

## Ohio Regional Newsletter ~ December 2022



### **Our Christmas Offering Helps Us Repeat The Joy! Tailored Resources Available to Congregational Leaders**

"Joy To The World" is a favorite Christmas Carol for many Christians, myself included, and perhaps the most famous line from it is, "Repeat the sounding joy!" which (naturally) repeats. Repetition is a musical technique to help us to remember something that is very important that might get lost if we heard it or sang it only once.

And after all we've been through/are going through in the past few years, we really need to repeat "JOY!" – loudly and often! Can I get an "Amen!"???

We repeat the joy of life because there IS joy in life and it bears repeating. There is joy in almost everything around us, if we have the heart and spirit to look for it. Why, even in the midst of death there can be joy. If you were at the memorial service for the Rev. Jim Schimmel you experienced real and tangible joy as we celebrated who this wonderful person was to us – husband, father, friend, pastor, mentor, camp counselor, and neighbor. Just as Jim wanted us to do, we celebrated with stories and laughter and even tears.

And there is joy to be repeated in our congregations. Our churches celebrate the joy of lives touched and hearts transformed, of community built and wisdom deepened. Joy is repeated when we invite people to the table of communion and when we pray over the bread and the cup. Joy is repeated when we preach and live the justice and righteousness of God and follow the way of Christ. When a lay leader or pastor visits someone in the hospital after surgery or a nursing home, we can frequently even see joy spread on the faces of those we visit or hear it in their voices.

And even in our congregations whose memberships are growing smaller and older, there is joy to be repeated. When these churches focus on joy we all are reminded that the health and vitality of a church is never to be measured by the number of people in the pews or by the age of those who gather, but by the level of commitment to Christ and by the lives that are touched by the ministries of the congregation and its members within and beyond its walls. Even congregations that are deciding to conclude their regular and tangible ministries repeat the joyful good news of God when they invest their assets in a permanent legacy fund of the Christian Church Foundation so that every year the joy repeats as dividends help support the ongoing mission of a multitude of organizations and institutions.

We hope your congregation will be receiving the 2022 Christmas Special Offering this year. Many churches are receiving it on December 11 and December 18. The funds from this offering, 100% of which comes back into the Regional Church in which it was collected, helps us cultivate and share joy in so many ways. Your Christmas offering equips the Christian Church in Ohio to echo the joy heard in congregational life, summer camp settings, seminary classrooms, and leadership gatherings. Your gift enables our Region to give support to Elders/Deacons/Trustees, board chairs, Sunday School teachers, youth group sponsors, worship leaders, seminarians, and pastors so that joy resounds. With your gift, connections are made between congregations, leaders, ministry partners and among Disciples throughout Ohio and around the world. You are invited to make a gift to the Christmas Offering to repeat the sounding joy across our church.

We have created a web page for resources for the 2022 Christmas Offering specially tailored to the Christian Church in Ohio. You can find them at: <https://www.ccinoh.com/other-pages/christmas-offering.aspx> PLEASE share this with your church leaders, especially your church administrator/secretary.

Included are:

- The 2022 Ohio Region Christmas Offering Bulletin Insert
- A .mp4 movie with music and narration for the 2022 Ohio Regional Christmas Offering (wide)
- A PowerPoint Video complete with music and narration for the 2022 Ohio Regional Christmas Offering (.pptx format - wide)
- A PowerPoint slides (6) for the 2022 Ohio Regional Christmas Offering. (.pptx - wide)
- A PowerPoint slides (11) with Litany for the Ohio Regional Christmas Offering (.pptx - wide)
- A 2022 Christmas Offering social media image (square)
- A 2022 Christmas Offering social media image (long/cover)

Thank you for promoting this important avenue to support, extend, and repeat the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ throughout Ohio.

Gratefully Yours,  
Allen

---

## Advance Ministries Announces Midwinter Retreat – Registration now open!

All young adults ages 19 to 30 are invited and welcome to attend this event!

