeheartedly to the Region's Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism efforts, as well as to become an Accessible Congregation. The latter was a program of the National Organization on Disability's Accessible Congregations Campaign (ACC), which sadly no longer exists. What we learned from the ACC was that it was just as important to work on changing our perceptions about who is differently abled or disabled and how they are welcomed into our communities as it was to make building modifications or provide hearing enhancement systems (which are also important, of course). This perspective maintained that without a change of heart and awareness, no other adaptations would ultimately be successful. I believe this was exactly what Jesus was trying to get at with his parable of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:1-46)

I invite you and your community of faith to celebrate Disability Pride Month and then share with us how you are doing this. Find out more information about Disability Pride Month and practical ideas to commemorate it at: <https://therollingexplorer.com/everything-you-need-to-know-about-disability-pride-month-in-2020/> (updated for 2021) and find out more about how you and your faith community can support people with disabilities, their families, and those who support them, go online to: <https://faithanddisability.org/>

Faithfully Yours,
Allen

Matching Gift Opportunity for Camp Christian

WOW!

The First Christian Church of Athens, Ohio has generously offered a \$10,000 matching grant for the funds raised by the Sponsor-A-Camper Fund this summer! If you give now, you double your offering and help to make a HUGE impact at Camp Christian! Click the following link to offer your donation - <https://www.ccinoh.com/other-pages/donation.aspx> - Any dollar amount will be matched up to \$10,000! Please share widely to help maximize this giving opportunity! We hope to have met our matching gift goal by the end of this summer's camping program, so please plan to make your donation by August 1st.



Additionally, FCC Athens has offered a separate gift of \$5,000 to help with the Camp Operating expenses for

Camp Christian 2021! We are so blessed by the stewardship and giving of this faithful congregation! Thank you FCC Athens!!!

If your congregation is interested in participating in offering other matching grants, or in large gifts to Camp Christian or the Christian Church in Ohio, please reach out to our Regional Pastor and President, Rev. Allen Harris at aharris@ccinoh.org.

Reminder, Camp Christian Summer Registration Now Open!

Summer is officially here and Chi Rho Camp starts THIS SUNDAY, July 4th!! It's not too late though to register for this or any of the other Summer Programs coming up.

Linked [HERE](#) please find the forms for the various weeks of camp as well as the health and scholarship forms. There are a few differences between previous years' forms and this year's forms due to changes we have had to make around Covid-19, so please take your time to read over the documents carefully.

We look forward to seeing all of you back at Camp Christian this summer, so please share these forms and information with anyone and everyone you know who may be interested in coming to camp! See you soon!

For any questions, please contact Regional Program Director, Rev. Alan Dicken at adicken@ccinoh.org.

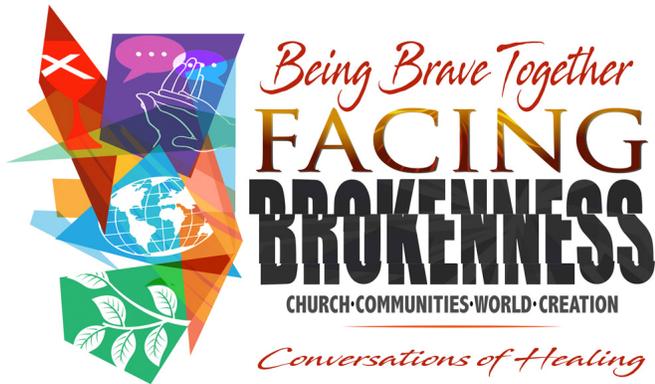
Join Global Ministries for a Virtual Pilgrimage to Puerto Rico!

Join Global Ministries for a virtual pilgrimage to Puerto Rico and immerse yourself in the work, witness, and hope of AMANESER 2025. Global Ministries is offering free registrations to the first 20 participants to provide engagement opportunities to Disciples and UCC persons.



In the Eye of the Hurricane: A Virtual Pilgrimage to Puerto Rico is a collaboration between AMANESER 2025 and Global Ministries. This virtual pilgrimage will explore the effects of climate change in this Caribbean island through the lens of Hurricane María, a hurricane that devastated Puerto Rico in 2017. In addition, participants will learn about how colonialism and racism play important roles in the current socio-political situation of the island, further aggravating disaster response and recovery efforts. Participants will also better understand how community organizing and sustaining efforts are vital solutions to these challenges.

[Click here](#) for more information about the schedule and registration. This virtual pilgrimage will feature live interactions, discussions, and opportunities to be present in community as we listen, learn, and share with staff and local community leaders of AMANESER 2025. Would you join us?



