



Kansas Messenger

Christian Church in Kansas (Disciples of Christ)

www.kansasdisciples.org

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**We would love to
connect with you!**

Connect with us on

[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

DISCIPLES CONNECT AND EQUIP

Reconnecting by Covenant



**Reconnect with us at the
2021 Disciples Connect and Equip
Regional Gathering!**

All Kansas Disciples are invited to Tawakoni for our annual Disciples Connect and Equip regional gathering on Saturday, August 14. The day will begin with registration and coffee fellowship at 8:45 a.m. followed by opening worship under the big tent at 9:30 a.m. The day will conclude with a closing worship and communication starting at 3 p.m.

A celebration for the service and ministry of Regional Minister Steve Martin is also planned. Steve will be retiring at the end of August after 24 years of regional ministry and service to the Kansas summer camping program.

Throughout the day there will be opportunities for fun, fellowship, and learning opportunities as we explore the day's theme "Reconnecting by Covenant." Our Keynote speakers are General Minister and President Terri Hord Owens and Communications and Development Manager from Week of Compassion Erin Wathen.

One focus for reconnecting and building for the future will be the creation of an Ebenezer, a stone tower or wall, symbolizing God's presence in bringing us through the latest tribulations and reconnecting us in covenant. The Ebenezer is a tangible reminder of the Lord's power and protection.

To create the Ebenezer, each church is asked to first select and decorate a stone about the size of a loaf of bread that represents the diversity in their congregation. Then, on August 14, bring the stone to the opening worship time and help build our Ebenezer.

A catered sandwich boxed lunch is sponsored by Kansas Disciples Women. You will have the choice of ham, turkey, or veggie sandwich. Each box also includes chips, a cookie, and a choice of drink. Walk-in registrations are not guaranteed a requested meal choice.

Childcare for children four years and younger will be available throughout the event.

Pre-registration by July 31 is required for adequate childcare staffing. Limited Friday night lodging at camp is available. Contact the camp office at 316-775-1222 or email reservations@kansasdisciples.org to secure lodging arrangements.

The event will also be recorded and posted to the regional website and social media pages following the live event for those who wish to join from afar.

The cost is \$10 for Adults; Children and Youth (18 years and younger) are free.

Pre-registration deadline is Saturday, July 31. Register online at www.kansasdisciples.org or through your ENGAGE account.

REFLECTIONS OF THE VALUE OF SUMMER CHURCH CAMP

BY JOHN SOWERS, PASTOR
LEAVENWORTH FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH



Pastor John (right) with two campers during 2021 Junior Camp at Tawakoni.

Think about a conversation that changed your life or changed the way you look at things. That is, think of a conversation where the time before looks nothing like the time after that conversation.

Camp Builds Connection and Relationships

I remember as a young child, I thought the pastors in the church were unapproachable and by extension the adults in the congregation. I did not dislike Dr. Bell or Rev. Blose, but I thought they were distant and not concerned with the affairs of children and youth. It seemed to me as a young boy that we had not a Holy Trinity, but Holy Quartet instead: God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, and Minister.

I go to camp every year because it reminds me of a truth that I sometimes need reaffirmed: *I cannot out give God*. The first year I went to camp thinking proudly that I was doing a good thing and a sacrificial thing going to camp. Let's face it, you're away from the comfort of home, sleeping in shared spaces with people, outdoors most of the day, going to bed late, and getting up early. This in addition to abiding by a very full and active schedule.

For all intents and purposes, a counselor does everything a camper does, but often gets less sleep. Camp is many things, but restful may not be one of those things. Yet, even with all of that, I feel in debt to God when I come home.

There are always so many special instances when God shows up and is present. There are those shared moments with youth where you know you may be planting a seed that will bloom and grow long after you have ceased to work and till the garden of life and living. In the summer that is yet to come, there may be camps that still need counselors, and you could experience this joy as well!

Camp has changed my life, but I had to wait a little longer to experience its transformative power. The glorious thing is we never outgrow God's gracious and giving nature. There are some camps that are only two and three days while others are a full week. Maybe summer isn't complete until you have had a week at camp.