Our 2023 theme will be "Pass It On". Through conversation with each other and our amazing faculty, we will learn how to discern and hone our spiritual gifts. What are my God-given strengths? How can I use them to not only transform myself and my relationships, but also the world? We hope through this that we gain a better understanding of who we are and what we have to share.

Join us January 6-8th at Camp Christian for Winter Retreat as your officers, Ally, Andy, and Maddy kick off the 2023 Advance Conference year! As always, bring a friend or two to join the welcoming community we've all loved, built, and cherish every day.

More info at <https://www.ccinoh.com/ministries/adult/advance-ministry.aspx>



## Spiritual Life Retreat for Ministers

*Spouses, Chaplains, and Retired Ministers are also invited to attend.*

**January 24 – 26, 2023 Camp Christian**



### ***Drink of One Spirit: Living Our Truths in Community Led by Rev. Monique Crain Spells***

Thomas Merton wrote, "The spiritual life is first of all a life. It is not merely something to be known and studied, it is to be lived." As clergypersons, the busyness of Advent and Christmas, will have passed, and the season of Lent will be just ahead on our calendars. During the pause between these two seasons of our lives, the Ohio Spiritual Life Committee invites you to take a break together and come away to the annual Ministers' Spiritual Life Retreat from January 24 -

26, 2023 at Camp Christian to explore the theme "Drink of One Spirit: Living Our Truths in Community" together as clergy colleagues.

**Retreat Description:** Given the numerous ways we encounter God and the heart of God among one another, what does it look like to "drink of one Spirit" as described in 1 Corinthians 12:12? We have online worship, in-person worship, Facebook Live videos, Twitter posts, radio, YouTube, text messaging, email, websites, and the phone. How do we ensure our community of faith is drinking of one Spirit—the Spirit of God as witnessed in the ministry of Jesus? We will explore characteristics of the Spirit, practice tracing the Spirit, and design a gauge to guide our walk and ministry of faith.

**Monique Crain Spells** is an ordained minister in the Christian Church Disciples of Christ who has connection to the church since 1988. She currently serves as Director of Christian Education and Faith Formation for Disciples Home Missions and the National Convocation of the Christian Church. Prior to this call, Monique served eight years in theological education administration at Christian Theological Seminary and Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University. She has actively engaged the wider Indianapolis community as an advocate, educator, playwright, preacher, and past moderator for the Christian Church in Indiana. It has also been her privilege to serve as a church planter, Hope Partnership clergy coach, and Past President of the Fellowship of Black Disciples Clergywomen. Monique received a Bachelor of Arts in Communications with a focus on Public Relations from Purdue University and a Master of Divinity from Christian Theological Seminary. She is completing her Doctor of Ministry coursework around the power of rituals at Lexington Theological Seminary.

Registration and full details at <https://www.ccinoh.com/ministries/adult/spiritual-life.aspx>

---

### **Pastoral Care Post-Roe Workshop**

For Ohio Disciples of Christ and United Church of Christ Ministers

***This workshop is for all clergy - pro-life, pro-choice, and everywhere in between.***

February 4, 2023 ~ 9:30am – 2:30pm  
Camp Christian

What does the law say? What are the available options of care? What does the sacred commitment to accompany and care request of clergy now

Rev. Terry Williams of Faith Choice Ohio will be leading a workshop for clergy on Pastoral Care Post-Roe. After the Supreme Court's decision on Dobbs, each state now has the responsibility of determining the legal availability of reproductive choice within their boundaries. Ohio's ban on abortions after six-weeks of gestation is currently on hold, but likely to become law soon. Further, the State Legislature is considering additional legislation to reduce and shape options of reproductive choice.

This new landscape has implications for how clergy provide pastoral care. What is required by the state may differ from what we understand our God to request of us. Our personal convictions may differ from the one in our care. So how do we navigate the responsibilities to God, our neighbor, and ourselves - all within our particular state?

