



Kansas Messenger

Christian Church in Kansas (Disciples of Christ)



www.kansasdisciples.org

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TBA, Regional Minister of New Church Ministry

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connect with you!**

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EQUIPPING SMALL CHURCHES TO CONNECT WITH 21ST CENTURY FOLLOWERS

This article is part one of three that offers church communication strategies specifically for small congregations. While the focus is on small churches, all churches will find the strategies presented helpful for their ministry.

Written by Jessica Marston, CCK Communication Specialist.

Church communication is a complex and ever-changing field. It is about building relationships, earning trust, and making people feel important.

It is important to develop strategies and goals that reflect your church's overall mission and vision. As a result, church leadership should understand that implementing these strategies is a process – a journey – that requires constant adjustments as your church changes and grows.

While it is good to explore what other churches are doing, church communication strategies are not a one size fits all solution. Every church and its community is different, therefore the tools, methods, and strategies used will be different.

Small churches, with an average worship attendance of 75 people or less, often feel lost, confused, and overwhelmed when it comes to developing effective strategies to reach their communities and build relationships. Small churches have less volunteers to pull from and fewer financial resources to buy expensive equipment and programs.

The first place to start is to build a dedicated communications team. One person cannot do it all and church pastors have "blind spots." Every team will look different, and the communication team may need to change based on several factors such as event, ministry focus, and church season.

For security reasons, a church should have no less than three people from different families that represent the diversity of the congregation. Remember to balance your team between paid staff and volunteers. A church could have volunteers who are willing to help with specific communications tasks who would not be willing to volunteer for anything else.

After establishing a communications team, it's time to set your goals. The SMART goal acronym stands for **specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based**.

By setting objectives and creating a clear roadmap for how you'll reach your intended target, you can decide how to apply your time and resources to efficiently. The SMART goal framework sets boundaries and defines the steps you'll need to take, resources necessary to get there and milestones that indicate progress along the way. With SMART goals, you're more likely to achieve your goal efficiently and effectively.

Want to Learn More?

Check out the Art of Church Communication Workshops this April! See article of page 7 or go to www.kansasdisciples.org/aocc-workshops for details.

THOUGHTS FROM YOUR REGIONAL MINISTER

"A Lenten Prayer"

BY LARRY ROSS,
INTERIM CO-REGIONAL MINISTER

As we enter Lent this year bruised by our battle with COVID, aghast at the horrific war in Ukraine, and aware that none of the many injustices in our own part of the world have been resolved.

I have always found that Ash Wednesday served to remind me of the fragility of this world (ashes to ashes, dust to dust). Yet, Lent itself is a march toward Easter and the reminder that God's love is greater.

Rev. Sara Nave Fisher, the wife of an Army chaplain, writes about talking to children about war in her soon-to-be-released book [When Kids Ask Hard Questions, Volume 2: More Faith-Filled Responses for Tough Topics](#). She has a knack for getting to the basics.

"But here's what I do know about God and war: God is ever-present," she says. "God is with every person. God loves every person. I fully believe that we are called to be people of peace, and that we are called to protect the most vulnerable. Sometimes, those things are at odds—or seem to be. There aren't always easy answers. War is always tragic. It is always sad."

Our General Minister and President, Rev. Terri Hord Owens, signed an ecumenical response to the fighting in Ukraine. It says, in part, "We also call upon the faithful people of our congregations and communities to pray for wisdom, peace and justice to prevail in Ukraine. Join us as we pray:

'Oh Divine, most mighty, most merciful,
our sacred stories tell us that you help and save your people.
You are the fortress. May there be no more war. You are the harvest.
May there be no more hunger. You are the light.
May no one die alone or in despair.
Oh Divine, most majestic ... grant us your life.
Amen.' "

That's a prayer I can, and do, pray.



EMPOWER YOUR SERVICE WITH KLC TRAINING

Pastoring a church for over forty years helped me appreciate people who served the Lord with gladness. For those who serve and want more power, understanding and effectiveness in their work the opportunity is available.

Great news! You can get leadership training from the Kansas Leadership Center through a virtual experience. Simply contact the regional office and ask if you can participate in the special training soon to be offered.



Written by:
Rev. Titus H. James, Sr.

THE KANSAS MESSENGER CELEBRATES 125 YEARS OF PUBLICATION



With its March 2022 issue *The Kansas Messenger* has achieved an amazing 125 years of continuous publication. We're proud to have been in service to the church in Kansas since the first *Kansas Messenger* was published in March of 1897.

Although there were other earlier attempts to provide news to the Christian church membership including, "*The Christian Messenger*" founded in 1885, "*The Faithful Witness*" in 1886; and "*The Kansas Missionary*" published in 1892-1893, none of these publications secured sufficient support to continue.

The Messenger began with a very small circle of readers reaching 2,000 subscriptions for the first time in 1910; 4,000 in 1940; 8,000 in 1947; and peaked at 18,000 in 1955. In its current digital format, *The Kansas Messenger* now goes out to more than 3,000 readers and it is now said to be the oldest state paper in the Brotherhood in point of continuous publication.

As with any milestone accomplishment, thanks go out to all the previous editors, and contributors that have made *The Kansas Messenger* a successful and meaningful communications vehicle in the service of Christ. We also thank all of you who continue to receive *The Messenger* and we promise to do our best to make it a strong and effective way to deliver the monthly news for the Christian Church in Kansas for years to come.

REGIONAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



TAWAKONI SEEKS A NEW CAMP MANAGER

At the end of last year, Tawakoni Camp Manager, Sid Rutland, submitted a letter expressing his intent to leave his position as the first Camp Manager for the Region. After assisting with the training of his successor, Sid plans to move to Oklahoma to be with his fiancé as she finishes school.

