

# Ohio Regional Newsletter ~ February 2022

## Across The Region And In My Heart

Rev. Allen V. Harris, Regional Pastor & President,  
Christian Church in Ohio  
Celebrate Black History Month

February has been designated as "Black History Month," just as other days and months designated to educate, raise awareness of, and celebrate the many diverse perspectives, achievements, and challenges of persons of various races, ethnicities, and national origins. Even as we take time out for focused exploration of a rich and varied part of our nation's heritage, we acknowledge that every day, week, and month year round should be about understanding more fully and honoring more completely persons who are Black and African American. The Christian Church in Ohio should be no different.

The accompanying graphic from our Disciples Home Mission reminds us that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has more to give thanks for when it comes to the leadership of African Americans than we often know or are led to believe.

To know more about the current breadth of ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) check out the ministries of the National Convocation here: <https://www.nationalconvocation.org> and to subscribe to their newsletter "Selah," email Brenda Rossy at [brossy@disciples.org](mailto:brossy@disciples.org) Finally, to watch a video about the

historic Merger Agreement that shaped the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as we know it today, go to YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2w7FsSiN3Mk>. It is my hope that these resources will help us all truly commemorate Black History Month in real and meaningful ways.

Faithfully Yours,  
Allen

(Click on the image to the right to download a [PDF version](#))

**CELEBRATE  
Black Disciples History**

**1867** The National Convention of Disciples (Colored) was founded by Rufus Conrad. He was the first called pastor of Mission Chapel in Indianapolis, IN. Mission Chapel is now known as Light of the World Christian Church.

**1872** Black Disciples congregations were growing strong across the cotton states and parts of the Midwest. The first Kentucky Christian Missionary Convention took place to nurture fellowship and plan for a school.

**1882** The Goldsboro-Raleigh Assembly established a training school for lay and clergy. In the same year, the Piedmont Tri-State Convention also opened a training school and campground.

**1892** Sarah Lee Bostick became the first ordained African American woman in the Disciples of Christ. She grew women's missionary work in her state of Arkansas and a dozen other states. She served for 40 years.

**1917** Preston Taylor, W.H. Dickerson, and Henry L. Herod called Black Disciples together in Nashville, TN for the first National Convention of the National Christian Missionary Convention (NCMC).

**1934** R.H. Peoples started a five-year study on the status of African American ministry in 23 states. In the study, 185 congregations and 140 ministers were included.

**1944** Drawing from S.S. Meyer's long-range plan, the National Christian Missionary Convention hired its own staff to give direct services to Black Disciples across the country. Camellia Barnes was one of those leaders.

**1969** The National Christian Missionary Convention merged with the International Convention of the Christian Church, maintained its corporation, and began developing the structure for the National Convocation.

Source: Journey Toward Wholeness by Brenda Cardwell and William Fox, Sr., 1989

## **Bruce Bowerman-Jett Called As Camp Food Services Director**

Following the work of a subcommittee of the Camp Christian Committee and the Personnel Committee, Bruce Bowerman-Jett was called to be our next Camp Food Services Director. Bruce officially began this last week. His culinary efforts will include three kinds of food service: Summer Camp and Conference, Christian Church in Ohio Events (non-camp), and rental groups (congregations and outside groups.) You can contact him via his new email address [bbowerman-jett@ccinoh.org](mailto:bbowerman-jett@ccinoh.org) starting next week.



Here is Bruce's introduction:

*Greetings,*

*It is with great excitement and a grateful heart that I have been called to do this outdoor ministry as your Food Services Director with the Christian Church In Ohio at Camp Christian.*

*My name is Bruce Bowerman-Jett. I am currently attending Phillips Theological Seminary as I am "in care with the Commission on Ministry for Ordination." I serve First Christian Church in Bellefontaine and Kenton, Ohio. I also lead The Free Store at Camp Christian.*

*My love for the church and camp came from my time I spent at Camp Christian. Some of the places I find rest and renewal happen when I am camping, hiking, entertaining friends, gardening, traveling, and watching a good TV show.*

*I have a strong passion to serve along with a team of folks who find "outdoor church" to be a vital ministry. I look forward to seeing you all this summer!*

*Pressing On in His Grace,  
Bruce Bowerman-Jett*

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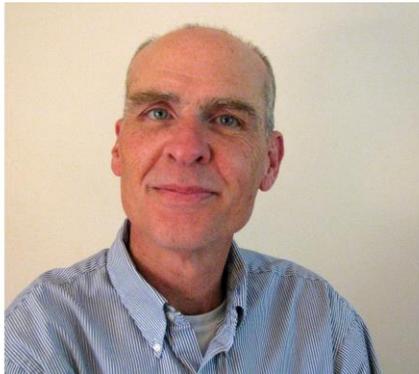
## **Networking For All Youth Ministers, Youth Advisors, and Other Children & Youth Leaders**

A small group of those in the Christian Church in Ohio who work with children and youth in our congregations have been meeting on occasion to network, share ideas, and support one another. We are eager for this group to continue and to grow.