Fortunately, we do not need to walk this path alone. Join other Disciples and UCC clergy within Ohio to learn of the current landscape and how we may not only walk, but guide others through it in ways that are compassionate, confident, and faithful.

Registration at: <https://www.ccinoh.com/regional-calendar.aspx?events=10913&action=details>

---

## Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF) Winter Retreat at Camp Christian

February 17-19, 2023  
for High School youth in grades 9 -  
12



Who God Says You Are, What the rest of the world thinks about you does not matter in comparison to what God Thinks! Join us at the CYF Winter Retreat, as we discover what the Bible Tells us about who God Says we are. Do you ever wonder about how we fit into God's Purpose or how our God given identity can and should impact the way we live. Come to camp for a fun filled weekend with your friends. Bible study, keynote speakers, games, singing and of course s'mores by the lodge fireplace.

Contact Colleen Munley at: [munleycollen@yahoo.com](mailto:munleycollen@yahoo.com) or Matt Thomas at: [matt.thomas1114@gmail.com](mailto:matt.thomas1114@gmail.com).

Scholarships are available through the Youth Scholarship Fund

Forms and registration at <https://www.ccinoh.com/ministries/children-youth/youth-fellowship/cyf-retreat.aspx>

A vertical poster for 'LECTURES in Religion'. At the top is a blue dove with its wings spread. Below the dove, the text reads 'REVEREND ALLEN HARRIS' and 'Regional Minister of the Christian Church in Ohio'. The date and time are 'JANUARY 17, 2023 | 5 P.M. | KENNEDY CENTER BALLROOM'. The title of the lecture is 'Reimagining and Retooling Faith For An Explosive World'. A paragraph of text follows, discussing faith and spirituality in a world of division. At the bottom right is the 'HIRAM COLLEGE' logo.

## Hiram College Lectures In Religion January 17 2023 Features Our Own Allen Harris As Speaker

Hiram College is honored to host the Lectures in Religion program, which welcomes religious scholars and faith leaders to explore the intersections and possibilities of religion and society. This year, the college is delighted to welcome Rev. Allen Harris to speak from his wealth of experience and wisdom serving congregations in the pursuit of justice, healing, and wholeness. His lecture will explore the potential of reimagined religious tradition to reconcile divisions among communities and lead us not only back together but towards a better vision of our world. Following the lecture, Rev. Harris will take part in a Clergy Conversation (@ 7:30pm) to discuss the challenges of honoring the roles of priest *and* prophet within a hyper-polarized and hyper-politicized moment.

The events are free and open to the public. Clergy and laity from the Christian Church in Ohio are most welcome to attend. Questions can be sent to Rev. McCreight @ [McCreightCJ@Hiram.edu](mailto:McCreightCJ@Hiram.edu)

---

## Correction on CWS School Kits – For The Good!

In a previous newsletter in the Festival of Sharing article we reported that there were 40 CWS school kits collected at our Regional Assembly. We counted incorrectly because we know that Rev. Lauren Roe personally delivered 95 school kits just from First Christian Church of Zanesville! We apologize for the error, but delighted that the final count was more kits!



---

## THANK YOU to the Regional Youth Leadership Team who helped Clean Lodge Attic at Camp Christian



---

## Ohio Council of Churches Meet, Elects Rev. Harris as New Secretary

On November 2 the Governing Board of the Ohio Council of Churches met. The Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan Jr. is their Executive Director. At the meeting our own Rev. Allen V. Harris was elected Secretary.

Find out more about this important ministry partner of the Christian Church in Ohio at <https://www.ohcouncilchs.org>





**Regional Minister Featured In Blog Post By Chalice Media Group's President, Brad Lyons:**  
***Hoping in Color: The Sacred Community of the Colors of Hope Retreat***

Sometimes it takes a lot of courage to be comfortable in your own skin. It shouldn't have to be that way, but it is.

