

The Virginia Christian



Winter 2012

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A Quarterly Publication of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia

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REGIONAL ASSEMBLY 2012

To Live God's Dream

Exploring our call as Disciples
of Christ in today's world

Plans are underway for the 170th Regional Assembly of the Christian Church in Virginia, to be held June 1-3, 2012, on the campus of Lynchburg College. This biennial gathering of Disciples from across the state is an opportunity for us to gather in all of our diversity for worship, fellowship, business and learning together.

For the first time, participants have the option of registering for Regional Assembly online with a credit card. Along with full information about the assembly, a registration link can be found on the Regional Assembly pages of the Region's website: www.ccinva.org.

Jesus told his followers: "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13, 14). Can we, Disciples of Christ in 2012, still be salt

Continued on page 4



Keynote
Richard Harrison



Keynote
Todd Adams



Guest Musician
Andra Moran

In This Issue:

- Reflections 2
- Ministerial Changes 3
- Evangelism Workshop 5
- National Human Trafficking Day 6
- D.A.R.E. to Lead 7
- Contributors 8
- Extreme Faith... 11
- Week of Compassion 12
- Elders & Deacons Workshop 12
- HELM Fellows 13
- Craig Springs 14
- YMC Trip 15
- Kid's Korner 16

Calendar:

Regional Board
– March 10 at
Lynchburg College
Youth Spring Retreat
– April 20-22,
Hartford, VA
D.A.R.E. to Lead
– April 28 & 9,
location TBD
Regional Assembly –
June 1-3, LC
Extreme Faith/Bold
Action – July 13-15
See page 7 for a
calendar of Disciple
Women events.



*Regional Minister
Rev. G. Lee Parker*

Reflections from the Regional Minister

My father had an airplane. I never got to fly in it, because when I was born my mother told him, “You have responsibilities now and I don’t want you flying around in that plane anymore,” and the plane was sold. It was a Taylorcraft—a high wing, single engine, two seater, fabric skin plane. While growing up, I heard a number of stories about flying adventures. The one I like most involved tying surf fishing rods to the exterior of the plane, landing on the beach at Ocracoke Island, surf fishing and returning to Washington (NC) with fresh caught Drum.

The Taylorcraft of that day was dependable and easy to fly. The military used them in WWII for training, observation, and transport. One of the more desirable aspects of the Taylorcraft was its stability. If the plane were to go into a spin, and there was enough altitude, all the pilot had to do to return to level flight was to release the control stick and the plane would stabilize itself to level flight. That is a saving grace for a pilot in trouble.

That trait of self-correcting spins is not to be found in modern high performance fighter aircraft. These aircraft are inherently unstable. What makes them work is a complex computer “fly by wire” system. The advantage of this system is that these planes are far more maneuverable than previous generations of high-performance aircraft. They turn sharper, respond quicker, and enable pilots to fly in ways beyond human reactions.

A naval aviator of a Boeing F/A-18E/F Super Hornet off a United States aircraft carrier is flying an aircraft that has proven to be the most successful air superiority airplane in the world. It is filled with computers, advanced avionics, miles of wire, redundant systems and two powerful jet engines. It can fly at least 1.8 times the speed of sound.

Dad’s Taylorcraft could achieve 95-100 miles per hour. My, how things change. You might be wondering where I am going with this. I hope to make a point about faith in a power beyond oneself, regardless of the complexity of the situation. The naval aviator in an F/A-18 has to have faith in a multitude

The Virginia Christian

Editorial Team:
Amy Moore
Lee Parker

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of parts, computers, redundant systems, and a LOT of support personnel to do their job. Dad's Taylorcraft could never pretend to do what an F/A-18 can do, but one could lean on the basic stability and simplicity of the Taylorcraft to get you there and bring you home. I like being able to lean on the certainty of things—uncomplicated things.

The most certain and uncomplicated thing I know is that God loves me and that God loves you, and that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God, and the Holy Spirit is with us always. I like that thought to fill my waking hours. I know that no matter how deep I get into theological questions with sisters and brothers in Christ, God is in the middle of that conversation. I like the assurance that God is with us when we don't see eye-to-eye on how to do church. No matter how complicated church becomes, God is in our midst.