We invite all who work with children and youth to let us know so that we can connect you better, network you more fully, and show you our support for one another in new and more tangible ways. We will keep a list of such leaders in our database to share with everyone and keep up to date. You do not have to be attending or serving a Disciples of Christ congregation. We even have one of our General Ministry Partners who is involved in children and youth ministry but lives in Ohio already on our list!

If you are someone who is involved in children and/or youth ministry in any way, please email us at [ccio@ccinoh.org](mailto:ccio@ccinoh.org) and let us know that you are and tell us a little bit about what you are doing and where you are serving. We hope to have a virtual meeting soon to meet each other and learn what you might need more of from the Regional Minister and Regional Church Office!



### **Regional Church Council Affirms Rev. Jim Bane As Volunteer Regional Camp Liaison**

At the recommendation of the Regional Minister and the Camp Christian Committee, the Regional Church Council offered its support for a new "Regional Camp Liaison" volunteer position to be created to help aid communication between the planning team for our summer camp and conference programs and the Camp Christian Committee and Regional Minister. This position will also be a resource for advice and counsel to Summer Camp Staff and Directors. The Regional Council also affirmed the Rev. Jim Bane as our Liaison for the 2022 Camp & Conference Season.

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## Rev. Alan Dicken Called To New Position At Week Of Compassion

Our very own Rev. Alan Dicken has been called as the new Associate Director for Refugee and Immigrant Response with the Week of Compassion. Here is part of the announcement from Week of Compassion:

*"In this season when needs are increasing, two new staff joining the work at Week of Compassion will increase our capacity for ministry and allow us to respond most faithfully with our partners and communities.*

*Rev. Alan Dicken will serve as Associate Director for Refugee and Immigrant Response, working with local congregations and regional ministers to equip and connect congregations in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to refugee and immigration assistance. These activities include building partnerships and collaborative commitments with a variety of Disciples and ecumenical partners to establish a sustainable, long-term refugee and immigration response.*

*Raiza Spratt joins us as Disaster Response Organizer, engaging a deep relational understanding of the church and its structures, to work with Disciples communities to build capacities for disaster response, including preparedness, relief, and long-term recovery."*

You can read the entire press release here:

<https://www.weekofcompassion.org/stories/responding-in-a-changing-landscape>

We are thrilled with Rev. Dicken's call to the larger church and we offer him our support, prayers, and joyful celebration!



## Camp Christian Summer Staff Applications

Do you know a young adult who would love to spend their summer at Camp Christian serving on Camp Staff? Perhaps, it's you!!

The 2022 Camp Staff Application & Reference Forms are posted. Please share with anyone who may be interested in applying. Thank you!

More info and the documents are available at: <https://www.ccinoh.com/camp-christian/summer-programs/camp-christian-summer-staff.aspx>

**Deadline to apply is February 28th.**

## Advance Winter Retreat - Rescheduled

As young adults (ages 19-30,) we are often faced with the stress of unknowns in our personal lives. So how on top of all the uncertainty in the world, do we find peace in all of this? This winter, we will tackle Finding Peace in the Unknown. So come join us **THIS WEEKEND - February 11th -13th** and you may find the tools you are looking for!



\*Full vaccination is required to attend and if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at [officers@advanceministry.org](mailto:officers@advanceministry.org). Additionally, if you are in need of financial assistance to attend, the Advance Scholarship application is open as well.

We are so incredibly excited and look forward to having you all in community at Camp Christian!

For registration information, go to <https://www.ccinoh.com/ministries/adult/advance-ministry.aspx>

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## Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF) Winter Retreat at Camp Christian February 18-20, 2022 for youth in grades 9 - 12

### Expanding the Table: Jesus our Host

Join us as we dive into gospel stories about Jesus and his table ministry. The way he so often used the act of sharing a meal, breaking bread, to let people know that they are seen and heard. This is the heart of the Gospel, the ever-expanding hospitality of God. Our bible study with keynote speakers is from the Gospel

CYF Retreat  
Camp Christian  
February 18-20

Expanding  
the Table:  
Jesus our Host



of Luke. We will look at Jesus dining with a Pharisee, his lost and found parables, feeding of the 5000 and the Last Supper. Saturday night will be all fun and games with a bonfire. Sunday afternoon we will end our time together with a special worship service, including communion.