All too often our culture teaches us to ostracize the different, to fear that which we can't understand, to alienate our siblings for no reason other than they're different. For those who endure being cast out, that's bad enough, but the injury magnifies when those values are couched in our faith structure.

READ THE FULL POST AT: <https://chalicepress.com/blogs/news/hoping-in-color-the-sacred-community-of-the-colors-of-hope-retreat>

---

**Cleveland Christian Home Announces New Partnership**

*Message from Chuck Tuttle, Executive Director of the Cleveland Christian Home*

Dear Friends of Cleveland Christian Home,

We are pleased to announce we have established a new relationship with The Centers and we wanted you, the leaders and members of the Christian Church in Ohio and beyond, to know.



Through your generous support throughout the years and through good times and challenging times, Cleveland Christian Home (CCH) has been the most trusted and reliable choice for children struggling to overcome the toughest emotional and behavioral challenges. CCH offers one of the only residential treatment programs in the City of Cleveland with an intensive treatment center. Our success in treating children with trauma has made CCH the go-to organization for children and families in crisis.

In this increasingly complex, competitive, and highly regulated environment, scale is of great importance to continue to keep these direly needed service available in our community. Through this partnership, CCH and The Centers have developed an opportunity where we can take our great services and make them even greater through efficiencies of scale. As we know it is with you, it is of utmost importance to CCH and The Centers that the mission of CCH and the services we provide remain available to the community we serve.

We are very excited about the opportunity to partner with a great organization such as The Centers to increase operational efficiencies, share best practices and make CCH a world-class organization for the betterment of the children and the community as a whole. CCH has done great work for more than a century, and now with our capital improvements, we are looking forward to molding this organization into one of the best in the nation.

This collaboration will continue the legacy of the Cleveland Christian Home since it was founded in 1900 when Rev. Henry Timme, a pastor in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), took in a family of children left on his doorstep. Congregations, clergy, and lay leaders have worked faithfully and diligently over the years to maintain the spirit and the mission of Rev. Timme, and this relationship with The Centers will help ensure that charge will continue well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Many Ohio Disciples of Christ came to know and trust The Center when they joined together with our beloved West Side Ecumenical Ministries on Cleveland's near west side in 2011, a ministry founded by several congregations including Franklin Circle Christian Church. That facility continues to faithfully serve the Detroit Shoreway area and nearby communities.

This new partnership will help the Centers to continue its efforts towards ensuring equity by healing, teaching, and inspiring individuals, and families to reach their full potential. Their integrated model coordinates health and wellness services, including primary care, behavioral healthcare, addiction services, HIV treatment, in-house pharmacies, and dental, along with family support programs, including early childhood development, career training, and job placement. This partnership allows for a continuum of care for our children that CCH alone could not do. We are thrilled for the impact of this holistic care for our children.

Effective, October 1, 2022, the highly talented and dedicated CCH team joined forces with the Centers to work together to have greater impact than either agency could do on its own. Rest assured that the services that have been grown, nurtured and developed over these many years will continue. Together, we are committed to continuing CCH's legacy to ensure that families in crisis are provided the very best residential care for children who have been through the most intensive trauma situations imaginable.

Your steadfast support has been vital in the lives of hundreds of children and we hope to count on your support. If you have questions or need further information, please contact us at [w@cchome.org](mailto:w@cchome.org) or 216-688-4103.

Best regards,  
Chuck

---

## Congregational News

### Heights Christian Church in Shaker Heights Offers Unique Outreach Project

Heights Christian Church in Shaker Heights is involved in many outreach and community projects, but none so unique as the one Connee Choi has developed with egg cartons. Connee, a longtime member of the church, has collected and recycled 8,728 egg cartons (to date). These cartons, gathered from members and friends of Heights Christian Church, go to farmers at the Shaker Farmers Market for reuse. She has been organizing this since 2013. The Pastor of the church is Dr. Kate Gillooly



---

### Lake Shore Christian Church Celebrations

On Sunday, September 16 Lake Shore Christian Church in Euclid celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the third anniversary of their Pastor, Rev. Brian Moore. In addition to a celebration worship and dinner, the congregation had a ribbon-cutting ceremony for their new electronic sign.