As simple as a Taylorcraft or as complex as F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, they both fly, and that gives them common ground. No matter how simply faith is grasped (Luke 18:17: "Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.") or how complex the theological study or the study of the scriptures becomes, it is still based upon common ground—growing closer to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of us all. Let's remember and hold fast to that reality.

Ministerial Changes

Retiring at the end of November 2011, **Dr. John W. Turner** was made Pastor Emeritus of Gilboa Christian Church after 25 years of ministry there, the longest pastorate in the history of the church.

Rev. Rick Harrison is serving as interim minister at Trinity Christian Church, Mechanicsville, VA.

Rev. Clay Boyd resigned from Colonial Christian Church, Colonial Heights, in January.

Rev. David Cobb resigned from First Christian Church, Lynchburg, at the end of January.

Rev. Kaye Edwards, Director of Family & Children's Ministries for Disciples Home Missions, will retire March 31, 2012.

Bethany Christian, Roanoke

January 21 was a special day in the life of Bethany Christian Church as they installed their new minister, Elaine W. Austin (who officially began her ministry there in October). Dr. Gina Rhea, the minister of Unity Christian Church in Radford, challenged the congregation in her sermon. She used the analogy of "dance partner" describing how the members and the minister were to work in harmony with one another. Regional Minister Lee Parker was also present for the official installation. Elaine was given two stoles and a bouquet of roses. A reception followed the service. It was the beginning of an exciting journey.

Continued from front page

and light in this world? This is God’s dream for the Church, but how do we live God’s dream? These are questions we’ll be exploring at Regional Assembly. Two keynote speakers will set things in perspective during presentations on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning: Disciples historian Rev. Dr. Richard Harrison will give us some historical perspective on how we, Disciples of Christ, have been uniquely prepared for this moment in history. Rev. Dr. Todd Adams is Associate General Minister and Vice President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. He will help us assess where the church is today and the missional landscape to which we are called.



*Friday Night Preacher
Joel Saucedo*

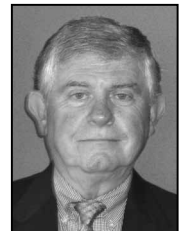
Friday evening’s worship will be led by the Piedmont District, with the message brought by Rev. Joel Saucedo, pastor of First Christian, Pearisburg. The Piedmont District Choir Fellowship, which

gave a well-received concert at the last Regional Assembly, will also participate.

Guest musician Andra Moran will lead a time of worship and song before each of the business sessions, as well as at other times. She will also work with the youth attending Regional Assembly as they plan and lead worship Saturday evening. Following this service, Andra will present an informal coffeehouse concert in Westover Room, a lounge-type space in Burton Student Center, below the dining room.

Westover Room will also be the location of our final worship service on Sunday morning, when Todd Adams will preach.

The speaker for the Disciple Men luncheon on Saturday is Archie Jenkins, current president for the General Conference Disciples Men for the United States and Canada. The Disciple Women’s luncheon speaker is Cynthia Stratton, pastor of Bon Air Christian Church for the past 25 years. If you plan only to attend one of the luncheons, make sure you register, either using the Regional Assembly registration brochure or



*Men’s Luncheon Speaker
Archie Jenkins*



*Women’s Luncheon Speaker
Cindy Stratton*

To view *The Virginia Christian* online, go to www.ccinva.org. The next issue of *The Virginia Christian* will be published in **May 2012**. Deadline for submissions is **April 16**. Articles submitted for the “Around the Old Dominion” section should be no more than 200 words. Articles and photos may be submitted by mail to the Regional Office or by email to: moore.amy.g@gmail.com.

by using the online registration at www.ccinva.org.