Mission project: We are collecting new or lightly used twin sheet sets. (Please donate white sheets only for laundering purposes.) These sheet sets will be made available to folks who are not able to bring their own bedding to camp. We are also collecting items to make toiletry kits to be used at camp for folks who forget something or are unable to bring these items to camp for financial reasons. Items such as bar soap, bodywash, shampoo/conditioner, toothpaste/toothbrush and deodorant. All donations are appreciated as we strive to make camp accessible to all.

**Please note:** Youth must provide proof of vaccination or proof of a negative covid-19 test, administered 24 hours before arriving at camp. All adult staff, directors and counselors must be fully vaccinated. Masks are required. If you have questions or concerns please contact Colleen Munley, chair of CYF Commission/Regional Youth Council at [munleycolleen@yahoo.com](mailto:munleycolleen@yahoo.com)

Registration and scholarship forms and information available at <https://www.ccinoh.com/ministries/children-youth/youth-fellowship/cyf-retreat.aspx>.

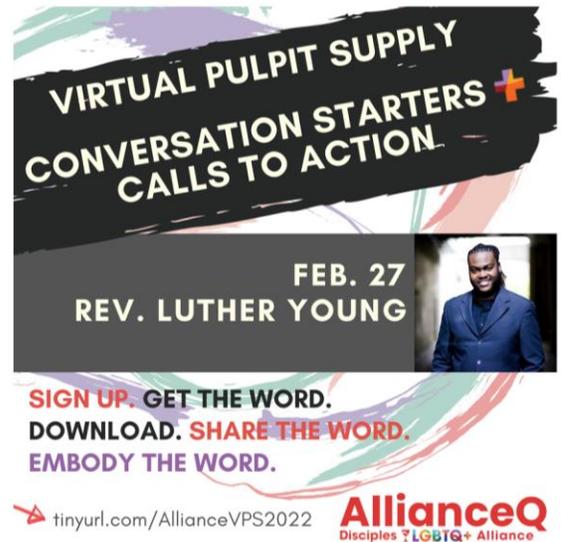
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## Rev. Luther Young Provides Sermon For Virtual Pulpit Supply

Our very own Rev. Luther Young, Minister of Music/Pastoral Leader at Woodland Christian Church in Columbus, is preaching as part of this wonderful Virtual Pulpit Supply (VPS) graciously provided by Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance. Rev. Luther Young will bring the word and call us to #embodytheword.

Now the resource includes conversation starters and calls to action. This resource is great for small groups as well as worship settings. Request February's VPS now at <https://tinyurl.com/AllianceVPS2022>. Request every month's materials if you would like and can use it.

Please consider using this resource for your faith community or church on Sunday, February 27. Pass this information along to someone else who might be able to use it as well!



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## Change of Date For The Next International Affairs Seminar Announced: March 8-16, 2024

The COVID Pandemic has again taken its toll on us planning an effective and safe weeklong event. Because of the continued uncertainty of securing travel, lodging, meals, and activities, which need to be made months in advance, it became clear that we could not adequately plan for this event by February of 2023. Therefore, we are rescheduling the Seminar to March 8-16, 2024. To read more about the 2024 International Affairs Seminar, go to: [https://www.ccinoh.com/media/319202/un\\_seminar\\_2024\\_change\\_of\\_date\\_flyer.pdf](https://www.ccinoh.com/media/319202/un_seminar_2024_change_of_date_flyer.pdf)

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## Year Book Reports Due February 28th

Most kids of a certain age have heard the riddle, "What's black and white and read (or red) all over?" Answers range from zebras with dermatological conditions to newspapers. Well, here's a new answer to go along with those – [ALEX: Data for Disciples](https://disciples.org/alex/data-for-disciples). The data ALEX contains in the form of Yearbook reports is somewhat black and white in that numbers are pretty straightforward. The data is "read all over" by other congregations in summary reports, by regional staff helping congregations, and other ministries seeking to better support our congregations.

**Help all the expressions of the church by making sure your congregation is included** in this year's data gathering effort. Reports are submitted electronically through ALEX, approved by the region, and end up in the annual statistical snapshot of the church known as the Yearbook. Reports are due to the Regions by Feb. 28 so they can be reviewed and approved by March 15.