---

### Disciples Christian Church Celebration of Ministry

Disciples Christian Church of Boardman Invites Everyone To Celebration Of Ministry Sunday, December 11th.

Sunday, December 11, 2022 - "A Celebration of the Ministry." Rev. Allen V. Harris will preach at the 10 AM Worship, Rev. Cynthia Klingemier, Regional Elder for District 4, will also participate in this service. Catered Lunch to follow and all are invited, please RSVP to Rev. Beth Elizabeth Ann Pass to reserve a spot for lunch: [revbeth2000@yahoo.com](mailto:revbeth2000@yahoo.com)

---

## Men's Group Of First Christian Church of Niles Creates Annual Pine Wreath For Christmas



## Fifth Christian Church, Cleveland Invites Singers And Worshippers To Christmas Cantata

**CHRISTMAS CANTATA**

**FIFTH CHRISTIAN CHURCH DISCIPLES OF CHRIST. MAESTRO GLENN BRACKENS CONDUCTOR**

O SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG. FOR HE HAS DONE MARVELOUS THINGS. HIS RIGHT HAND AND HIS HOLY ARM HAVE GOTTEN HIM VICTORY. MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE TO THE LORD. ALL THE EARTH; BREAK FORTH INTO JOYOUS SONG AND SING PRAISES. *PSALM 98*

216-752-5996

<b>ADDRESS</b> 14109 BENWOOD AVE CLEVELAND, OH 44128	<b>REHEARSALS</b> DECEMBER 3 <sup>RD</sup> , 10 <sup>TH</sup> , & 17 <sup>TH</sup> , 4PM.
<b>CANTATA</b> CHRISTMAS EVE 6PM DOORS OPEN AT 5PM	<b>PASTOR</b> E. REGIS BUNCH, MDIV

---

## **Shreve Christian Church Provides Cleveland Christian Home With Christmas Tree.**

This is the 27th year that Shreve Christian church has been bringing a tree for the Cleveland Christian Home! It is provided by the Twinsberry Tree Farm in Shreve.



---

## **Clergy Updates**

### **Gladys Davis Called As Designated Pastoral Interim For Highwater United Church of Christ in Newark**

We are pleased to announce that Gladys Davis was called as the new designated term pastoral intern for Highwater United Church of Christ in Newark through May 2023. She began preaching on a regular basis beginning Sunday, September 11, 2022.

Gladys worked for many years as an accountant, an accounting consultant, and a faculty member teaching managerial and financial accounting and was our Regional Church Treasurer for four years. She holds a Master of Business Administration from Xavier University and a Bachelor of Science in Business from Miami University. Gladys is currently in her final year of seminary at Trinity Lutheran Seminary and will fulfill her requirement for an internship at Highwater and is in the Christian Church in Ohio Commission on Ministry



Ordination Track (Track 1). As an intern, Gladys was commissioned by the Disciples of Christ and licensed by the state so that she may perform all duties at the church (i.e., communion, weddings, etc.). She will have mentors/advisors from both the Disciples of Christ and the UCC. Since 1989 the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) mutually recognize their sacraments and ministry and are committed to work together to enhance the mission of the church. Please join us in congratulating Gladys on her new call.

---

On November 13 the Rev. Vickie Rankins-Anderson was called to be the new Pastor of New Hope Christian Church in Holland. She will begin her ministry January 1, 2023. Rev. A.W. Farnsworth completed his ministry at New Hope Christian Church on Sunday, November 20 and the Rev. Joseph Hara, Regional Elder, presented a letter and certificate from the Regional Church honoring his service. He served the congregation as Pastor for 11 Years (1999-2004 & 2014 – 2022).