The number of interest group options has been reduced and will all be held during one block of time early Saturday afternoon. A second block of time offers an opportunity for small group discussion to explore more deeply how we might “live God’s dream” as individuals or congregations. Our keynoters will suggest topics for the groups to focus around, and participants will choose the group/topic which seems best for them. It may be appropriate to form a group of members of one congregation. Group hosts will help facilitate the conversation. The hope is that these conversations will lead to meaningful action or be the beginning of continued conversations back in our home congregations.

Congregations are encouraged to submit photos for the “Living God’s Dream” slide show which will run during dinner on Friday evening. You may send photos for the slideshow, showing mission projects, church activities, etc., to Janice Austin, electronically at jamarti1@vt.edu or via mail to 4495 Cumberland Dr., Christiansburg, VA 24073. Please clearly identify the church and provide a caption.

Cokesbury will have a book display, with the option of ordering books for home delivery.

Look for more information regarding housing options, interest groups, youth program, children’s program, etc. in the assembly

registration brochure which will be mailed to churches soon. The same information will be available on the Region’s website, with information updated as needed, as well as a link to register online.

Find us on Facebook—Virginia Regional Assembly—for updates and to see who else is coming!

Extreme Makeover Event

*“Learned so much! Thank you!
... Best workshop I’ve attended.”*

These are just some of the comments received about **Extreme Makeover ~ Tools for Evangelism**, the workshop held at Seventh Street Christian Church in Richmond on January 21.

Rev. Bill Lee motivated the nearly one hundred participants not to be afraid to talk about Jesus. Rev. Bill McConnell, in his morning keynote, “Systemic Evangelism,” reminded participants that evangelism happens through relationship. Evangelism takes place in conversation. We can share our faith and faith story, but we also need to listen. He added that evangelism isn’t something we do, but who we are; it is not something we do, but how we live. We must see people as God sees them and open our hearts and lives to them.

Several hour-long workshops with many talented presenters gave ideas on how to integrate visitors into church community life.

As one participant responded, “Let’s do it again!”

Virginia Disciple Women present programs on National Human Trafficking Day

Disciple churches throughout the region held community awareness events and prayer vigils on Wednesday, January 11, 2012 (the designated National Human Trafficking Day). "While we don't have the total numbers and names of all the churches that participated yet, it was exciting to receive calls and emails from local churches in the Region," said Donna Webster, Director of Women's Ministries, Christian Church in VA. "While I know not all of our churches were able to participate, it was wonderful to hear how members utilized some of the recommended materials that week in their bible studies." Examples of the programs that were used are being compiled and can be found at <http://www.discipleswomenva.org/2011-spring-project/human-trafficking-project/bulletins/>.

One highlight of the day was having Judy Sykes, Special Agent of the FBI (Richmond), attend the

awareness/prayer vigil at Fort Lewis Christian Church in Salem. Inspired by Newbern Christian Church, the church also invited a local police officer from the Salem Police Department. "In some areas, we are finding that our local law enforcement officers have limited information about human trafficking in the state. We hope by the end of the year to have reached most law enforcement bureaus."

In addition to the events, in January Disciple Women of Virginia and North Carolina unveiled their new human trafficking website called www.caughtintraffic.org. The website was designed by Tom Larson of West Side Christian Church. His wife, Jennifer, serves on the human trafficking committee for the Women's Cabinet. Information on "our next steps" for addressing human trafficking in our Region will be sent out in February. We applaud all the wonderful efforts Virginia Disciples are taking on this social justice issue.



Fort Lewis CC in Salem held a Human Trafficking Awareness Prayer Vigil.



District 11 Disciple Women hold Winter Retreat

Disciple Women Calendar

February 2012 –

Woman to Woman Application
to China to be released

April 7, 2012 –

Spring (SPA Day) Workshop:
Petunia Christian Church,
Wytheville, VA

April 21, 2012 –

Spring (SPA Day) Workshop:
Broad Street Christian Church,
Martinsville, VA

February 18 (Snow date Feb. 25) –

VA Women's Cabinet Meeting,
Regional Office, Lynchburg
Virginia, 10:00 a.m.