**For more information, including worksheets and instructions, go** to <https://disciples.org/alex/congregation-user-info>.

You can see the **instructions and worksheet posted [here](#)** along with a video of what is new and a tour of the tabs. Please plan to make time to **enter your information during February** so your region has the opportunity to ask you questions before March 15!

**Your attendance will automatically be totaled and averaged for you** by the system when it comes time to fill in your Yearbook report **if** you have been filling in your weekly numbers. Go to the icon that looks like a pencil piercing a box and you'll find how to add your entries.

When congregation administrators go to look at the Yearbook listing for the congregation, you will notice TWO tabs - one for the ministerial staff and one for the other staff. **You cannot edit the minister listing, but you can still update your other staff at any time.** If you need the minister listing edited, let us know at [ccio@ccinoh.org](mailto:ccio@ccinoh.org).



## Week of Compassion Special Offering

February 20 – 27

### *Love Remains*

On Memorial Day 2019, tornadoes swept through the Miami Valley of Ohio, destroying thousands of homes and apartments and leaving a trail of downed trees and power lines in their wake. Many of the tornado-affected families have had to relocate multiple times since the tornadoes due to substandard housing conditions and inflated rent.



Two years after the storm, the Stephens family were still unable to find adequate living quarters. The family of ten was forced to live apart. In addition to dealing with unscrupulous contractors, the family had to haggle with insurance companies as they tried to rebuild their home. The Stephenses, like so many other families, remained in temporary housing and separated, pending the completion of repairs.

Yet, all was not lost. The Stephens family connected with the Miami Valley Long-Term Recovery Operations Group (MVLTRG,) and volunteer teams finished the repairs.

Alongside these traditional home repair projects, and with support from Week of Compassion, the MVLTRG helped launch the Tornado Survivors' Pathways to Homeownership Project to help alleviate the housing crunch in the Dayton area. Volunteers and local nonprofits work together to transition "nuisance" properties and vacant lots into affordable, single-family housing options for tornado survivors who were displaced from rental housing, stabilizing both families and the community. First-time homeowners receive the support they need to build for their futures.

Sammy Deacon, Brethren Disaster Ministries Long-Term Project Leader, says "When you reach out to help someone else, the blessing comes back to you as well. An important aspect of the recovery effort is listening to people's stories and knowing you have the opportunity to help them—physically and spiritually."

With support for long-term recovery, including innovative programs like the Pathways to Homeownership project, Week of Compassion helps create opportunities for families to thrive after disasters. Because love remains.

For more information and worship resources, go to <https://www.weekofcompassion.org/2022.html>

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## Water the Plants Prayer Initiative

The challenges of starting a church are unique and prayer is a vital component in congregation and community development.



Water the Plants (WtP) is a church-wide initiative that brings together 1000 intercessors to pray for the leaders and congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) New Church Movement.

This program gathers a team of dedicated supporters of new worship expressions to prioritize the spiritual discipline of prayer. Based on 1 Corinthians 3:6, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow," we will take a proactive approach to "watering" DOC church "plants" with prayer (Living Water).

If you are interested in participating, we ask that you commit to praying for the ministries and leaders of the New Church Movement. You will receive a Prayer List that will guide daily and weekly prayers during your own personal prayer times as well as during our Group Prayer times led by a New Church Ministry Prayer Leader on the phone. In addition, you will receive regular communication prayer reminders as well as a physical prayer reminder of your choice.

More information at <https://newchurchministry.org/services/water-plants-prayer-initiative/>

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## CCIO Ministerial Changes

### Rev. Stewart Royce called as Pastor of Central Christian Church Coshocton

Reverend Stewart Royce began as Pastor of Central Christian Church in Coshocton in Sunday, February 6. Rev. Royce was born in Toronto, Ontario, and his family has a long history with the Disciples of Christ in Canada. He worked in the newspaper business before entering the University of Western Ontario, graduating with a B.A. in 2000. Then he moved to Kentucky and attended Lexington Theological Seminary, completing his Master of Divinity degree in December 2003. During his final year, he met Jill, who worked as a hospice nurse in Lexington.



Upon graduating from Seminary, he served as Associate Minister in Hermiston, Oregon, and then minister to Boones Mill Christian Church in Virginia. Stew and Jill were married at Boones Mill church in 2008. More recently, Stew served a congregation in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. They have family in Dayton and Cincinnati, including two granddaughters.