**Copied with permission from the June 17 "Sower's Seeds" article in The Leavenworth Christian newsletter. Edited to fit Kansas Messenger publication guidelines.*

What is Your Experience at Church Camp?

I was interviewing for my first pastoral position in Franklin, Indiana. I was applying to be the associate pastor and the primary emphasis of the position was youth and family ministry. A member of the search committee asked, "What is your experience with church camp?" I smiled and said, "I have heard it is a good thing and I will support it as your pastor."

In truth, I knew about church camp, and every year my pastors encouraged me to go. My pastors assured me that I would have enjoyed it. Yet, because we had not been a church camp family, I had no frame of reference. There were other members of the youth group who went every year, and seemed to enjoy it, but I did other things during the summer.

A Pastor's Influence on Camp Attendance

I am convinced that if my pastors had said, "John, you will love church camp, and besides, we are going to be counselors there that week so you will know someone on staff." I probably would have gone.

It is easier for a child to go to camp if they have the security of knowing their pastor is there as well. If a pastor says camp is vitally important and then prioritizes their attendance every year, it is a way of walking the walk so to speak.

Some pastors believe they "age out," of youth ministry. However, it is important that a pastor is involved in children and youth ministry throughout their entire career. Sometimes it might be as a volunteer supporting the youth program or going to camp.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Disciples Center at Tawakoni is more than a church camp. It's your year round camp, conference, retreat and event headquarters!

Fees vary depending of size and nature of each event. For more information, contact the camp office at reservations@kansasdisciples.org or call 316-775-1222.



Have you signed up for CCK text alerts?

Text **KSMESSENGER** to **474747** to sign-up for the regional text alerts system.

Check us out on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

THIS COULD BE YOU!

We are always looking to highlight what our local churches are doing to **CONNECT** and **EQUIP** their faith community.

Submit your articles and pictures online at www.kansasdisciples.org/news and your church just may be the next one featured.

HAVE NEWS TO SHARE? KANSAS MESSENGER ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

We are glad to receive your news articles and photographs for publication. We reserve the right to edit all materials. Submit your items online at www.kansasdisciples.org. Article submission deadline for the August issue is:

Monday, July 26

NEWS FROM YOUR REGION



KDW 2021 RETREAT

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR 2021 DISCIPLES WOMEN FALL RETREATS

Join KDW for midweek, October 6-8, or the weekend, October 8-10, Disciples Women Fall Retreat at Tawakoni.

The retreat begins with registration at 4 p.m. followed by evening worship beginning at

6:45 p.m. Enjoy self-guided and self-discovery workshops and activities throughout the second day of retreat. The retreat ends prior to noon on the last day with closing worship.

Come study with our keynote speaker Rev. Dr. Beth Rupe, the Interim Minister of CCIW Women's Ministries, as she leads us to answer the question, "Who Needs a Bridge?"

Order your 2021 KDW Fall Retreat T-shirt when you register and pick up your shirt at the retreat. A few extras may be available, but not guaranteed, for purchase at the retreat. Adult sizes small through 5XL available. Cost is \$15 each. Net proceeds go to Women in Kenya Ministries.

More information on workshops and activities can be found on our website, www.kansasdisciples.org, on the Disciples Women ministry page.

Register now! The cost for the full retreat, 3 days-2 nights lodging and five meals, is \$85 (\$100 after Sept. 15) or \$50 (\$60 after Sept. 15) for a partial retreat, no lodging and 2 meals. Child registration available for weekend retreat only. Child registration is \$35.

Encourage a friend or family member to attend with you. Register online at www.kansasdisciples.org or through your Engage account. Registration information is also being mailed to churches.

***We can't wait to be together in
worship, fellowship and prayer!***

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR KDM FALL RETREAT

The Kansas Disciples Men Fall retreat will be Sept. 24-25, at Disciples Center at Tawakoni.

It all starts on Friday at 6 p.m. with a delicious meal followed by a time of worship, welcome, and

community building. We end the retreat on Saturday evening with a Steak and/or Chicken Fry at 5 p.m. and Closing worship and communion at 6 p.m.

Keynote speaker will be Rev. Dr. Alex Ruth, the Associate Director of Disciples Men, and the Pastor at Marshfield Christian Church, in Marshfield, Mo. He will focus on friendship as a model for growing as men of faith.