March 2012 –

Leadership Training for Virginia
Disciple Women Cabinet,
Christmount, Black Mountain,
NC

Saturday, June 2, 2012 –

Disciple Women Luncheon
at Regional Assembly
Speaker: Rev. Cynthia Stratton,
Bon Air Christian Church

September 7-9, 2012 –

Men's and Women's Fall Retreat
at Craig Springs: "Learning
the Liturgical Seasons"
led by Rev. Bill Moore

October 12-14, 2012 –

Virginia Disciple Women's
Fall Retreat, Blackstone United
Methodist Center, Blackstone, VA

About 90 women attended the annual district women's retreat held at Walnut Springs CC on the afternoon of Sunday, January 21. After a catered lunch, the Women of Worship and Praise Team from FCC Winchester opened the worship time. Donna Webster spoke on "Women of God: Being the Presence of Christ—a look at Euodia and Syntyche."

Save the Date! **D.A.R.E. to Lead Leadership Experience** **April 28 and 29, 2012**

The Virginia Regional Renewal & Nurture Ministry, in partnership with **Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation**, invites pastors and key church leaders to find out how participation in a comprehensive process for transformational leadership development can lead to new vitality for their congregation. The same event will take place on consecutive days at two separate sites in Virginia. Participants will spend two hours going through learning stations led by a team from the Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation. Locations and more details to come. **There is no charge for this introduction.**

Thanks to *Virginia Christian* Contributors in 2011

The Virginia Christian, published four times a year, is one of the best sources of information available concerning our congregations and districts, the Region, and the General Church.

Listed below are those who sent gifts during 2011. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. We apologize if any names have been omitted or information incorrectly printed; please let us know if changes need to be made.

You can also help by:

- (1) letting us know promptly of address changes or deletions so that we can avoid the cost of postal returns,
- (2) choosing to read *The Virginia Christian* online instead of receiving it by mail (see directions for how to do this on page 8),
- (3) sending names of all who want to receive the newsletter (especially new church members),
- (4) submitting short news articles and good, clear pictures (see page 4),
- (5) encouraging the members of your congregation to use the envelope found in this issue in support of the publication or to give online at www.ccinva.org, and
- (6) promoting *Virginia Christian* Sunday on March 4, 2012.

INDIVIDUALS

Ainsworth, Jerry & Kay
 Arrington, Clark & Jerene
 Atzert, Janet E.
 Bailey, Atha D.
 Bennett, Bonnie & Hayes
 Bethel, Shirley
 Blackwell, William
 Blanton, Martha
 Boyd, Arthur W.
 Brackett, Janet D.
 Britts, Bobby & Jo Ann
 Brubaker, Richard W.
 Brubaker, Warren & Virginia
 Bumpass, Eugenia T.
 Carner, C. R.
 Carr, Scott & Jane
 Clarkson, Carol
 Clemmons, Linda
 Corvin, Louise
 Crank, Melba C.

Crawley, Jr., S. H. & Joyce H.
 Crider, Joyce A.
 Crumley Jr., Mrs. Herbert T.
 Cummings, Betty Lou
 Cusce, Mauro J. & Lena
 Dalton, Kenneth & Linda
 Daniel, W. L.
 Davis, Evelyn B.
 Derby, Rev. David & Phyllis
 Dickerson, Jim & Babe
 Dickerson, Mildred C.
 Duncan, Andrew
 Dunham, Mark S.
 Edwards, George & Jan
 Edwards, J. Robert
 Elmore, Allen & Mandy
 Elswick, Clyde & Nancy
 Fain, Marie H.
 Featherstun, Patricia A.
 Ferrell, Lucille J.
 Flint, Lorraine K.

