



# The Disciples Together Express

News from the Christian Church in the Upper Midwest  
(Disciples of Christ)

October 2011



Bill Spangler-Dunning  
Regional Minister & President

The time is now! If there has ever been a time for coming together it is now! Throughout human history there have been those moments when ordinary people have had to make critical decisions during the darkest times. With the economy struggling, unemployment running high, political positions dividing up our country, natural disasters ravaging all parts of our world and church attendance and membership often decreasing, we could say that these are dark times!

In the past these "ordinary people" often chose two opposing paths when facing the darkness. The first path was to isolate and withdraw to protect the little resources that were left. The second path was to realize our strong need for one another and find new ways to share our resources, making all of us healthier. I think this was the message in the Bible story of the "feeding of the five-thousand".

We cannot wait any longer! This is the time! We, ordinary people of today, need to choose our path through these dark and difficult times. We can find new ways to share our stories and our resources with each other. If that means using the latest video technology to connect our churches during a time when physically getting together is no longer economically possible or for good stewardship of time and finances - then we will do it. We, the "ordinary people" of this time need to seek out new ways to break through our communication barriers of language, geographic location, and media delivery. If it means that we must face the hard questions that often circle around church buildings and budgets we "ordinary people" will find the grace and strength to do so.

For years we have been saying to each other the path that provides us with the most light for our journey begins with the simple act of coming together. This is the overwhelming message of Jesus in his continual call for us to be the Body of Christ, to unite where there are divisions and to love our neighbor. This is the time for "ordinary people" to come together!

As your regional Minister for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Upper Midwest, I invite you to seek new ways of doing ministry with Disciple churches near you and to come to the **First Annual Congregational Gathering** on **October 15** at **West Des Moines Christian Church**; where we will spend time reestablishing relationship with each other and discovering new ministries that with the help of God, will rise up in our midst like the loaves and fish rose up among the 5,000. The structure of this gathering invites every congregation to send two lay individuals with voting rights, if that should become necessary. Also, if there are others in your congregation who would like to come and be part of the discernment and discovery of what new ministries God might be calling us to do together - please encourage them to attend.



We are "ordinary people" but together in this time I believe with all my heart that God is calling us to rise to the occasion and do something extraordinary! Blessings - BSD

## Congregational Gathering October 15, 2011

Disciples will be gathering at **West Des Moines Christian Church** October 15, 2011 to continue in the new Regional Structure that was approved April 9<sup>th</sup> at the Called Regional Assembly. Upper Midwest Disciples will come together with ideas for a new way of Disciples Together Ministry. This is a day to dream, start planning and create your ideas for the Region. This day is a day about your visions of church and the Region. This day is a day about you! Come be a part of the dream and let your ideas be heard! The day will focus on sharing ministry ideas and allowing for large groups to share with each other allowing common ministries to arise within the group. The gathered body will commission ministries for the next year. During this gathering we will also chose a representative Operations Council and Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President will install our new regional minister Bill Spangler-Dunning. For more information contact your church office or Regional Office at 515.255.3168.



## Around the Region



- Trunk or Treat is taking place on October 30<sup>th</sup> at **West Des Moines CC, West Des Moines, IA, Capitol Hill CC, Des Moines, IA** and **Broadway CC, Council Bluffs, IA**. Participants are asked to decorate their vehicle trunks in a Halloween or other theme. Everyone is encouraged to wear costumes and hand out candy items.
- WOW! Worship on Wednesdays has begun at **Marion CC, Marion IA**. Youth group provides opportunities for the development of Christian life skills and multi-age Christian relationships through bible study, fellowship, witnessing, service, recreation, music, and crafts.
- Great Harvest Bread Sale Fundraiser starts October 2<sup>nd</sup> at **FCC, Red Oak, IA**. There will be many varieties of breads for sale! Breads will be picked up in November before Thanksgiving!
- **FCC Newton, IA** has started their night of F.U.N. – Family Unity Night – This Wednesday Night program provides youth bible study and adult bible study -Coffee Talk at the Holy Grounds Coffee Shop (a Sunday School room turned into a coffee shop) and puppet practice are also part of the Wednesday night F.U.N.
- **Capitol Hill CC, Des Moines, IA** invites you Saturday October 22<sup>nd</sup> to their Food and Gift Fair. Items for sale are hand-quilted quilts, baked goods, jams and jellies, hand sewn gifts and holiday crafts! Come start Christmas shopping early!
- Disciple Women of **FCC, Keokuk, IA** are sponsoring a Church-Wide “Good Stuff” Rummage Sale October 13-15<sup>th</sup>. Items to bring and receive are clothes, toys, knick knacks, kitchen items & more.
- In September **Oakland CC, Oakland, IA** had Sunday worship about 2 miles from the church where Hannah & Ethan Henderson were baptized in their family swimming pool. A luncheon was held in their honor. Baptism doesn't always happen around Easter and not always in the baptistery.
- PowerKids, (2 yrs old to 5<sup>th</sup> grade) PowerZone, (Middle School) and PowerHouse (High School) youth have begun at **FCC Oskaloosa, IA**. A Wednesday night children's ministry provides the youth with knowledge and understanding on how to grow in their Christian walk.
- The E.D.G.E. – Every Day God Experiences – is underway at **FCC, Perry, IA**. A Wednesday night Youth program with discussion, crafts, songs and other activities. A youth group to experience and “have Faith, Live on the EDGE!”
- October 6-8 is **Howard Street CC, Colfax, IA** Church Garage and Cinnamon Roll Sale. A great way to find winter clothing for the family and smell and taste homemade cinnamon rolls.
- Midweek Miracles (M&M) Club started at **FCC Burlington, IA**. This is a Wednesday night children's ministry and dinner for youth.



- **Regional Question: What does the Christian Conference Center do when summer is over and there is no camp?** The Christian Conference Center (CCC) stays really busy during non-camp season. The CCC hosts many religious, scrapbooking and quilting retreats. They also host family reunions, weddings and much much more! Feel free to call the CCC at 641.792.1266 to book an event for your church or family!

Congratulations to Gary Freeland and Jayme Harvey on their ordinations. Gary Freeland was ordained Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> at **FCC, Panora, IA** and Jayme Harvey was ordained Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> at **Park Avenue CC, Des Moines, IA**. Many prayers and blessings to both of you as you continue your ministry!



### CYF Youth

Mark your calendars for 2011 CYF Fall Assembly at the Christian Conference Center November 18-20<sup>th</sup>! Hosted by your Upper Midwest Youth Council

Come to reunite with camp friends and meet new friends back on Holy Ground. More details coming soon!



**We want your news!** Does your church have an article, story or event for the DT Express? The Region wants to know! Please email your editors Amber Elliott [adeumw@gmail.com](mailto:adeumw@gmail.com) or Adam Frieberg [amfumw@gmail.com](mailto:amfumw@gmail.com) or call the Regional Office at 515.255.3168 or mail article to CCUM, 5064 Lincoln St., Newton, IA 50208.

From **FCC Sac City, IA** Newsletter  
*“People, even more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed and redeemed. Never throw out anyone.”*

- Audrey Hepburn