All men from the Kansas region are invited and encouraged to attend. The cost for the retreat is, \$70 per person and \$65 per person if you register as a group of 5 or more from the same church. **Registration deadline is Friday, Sept 3.**

You can register online at www.kansasdisciples.org or through your ENGAGE account. Paper registration forms are available through any regional office.

**Be among the first 10 registrations
from men 50 years or younger
and have your registration fee refunded!**



NEWS FROM YOUR REGION

KANSAS CHRISTIAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP CABINET APPLICATIONS DUE AUGUST 15



The Kansas Christian Youth Fellowship is the youth ministry of the Christian Church in Kansas that provides leadership development among high school youth and opportunities for high school youth to experience the transforming power of Christ in a community beyond their local congregations.

KCYF is led by the KCYF Cabinet that serves the youth of the region by planning and preparing for events throughout the year. It also serves as a training tool to equip youth leaders and build servant-leadership skills. It consists of two youth representatives from each district, two at-large youth representatives, and two to four adult youth sponsors.

Applications are currently being accepted to serve on the KCYF Cabinet through August 15. Submit your application at www.kansasdisciples.org/kcyf-cabinet. Applications must be timestamped or postmarked by August 15.

START COLLECTING THOSE AUCTION ITEMS AND MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

THE DISCIPLES CENTER AT TAWAKONI ANNUAL GALA & AUCTION IS COMING SOON!



The annual Gala & Auction is scheduled for Saturday, October 23, at Tawakoni. This event is a fundraiser for capital improvements and camp scholarships.

The morning begins with a silent auction followed by dinner around noon and a live auction.

Details about how you can participate in the 2021 event will be published as they come available.

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL CHURCH

REGISTER TODAY FOR THE DISCIPLES VIRTUAL GATHERING



Join other Disciples congregations at the Disciples Virtual Gathering on Saturday, Aug. 7, for an opportunity to connect, learn, worship, and imagine new ways of gathering as

church. Through Bible study, workshops, and worship, the event will focus on the covenant we share as Disciples and the promise of Romans 8:38-39 that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

The Kansas region hopes to continue this theme into their Disciples Connect and Equip regional gathering at Tawakoni

the following week. *(See accompanying article on page 1)*

The virtual gathering day will begin at 10 a.m. with words of welcome, music, and a brief orientation to the virtual meeting space. Bible study led by Disciples scholars with interactive learning opportunities from general ministry leaders and other ministry partners will follow. The closing worship will feature a roll call of regions and a message by General Minister and President Terri Hord Owens. Throughout the day, a virtual exhibit hall will allow participants to connect with ministry partners in real time.

Regular registration starts at \$25, which includes access to all sessions and workshops. Register and sign up to receive email updates at www.disciples.org/2021-virtual-gathering.

HELM INTRODUCES 2021-2022 LEADERSHIP FELLOWS



An incoming class of eight students has been selected to join the Leadership Fellows Program in the Fall of 2021. These students were selected from a large pool of extremely qualified applicants. Through their involvement in their schools and churches, the eight new Fellows have successfully established themselves as

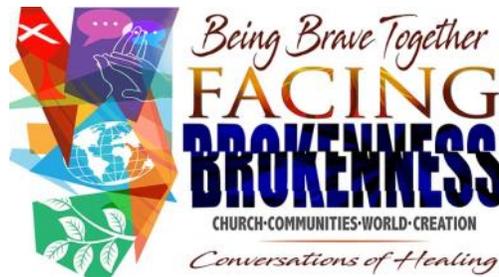
leaders within their own communities. Through the Leadership Fellows Program, HELM hopes to nurture and support each Fellow's undergraduate career to further expand on their already impressive accomplishments towards positive impact in our communities.

BEING BRAVE TOGETHER: FACING BROKENNESS

Conversations of Healing

Join the Disciples Justice Ministries this summer as we begin courageous conversations to bring about healing in areas of brokenness.

Recorded conversations followed by live Q & A will begin at 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 25, Sunday, August 15, and Sunday, August 29.



Representatives of the justice ministries will discuss how church, community, the world, and creation are impacted as well as offer suggestions on what we can do to address the broken places.