---

Rhett Solon, child of Rev. Faith Solon and Trey Solon, brother to Beau and Dean, was born happy and healthy on October 29, 2022. Rev. Faith Solon is the Associate Pastor of Northwest Christian Church in Columbus.

---

On November 20 the congregation of Hale Road Community Church of Painesville bid a fond farewell to their Interim Minister, the Rev. Sandy Downs, after almost a year of service.

---



On November 13 Rev. Ron Shipley was called to be the new Pastor of Hale Road Community Church of Painesville. He began on November 27<sup>th</sup>.

---

Rev. Scott Shieber (*Pictured to the left*) called to short-term interim Pastor position at Northwest Christian Church He joins the Rev. Faith Solon, Associate Minister, who is enjoying maternity leave following the birth of her third child.

---

Rev. Nathan Russell, Pastor of Washington Avenue Christian Church in Elyria, wrote the lyrics to a beautiful new funeral hymn: "God We Meet To Share Our Sadness" to the tune of Hyfrydol. To view this on his Facebook Page, go to:  
<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=10226584967683840&set=a.2409100920353>

---

## Disciples Men Offers Updated Newsletter & Podcasts

In the last edition of *The Voice*, Alex and I introduced the first of the Five Touchstones upon which the work of Disciples Men will be grounded going forward. The first touchstone is "loving."



In this edition, we invite you to listen to the conversation Alex and I had on the *Disciples Men Podcast* around the second touchstone, "serving."

These podcasts represent *our* thoughts and ideas. The members of the Executive Committee of the General Conference of Disciples Men will add their own thoughts and ideas about how best to live into these touchstones for Disciples Men as they plan and envision together. We also know that you will have ways to live into them none of the rest of us have not thought of. So, we invite your feedback! Share your thoughts and ideas to help us live into the full potential these touchstones provide us by emailing us or sharing your comments,

Here is the link to this podcast: [Touchstones of Men's Ministry - Serving](#)  
It can also be found on [Apple Podcast](#), [Spotify](#), and [Amazon Music/Audible](#).

Over the past three years Alex and I have been privileged to interview most of our denominational leaders on *The Jesus Way/Disciples Men* podcast. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to get to know these outstanding leaders a little better by tuning in.

Thank you!

Rev. Greg Alexander, Director of Disciples Men



### Job opening at Disciples Church Extension Fund

[Disciples Church Extension Fund](#) (DCEF), which inspires and empowers congregations to create Holy Places where people connect with God, each other, and the community, is seeking to hire a Chief Financial Officer. This position will oversee all aspects of the financial operations department including but not limited to accounting, financial planning, budget process, cash management, accounts payable, audits, loans, and investments. This role will also participate in the strategic oversight of DCEF's mission so that

organizational priorities are implemented in financially prudent manners. Applications are due on December 16. [Click HERE to learn more](#)

## Apply Now to be a DPF Peace Intern!

Disciples Peace Fellowship (DPF) is now accepting applications for the Summer 2023 Peace Intern Program. This paid, 12-week internship is a life changing experience for young adults (age 21 and older) where you get to live out your faith while serving as an ambassador for peace and justice.

Visit [disciplespeace.org/apply](https://disciplespeace.org/apply) to learn more and start your application. Or email DPF Mission Director Brian Frederick-Gray at [missiondirector@disciplespeace.org](mailto:missiondirector@disciplespeace.org) with any questions you might have.



## Week of Compassion Special Offering



## RISE UP ANEW

Yet it is because I remember all this  
that I have hope.

YHWH's favor is not exhausted,  
nor has God's compassion failed.

They rise up anew each morning,  
so great is God's faithfulness.

(Lamentations 3:12-23, The Inclusive Bible)

Suggested offering dates :February 19 & 26, 2023

**For more information, including worship resources, go to <https://www.weekofcompassion.org/2023.html>**