Franklin, Shirley
Garnand, Lorena B.
Garrett, Jane P.
Gilbert, Arlie & Georgia
Giles, Ellice & Gracie
Glasscock, Evelyn
Gordon, Ron & Marian
Graham, Marita H.
Gregory, Milton & Nancy
Grogan, Louise
Grubb, Phillis & Charles
Hall, Elmore & Mary Ann
Hanks, Berlin & Opal
Harris, Jim & Carolyn
Hart, Phillip & Diana
Haynes, Alma D.
Hill, Sandy & Ed
Hodges, David & Judy
Hood, Jan
Hudson, William & Mae
Hull, Kathryn
Huston, James A.
Jefferson, Tom & Jean
Johns, Shirley S.
Johnston, Arthur & Mildred
Keister, Gerry
Kimbrough, Lottie K.
Kraus, Neita B.
Leffel, John & Betty
LeSueur, Clarence & Fay
Little, Mr. & Mrs. Earl
Love, Edna W.
Loving, Alvin F.
Lyon, Emma Lou
Mattox, John & Betty
McCall, Dove H.
McCoy, Gary & Jane
McMillan, Mr. & Mrs. Robert
Mooty, Bob
Moran, R. L. & Martha
Nuckols, Dorothy H.
Oliver, Sr., Richard E.
Oliver, Bill & Beth
Oliver, Sid
Owen, Shirley A.
Parker, Lee & Jane
Parker, Polly & Bruce
Perry, Carlton & Lois
Phillips, Don & Gwin
Pifer, Eva Mae & Joseph E.
Pleasants, Mabel
Porterfield, F. S. & Lois
Powell, Sybil & Bobby
Powers, Tucker & Nancy
Pugh, B. G. (Spike)
Pulley, Ann
Ragsdale, Ms. Sandy
Ratcliff, Margaret D.
Richards, Patricia & James
Rodenberg, Carolyn & Jim
Rodgers, John & Virginia
Runyon, Mary F.
Schuermann, William & Sarah
Scott, Judy & John
Seal, Shirley
Sherley, Jack M.
Simmons, Patty & Danny
Simpson, James R.
Small, Herbert & Arline
Small, Ralph & Ruth
Sudderth, Cheryl
Sutherland, R. B. & Amy
Taylor, Marilyn
Thompson, Ron & Velma
Tinnell, Ann
Turlington, Jean
Umberger, Martha F.
Umberger, Ruth L.
Wallace, Ida Mae
Wallace, Susan K.
Ware, Constance G.
Webster, Elizabeth B.
Wells, Frances
Whitacre, Philip & Joan
Whitehurst, William H & Lois
Wiley, Nancy W.
Williams, George A. & Jeannette C.
Yeatts, Eliza
Young, Ruth S.

Virginia Christian Contributors in 2011, continued

CONGREGATIONS

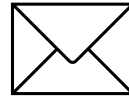
Bethany Christian Church, Richmond
 Centennial Christian Church, McCoy
 Clifffield Christian Church, Pounding
 Mill
 Doe Run Christian Church, Rocky
 Mount
 First Christian Church, Winchester
 Galilee Christian Church, Wytheville
 Laurel Hill Christian Church, Lebanon
 Mount Olivet Christian Church,
 Martinsville
 Mt. Olive East Christian Church,
 Martinsville
 New Hope Christian Church, Alberta
 Oak View Christian Church, Newport
 Park View Christian Church,
 Chesapeake
 Pembroke Christian Church, Pem-
 broke
 Poole Christian Church, Church Road
 Snowville Christian Church, Hiwassee
 Tazewell Christian Church, Tazewell
 Timberlake Christian Church,
 Lynchburg
 Walnut Springs Christian Church,
 Strasburg
 Westside Christian Church,
 Portsmouth
 Zion Christian Church, Maurertown

ORGANIZATIONS

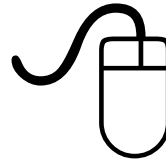
CWF, Fairview Christian, Hood
 CWF, First Christian Church, Roanoke
 CWF, Hillsville Christian Church,
 Hillsville
 CWF, Westhampton Christian Church,
 Roanoke
 Circle #2, First Christian Church,
 Hampton

Do you find *The Virginia Christian* to be informative, helpful, and encouraging?

Please use the enclosed envelope to send your gift to *The Virginia Christian*



or go to www.ccinva.org and click on "Giving" to make your contribution online!