Facing Brokenness: Church

July 11th, 7:00 pm EDT

Join a watch party and virtual conversation after the presentation of Facing Brokenness: Church. A recording of a panel of four Disciple leaders will be followed by live conversation online. Participants include: Rev. April Johnson, [Reconciliation Ministry](#); Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Jr., [Disciples Justice Action Network](#); Rev. Ken Brooker-Langston, [Disciples Center for Public Witness](#); and Rev. Alex Ruth, [Disciples Men](#).

For more information and to sign up, go to <https://disciples.org/congregations/conversations-of-healing-begin-july-11/>.

Congregational News

Here is some news from a few Congregations around the Ohio Region. If your Ohio Disciples Congregation has news you would like to share with the Region, please email it to Regional Administrator, Jennie Stoddart Bernard at jstoddartbernard@ccinoh.org.



[First Community Church, Dublin, Calls New Minister Of Pastoral Care](#)

First Community Church of Dublin has called Rev. Mary Kate Buchanan as their new Minister of Pastoral Care. Their Senior Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Glen Miles, writes, "Mary Kate is an exceptionally talented pastor. A graduate of Princeton Seminary, Mary Kate was ordained in June 2019 at her home church in Hudson, Ohio. She recently completed a two-year term as an Associate Pastor at Plymouth United Church of Christ in Des Moines, Iowa, where she participated in their Transition Into Ministry program. Sarai Rice, the Interim Senior Pastor at Plymouth, said, "Mary Kate is bright, articulate, enthusiastic, and energetic. She's done great work here, and we'll miss her when she leaves." Mary Kate impressed the First Community interview team with her knowledge of pastoral ministries, intelligence, high energy, and outgoing personality."

Mary Kate will begin working at First Community on September 1 and work closely with Jim Long during the four months leading up to his retirement. Along with the staff, members, and friends of First Community Church, the Christian Church in Ohio is also thrilled to welcome Rev. Mary Kate Buchanan to First Community!

[First Christian Church, Wauseon Shares Ice Cream With Neighbors](#)

On Tuesday, June 15th, the members of First Christian Church in Wauseon revived a beloved tradition and shared ice cream with their neighbors. Their Pastor, the Rev. Michael Doerr, and members of the church were at the Wauseon Super Cruise In on Fulton Street, celebrating their ability to be together again for these events, and the ice cream they got to share with their neighbors.



Rev. Doerr writes, "The separation we have experienced from one another and our neighbors over the last year has given us an opportunity to remember why we do the things we do for our community. While it's wonderful that ice cream making has become a longstanding tradition for us (approaching 30 years!), doing something that long can cause us to forget the motivation behind what we do, or we might begin to think of these events as the means to an end (like: we make ice cream to raise money to send our people on mission trips away from home). While that may be the end result of what happens with the money we raise, the sharing of ice cream with our neighbors is a ministry all on its own. We share something delicious with our neighbors and express our love, AND the love of God, with them in the process."

[First Christian Church of Paulding's Oldest Member Welcomes New Regional Minister](#)

Ms. Virginia Paulus, the oldest member actively involved in the life of First Christian Church of Paulding, Ohio welcomed our new Regional Minister, the Rev. Allen V., Harris, on a recent visit. Rev. Harris worshipped with the congregation on June 27th and offered his sermon, "Fearing The Calm As Much As The Storm," on Mark 4:35-41. He also met with leaders in the congregation to talk about the future plans of the congregation as it seeks a new pastor. Ms. Paulus welcomed him at the door and made sure he knew that while the oldest member, there was another member who had been a member longer than she. Mr. Jack Moore arrived shortly thereafter and made the same point!



[First Christian Church Wadsworth Music Leader Job Posting](#)

The First Christian Church in Wadsworth is looking to hire a Contemporary Worship Music Leader.

They are looking for a dynamic, faith-filled individual to lead our contemporary worship music team. This position will work with an all-volunteer group of musicians to provide music offerings for our contemporary worship service. Additional responsibilities include participation in the periodic Coffee and Connections informal worship gatherings

For more detailed information, please visit their website: <https://www.fccwadsworth.org/jobs>

To apply submit resume and cover letter to: contempmusicdirsearch@fccwadsworth.org



**Save the dates for the Disciples Fellowship Retreat at
Camp Christian**

September 3-5, 2021 at Camp Christian

For more information coming soon at

[https://www.ccinoh.com/ministries/adult/disciples-fellowship.aspx!](https://www.ccinoh.com/ministries/adult/disciples-fellowship.aspx)

For the full Ohio Regional Calendar with upcoming events and important dates, go to
<https://www.ccinoh.com/regional-calendar.aspx>