LTS OFFERS CONGREGATIONAL TECHNOLOGY MINISTRY CONTINUING EDUCATION CERTIFICATE



Lexington Theological Seminary's new Continuing Education opportunity for pastors and congregational lay leaders prepares participants for more effective leadership, unpacking issues that directly impact ministry today.

This six-course series is designed to meet the needs of today's leaders in the church, allowing study online to earn eight Continuing Education Units (CEUs) within a 12-month timeline.

Applications must be completed by July 31, and cost is \$1,100. For further information, go to www.lextheo.edu or contact Rev. Carol Devine, Director of Admissions at cdevine@lextheo.edu.

CHURCH THE NEW WAY

The 2021 Leadership Academy from the Disciples New Church Ministry will be online from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (CST) beginning Tuesday, September 21, through Thursday, September 23.

Current featured speakers include Rev. Terri Hord Owens, DOC General Minister and President, Rev. Lorenzo Lebrija, Founding Director of [TryTank](http://TryTank.com), an experimental laboratory for church growth and innovation, and Rev. Dr. Eun Strawser, co-vocational church planter and physician in Honolulu.

The Leadership Academy empowers leaders across the United States and Canada, regardless of their denominational affiliation with an interactive learning experience featuring three track sessions.

The Start Track (Pre-launch New Church) is designed for leaders of church/projects that have not yet launched. This track is perfect for the core teams of emerging church plants.

The Sustain Track (Post-launch New Church) is geared for new church planters of recently launched places of worship. During this cohort, participants will develop strengthening practices to grow and maintain sustainable ministry.

New this year is the **Multiply Track** (Established Congregations), which is for leaders of existing faith communities. Participants will explore methodologies in ministry innovation to develop growing, giving and going. Perfect for program staff, lay leaders, and clergy.

Leadership Academy also features DOCTalks, joint sessions that address missional transformation inclusive of every stage of leadership and congregational vitality, and LEADLabs, interactive, practical trainings designed to help leaders imagine, ideate, innovate, and implement missional concepts.

IN MEMORIAM

Rev. Dr. Clark Williamson, distinguished alumnus and trustee at The University of Chicago Divinity House, died after a short illness on June 26, in Indianapolis. Seeking to identify anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism in Christian theology and to correct it was one of the most persistent themes of his life and work. He was 85.

Rev. Dr. Don A. Pittman, William Tabbernee Professor of the History of Religions Emeritus at Phillips Theological Seminary died June 26, in Tulsa, Okla. Dr. Pittman served as dean starting in 2000, and later as vice president of academic affairs. Dr. Pittman was an ordained Disciples minister and a former missionary to Taiwan. He is the husband of the **Rev. Dr. Nancy Claire Pittman**, PTS president. The family has asked that memorial gifts may be made to [Phillips Theological Seminary](#) and the [Parkinson Foundation of Oklahoma](#).

Ronald Bruce Flowers, Ph.D. and John F. Weatherly Emeritus Professor of Religion at Texas Christian University, died June 27. Dr. Flowers was a professor of religious studies at TCU in from 1966 to 2021. Among other memberships, he served the American Society of Church History, Disciples of Christ History Society, and the American Academy of Religion.

Rev. Dr. Monte Gravenstein, 85, died Tuesday, June 29. He was a graduate of Phillips University and earned his Masters and Doctorate from TCU at Brite Divinity School. Dr. Gravenstein served several Kansas DOC churches including Fredonia, Independence, Leavenworth, Ottawa and at Hillside CC in Wichita. After retirement, he served several interims with the Christian Church. He was a member of Community Christian Church Disciples of Christ in Kansas City, Missouri.

Danielle Hoskins, daughter-in-law of pastor **Loy Hoskins**, Augusta FCC, and wife of **Mickey Hoskins**, Great Bend FCC died June 30, in a car crash near Salina. Three children were in the car with her and were transported to area hospitals.

HAVE YOU REMEMBERED THE CHURCH IN YOUR WILL?

Your gift can benefit the church for years to come. For information about bequests, contact the Christian Church Foundation at 1-800-668-8016, by email at kgould@ccf.disciples.org or on the web at www.christianchurchfoundation.org.