Suggested *Virginia Christian* Promotion Sunday:
 March 4, 2012

A way to cut down on the Region's mailing and printing costs is to choose an electronic version of *The Virginia Christian*. When it is published, you would receive an email with a link to view it online.

To be removed from the "snail mail" list and receive an email with a link to the publication online, send an email to: regoffice.ccinva@verizon.net.



A Gathering of Disciples Men

July 13 - 15, 2012

Join men from across the United States and Canada at Bethany College, Bethany, West Virginia, for inspiration, fellowship, education, and spiritual renewal.

X-TREME FAITH FRIDAY:

X-treme Faith Bold Action Kickoff



Men of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Meet & Greet, Fellowship Pig Roast, Games, Pep Rally, Surprises & more!



Mission Work
There will be several hands-on projects for "Tool-belt Christians." Among the projects are a trail from the Campbell Mansion to God's Acre (the Campbell cemetery).



Work on the old Brush Run Church site.



Repair on the Mansion and its property.



BOLD ACTION SATURDAY:

'An Evening with Derek Maul: 10 Life Charged Words for Disciples Men



Mr. Derek Maul
Author
and Men's Ministry Speaker

A GATHERING OF DISCIPLES MEN SUNDAY:

A Special Message for Disciples Men'



Dr. Frank Thomas
Pastor, Mississippi Blvd. Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Memphis, TN

Tours
There will be tours of Bethany College and the Campbell Mansion and grounds.

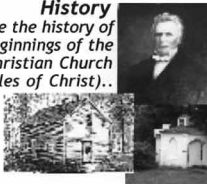


Work Shops

There will be several workshops to choose from.



History
Explore the history of the beginnings of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)..



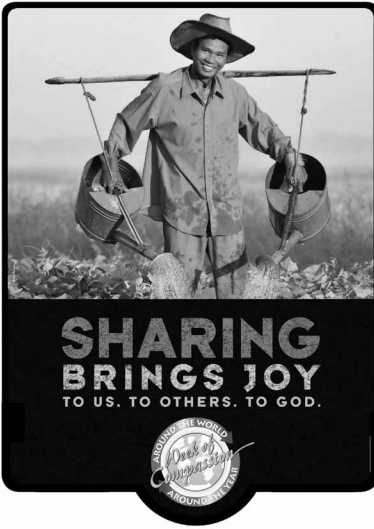
You can register for "Xtreme Faith, Bold Action: A Gathering of Disciples Men" online at our web site

www.gathering2012.org

or by downloading the registration form and returning it to the Office of Disciples Men, or by contacting the Office of Disciples Men to request a registration form.

Send requests and registration forms to:
GATHERING 2012, Office of Disciples Men, P.O.Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1986.

Registration through May 5, 2012 is \$175.
Registration for men 35 or under through May 5, 2012 is \$100.
Housing and meals will be extra.



Week of Compassion special offering to be received February 19-26

For more than six decades, Disciples of Christ in the United States and Canada have shared their material resources with a hurting world through Week of Compassion, bringing glory to God as well as joy to others. God's people giving of their resources—prayer, money, time, talent—remains the propellant behind Week of Compassion. The act of giving back to God is simply a matter of faith. It is the natural reaction to our saying "yes!" to following Christ. Sharing with others invites God more fully into our lives. As we reach out in love, we open the way for God to reach more deeply into us. Sharing will joyfully transform you as you help transform the world.

—Amy Gopp, Executive Director of Week of Compassion

Christmount Elders & Deacons Workshop to be held March 2-3, 2012 at Christmount

Good News in the Book of Revelation

Will you be left behind? What does the book of Revelation really say about the end times? Come to Christmount to discover why the book of Revelation really is good news!

Christmount and Lexington Theological Seminary collaborate for the Elders and Deacons Workshop to give lay leaders an opportunity to hear Disciples scholars and learn more about their particular ministry.

Dr. Margaret N. Ralph, Director of M.A. Program for Roman Catholic Students at LTS, will keynote. Elders and Deacons can benefit from this event in many ways:

- Gain a deeper understanding of the work they do.
- Learn specific skills, like how to visit in homes, how to deepen their personal spiritual lives, and how to talk about faith and the major issues of the modern world.
- Share concerns with and learn from other Elders and Deacons.
- Fellowship with other Disciples.