## Pastor Jeff Wilder Commissioned at First Christian Church, Middletown on January 30<sup>th</sup>

On Sunday, January 30, Jeff Wilder was Commissioned to Ministry as the Associate Pastor of First Christian Church, Middletown. The Rev. Connor Thompson is Senior Pastor of the congregation. Filling in for the District 8 Regional Elder who could not be present, the Rev. Nik Donges, Regional Elder for District 12, officiated at the service of commissioning.

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## Farewell For Pastor Matt Kluchar as Pastor of Hilltop Christian Church

Pastor Matt Kluchar's last Sunday as Pastor of Hilltop Christian Church, Mantua, was January 30<sup>th</sup>. His last sermon was the week before. Rev. Kluchar is going to be the youth minister at Faith United Methodist Church in Canton. The Rev. Terry Bartlett, Regional Elder for District 3, led a Liturgy of Farewell for Matt. He is pictured with Rev. Terry Bartlett, his wife, Jennifer, and their son, Benjamin.



## CCIO Congregational News and Celebrations

### North Eaton Christian Church to Host Chili Cook-Off To Raise Funds For Afghan Refugees



North Eaton Christian Church in Grafton will be hosting a Chili Cook-off on Sun, Feb 27 at 5 PM.

Everyone is encouraged to make a chili to enter into the competition. BUT we also need side dishes and desserts. Drinks, Mac&Cheese, hotdogs, cornbread, and chili toppings will be provided.

The Midview Swinging Blues Jazz Band will be entertaining us for the evening. VOTE with your wallet! Put your donations into the cup of your favorite chili. All donations will go to support the USCRI Afghan Refugee Resettlement program of which NECC is a part. If you have any questions about the Chili Cook-off please contact the church office at 440-748-2230 or [necc175@outlook.com](mailto:necc175@outlook.com) The Church is located at 39895 Royalton Rd., Grafton, OH 44044.

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## **Disciples Christian Church Renovation and Cultural Arts Center**

Disciple's Christian Church has been remodeling our building to create a Cultural Arts Center for youth and families in our diverse community in Cleveland Heights. We are currently offering space free of charge to art organizations that make the arts accessible for youth with a goal of facilitating an after-school cultural arts program next fall.



To generate revenue to help maintain our building we are also providing reasonably priced rehearsal and performance spaces to area art organizations. During our remodel, in our sanctuary, we replaced our pews with chairs; added a new audio system and a 19ft. projection screen; replaced our chancel which had side choir pews and a marble communion table with an open chancel/stage that is raised higher and has an accessibility ramp; donated our pipe organ to a congregation in Indonesia; added new flooring; upgraded our wifi and installed cameras for live-streaming so we are able to worship hybrid with zoom.

This past year we have already hosted two arts organizations, Djapo Cultural Arts Institute, which has a focus on African dance and drumming, and the Center for Arts Inspired Learning (CAL), which has a summer art internship program where teens are grouped into various art mediums with a teaching artist and create art to share with the public. This summer CAL will likely offer: fashion design, culinary arts, afro-fusion dance, singer-song-writing, fine arts, graphic arts, photography and play-writing. DCC is further seeking to collaborate with other youth arts organizations in our community, including theatre, film, dance, creative writing and music. Check out our website at <https://www.discipleschristian.org/about>.

You can view a video showing the "before" and "after" pictures of the renovation on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/FfNvcGSH9Mc>

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### **Fifth Christian Church of Cleveland Offers Jazz Concert February 12 2022**

This Saturday, February 12 at 6:00 p.m.! Come on out or watch online <https://www.facebook.com/fifthchristian.church> and enjoy the beautiful sounds of music from students of Tri-C jazz academy and Cleveland school of the arts. The church is located at 14109 Benwood Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44128.

*(Information poster on next page)*



FIFTH CHRISTIAN CHURCH DISCIPLES OF CHRIST



14109 BENWOOD AVE CLEVELAND, OH 44128

**Featuring:** Greg Camp Jr - Keyboard/Piano, Oscar Lacombe - Bass,  
Ted Clouser - Guitar, Malachi Johnson - Drums, Nehemiah Baker - Drums,  
Rev. E. Regis Bunch - Organist. *Love offering will be collected for performers.*

**Watch LIVE at [Facebook.com/fifthchristian.church](https://www.facebook.com/fifthchristian.church)**

Email [FifthChristianChurchDOC@gmail.com](mailto:FifthChristianChurchDOC@gmail.com) or Call 216-752-5996

*\*COVID-19 Policy: MASKS REQUIRED if attending in person.*