For more information or to register, go to www.christmount.org.

Applicants sought for Disciples higher education leadership program

Higher Education and Leadership Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) invites high school seniors interested in new kinds of Christian leadership to apply to join the 12th class of HELM Leadership Fellows. Application packets are available now at <http://helmdisciples.org/aid/fellows.htm>.

Leadership Fellows experience an ongoing relationship with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that adds value to their educations through organized opportunities for fellowship, training, and service to the church. With the help of a campus mentor, fellows design and conduct projects on or near their campuses, participate in an annual conference focused on shaping a Church for the future, and receive a \$2,000 annual scholarship grant.

Since 2001, over 70 fellows have passed through the program into careers as ministers, college professors, musicians and broadcasters, teachers, activists for peace and the environment and other forms of leadership.

Applicants must be high school seniors entering college in the fall of 2012 or community college students transferring to a four-year school. Fellows may attend any accredited four-year college or university, though students attending Disciples-related schools are particularly encouraged to apply.

The application deadline is April 16, 2012. For more information contact HELM at helm@helmdisciples.org or 314-991-3000.

To insure that you receive important information about programs and activities “like” the HELM Facebook Page at HELM-Higher Education and Leadership Ministries and/or follow us on Twitter at HELMdisciples.

Lectures to be presented by Dr. Ben Bohren

Dr. Ben Bohren, Regional Minister for the Christian Church in Northern California and Nevada, will present the 2012 John M. Turner, Jr. Lecture on Life and Faith on Sunday, March 26, at 3:00 p.m. at First Christian Church, Lynchburg. A 1968 graduate of Lynchburg College, Dr. Bohren will also present the Jennie Cutler Shumate Lecture on Christian Ministry at Lynchburg College’s Snidow Chapel on Monday, March 27, at 7:30 p.m. Dr. Bohren has been regional minister for the past eight years. Prior to that he served as Director of Church Relations of the Disciples National Benevolent Association and Director of Church Relations of Chapman University before that. He has a passion for youth and young adult ministry and for mission and believes that servant ministry is the hope for renewal in the church.

Craig Springs News

Our Region is fortunate to have a beautiful place to go to recharge, renew, and reconnect. Craig Springs Camp & Retreat Center is a place to discover and re-discover our God connection—a place where life-time friends are made. And the cool part is that you don't have to be twelve to participate!

Besides offering camping programs for all ages and abilities, Craig Springs brings people together from across the Region to share their faith, talents, and experiences. Adults come as counselors, coordinators, craft helpers, nurses, musicians, kitchen help, and gophers. Work weekends open and close the camp each season, with lots of work to be done by folks of all ages.

Outdoor Ministries is working purposefully and intently with the staff of the upcoming camping season to continue the ministry on the mountain. The enthusiasm of those involved is infectious! The curriculum for 2012 is "Secrets of the Kingdom: The Parables of Jesus," and directors from every camp recently attended a training session to begin planning and to gather ideas for worship, games, crafts, and music.

The Region is very committed to our camping program. Many upgrades have been made to the property and buildings at Craig Springs, preserving the historical past and improving function and use of the facilities for the future.

While Craig Springs does not offer horseback riding, kayaking, or rock wall climbing (unless you count Potts Mountain!), if you ask those who return year after year and call Craig Springs their home away from home, they all say there is a feeling they've been unable to match anywhere else, and the presence of God is all around. We invite you to join us on the mountain and come see for yourself.

—Rhonda Williams
Outdoor Ministries Chair

Do you know a child who could benefit from Nature Camp?

Nature Camp is an annual camp offered at Craig Springs which specifically focuses on meeting the needs of children who are from disadvantaged or difficult situations, often with behavior issues. The campers are paired one-on-one with a trained high-school-age counselor for a week of self-esteem building, friendship and fun!

Nature Camp has been led by Regional Youth since its inception in the 1970s. This year's director is Sarah Jones, and the assistant director is Andrea Rinehart, both experienced and responsible teens. Usually there are 20-25 counselors matched with the campers.

This year's Nature Camp will be held from Monday, June 18, to Friday, June 22, 2012. We are looking for campers ages 9-12 years. For a camper application and more information, contact Ann Pulley at revannpulley@gmail.com.

YMC to sponsor Regional Youth Mission Trip

Last summer, during a planning retreat, the Youth Ministry Commission discussed the idea of sponsoring a mission trip for the Youth of the Region of Virginia. After much conversation, we are heading to the Appalachian Region of Kentucky!

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky has an offshoot ministry called Kentucky Appalachian Ministry (KAM). As their website says, KAM seeks to serve the people by being "a bridge whereby visitors become friends as we honor culture, practice hospitality, and share our gifts with each other. This sharing expresses God's love through responses to social, economic, educational, and spiritual caring and support" (www.kentuckyappalachianministry.com).

In consultation with Rev. Lon Oliver, Associate Regional Minister

for KAM, plans have been made for a wonderful week in Kentucky, learning about the culture and people of Appalachia, learning about Disciples history, and spending some time serving in a place that is often overlooked.

We will travel to Berea, KY, on Sunday, June 24. On Monday, we will go to Paris where we will help clean up the grounds at Cane Ridge and worship in the original meeting house. On Tuesday and Wednesday we will travel to Irvine and Beattyville, where we will be doing everything from office work to building and repairs. While there, we will learn more about drug addiction issues in Appalachia. On Thursday and Friday, we will head deeper into the mountains, where we will do mission work while learning about the local population. We will return to Virginia on Saturday, June 30.

This week promises to be one of fun, fellowship, learning, missions, and life-changing experiences. The cost of the week is \$350 per person (including adults), and includes all your food, transportation, lodging, and the materials we will need to do the work that we will do in Kentucky. If you have any questions, or would like more information, please contact Ann Pulley at revannpulley@gmail.com.

2012 Craig Springs Schedule

Work Weekend – Memorial Day Weekend
 GAP Conference – June 7-11
 Nature Camp – June 17-22
 Special Camp – July 1-6
 Chi Rho Conference – July 8-13
 CYF Conference – July 8-13
 Multi-age Camp 1 – July 15-20
 AMPDD – July 22-27
 Multi-age Camp 2 – July 29-August 3
 New Covenant Camp – August 5-10
 Outdoor Adventure Camp – August 5-10
 Family Camp – August 10-13

More info at www.craigsprings.com

Kid's Korner

It may be winter, but most churches are already making plans for Lent, Easter, and Vacation Bible School. How does your church include the children during the Lent/Easter season—besides the usual Easter Egg hunt? Children also need the chance to reflect and to prepare for Easter. In the Children Worship & Wonder program, children “are on a journey to Jerusalem.” They hear the stories of Jesus blessing the children, the story of Zaccheus and Bartimeus. They are in the streets on Palm Sunday and in the upper room for the Last Supper. Each week the children “get ready to celebrate the mystery that Jesus died but is still with us” (from *Young Children and Worship*, Sonja Stewart and Jerome Berryman, 1989).

The next opportunity for Children Worship & Wonder training is April 27-29. It will be held in Lynchburg at the Chrysalis Retreat Center. This is an opportunity for churches to come and learn about starting this program in their churches and also for churches who already have this program to train new storytellers and greeters. Check the Disciples Home Missions website for registration information (www.discipleshomemissions.org).

Before you go to the local Christian bookstore to look for Vacation Bible School materials, consider the great ideas and curricula that can be found on the DHM website: “Journey to India,” “Journey to the Congo,” “Journey to Colombia,” “God’s Love is Everywhere,” and a curriculum on the history of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) called, “Bethany Village Live.” These are excellent programs and economical as well.

For more information on Children’s Ministry and programs, contact Elaine Austin at Bethany Christian Church in Roanoke (540.366.0968 or austinrva@cox.net).

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