The Camp Manager position was created in Fall 2019 and combined maintenance and camp caretaker duties, overseeing camp staff, and marketing Tawakoni's facilities to new outside clients. The Camp Manager Transition Team, with Sid's feedback, has taken steps to review and evaluate the position to adjust the job description and expectations.

The successful candidate will have the ability to work with, and at times, supervise paid staff and volunteers. Responsibilities will include overseeing the rental of camp facilities, have knowledge and skills for basic maintenance and repairs, developing and managing budgets, and planning of development projects. Skills include a knowledge of Microsoft Office programs for record keeping, writing of reports, and correspondences.

Applications, resumes, and letters of interest are currently being accepted for the next Camp Manager through March 24. A more detailed job description including sought characteristics, job qualifications, and job responsibilities can be downloaded from our website or can be emailed upon request.

Apply online at www.kansasdisciples.org/job-postings, e-mailed to cck@kansasdisciples.org, or sent to the Christian Church in Kansas, 2914 SW MacVicar Ave., Topeka, Kansas 66611.

CHP OFFICE SEEKS NEW ADMIN ASSISTANT

The Christian Church in Kansas (Disciples of Christ) is looking for a friendly, outgoing, energetic, and welcoming Administrative Assistant to work in our satellite office in Great Bend, Kansas. This 30 to 40 hour per week position involves secretarial and administrative support duties for the ministries of the Central and High Plains Districts and for the Regional Minister who is assigned to this office.

The successful candidate must be a team player, be able to manage multiple on-going projects at the same time, have an understanding and appreciation for Christian faith, have a high-level of competency in the English language, be able to maintain confidentiality, have competent computer skill – including various internet browsers, Dropbox, Microsoft Office suite, and be able to learn proprietary database quickly. The candidate must be willing to adapt to changes in responsibilities, and have reliable local transportation.

An understanding and appreciation of the Disciples tradition, Spanish language competency and an interest in long-term employment will be a plus, but not required. On rare occasions, some out of town travel is required.

If interested, apply online at www.kansasdisciples.org/job-postings, email letter of interest and resume to chp@kansasdisciples.org, or mail them to the Central/High Plains office of the Christian Church in Kansas, 5230 Broadway Ave. Great Bend, Kansas 67530. For more information call 620.792.6490.



HAVE YOU SIGNED UP FOR CCK TEXT ALERTS?

IT'S EASY!

Text **KSMESSENGER** to **316-465-5352**
to sign-up for the regional text alerts system.
Standard SMS and data charges apply.



GRANT OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND, BUT DEADLINES ARE NEAR

The Christian Church in Kansas (CCK) has a variety of grants that are available each year. The deadline for two of those grants – Reconciliation Offering and the Kansas Bible Chair Grants – is fast approaching, and the Kansas Leadership Training Grant slots fill quickly, so early registration is recommended. Applications for all CCK grant opportunities including descriptions can be found at www.kansasdisciples.org/grants. Here are the descriptions on each of the programs.

— RECONCILIATION GRANTS —

Half of the funds from the Reconciliation Special offering, received September-October, stays in Kansas to fund projects that address racism and/or poverty in our community.

Projects selected for grants are people centered projects — on-going or experimental — that reflects personal involvement in the life of any community where people are hurting because of poverty, alienation, racism and fear. Other considerations include the sponsoring organization's financial support of the annual Reconciliation Special Offering.

Grant requests will be reviewed by the grant committee and recommended to the Regional Executive Committee for consideration in April. Funds will be dispersed in January 2023 after the available offering funds are known.

Apply online at www.kansasdisciples.org/grants. The application and supporting documentation submission deadline is **March 31**.

— KLC TUITION GRANTS —

Once again, our region has a marvelous opportunity: 50 training slots in the leadership training programs offered by Kansas Leadership Center (KLC).

These are for people who want to make progress on something important – that is, to grow their leadership skills, to aid their congregations and CCK in addressing the adaptive challenges we face.

This training is intended to help you lead your congregation more effectively, more powerfully, to change lives and turn systems in healthy directions.

The team from within our region who will help to recruit individuals to the training programs are:

- ⇒ **Rev. David Dubovich**, Park Place CC, Hutchinson
- ⇒ **Rev. Laurie Lewis**, Parsons First CC
- ⇒ **Rev. Luis Mendez**, North Heights CC, Wichita
- ⇒ **Danielle Euler**, Leavenworth First CC,
- ⇒ **Rev. Guillermo Reyes**, Iglesia Cristiana Discipulos de Cristo, Garden City
- ⇒ **Rev. Titus James** (Ret.)

If you want to make progress on something you care about, grow your leadership skills, aid your congregation and the CCK in addressing the adaptive challenges we face then this training is for you. Your church will benefit most by sending



— KBC GRANTS —

Established by the Kansas Women's Board of Missions, the Kansas Bible Chair (KBC) offers significant funds to provide quality education and spiritual formation opportunities for Kansas Disciples.

Many regional events are subsidized by KBC funds, allowing Kansas Disciples to take part at a much lower cost than would otherwise be possible.

All requests for funding of education projects must come to the KBC Task Force with an endorsement from a committee or commission of the CCK.

KBC Grant requests are reviewed twice a year — April and October — by the grant committee and recommended to the Regional Executive Committee for consideration.

The Spring submission deadline is March 31.



teams of 3-4, one of whom is probably your pastor. You will also benefit by identifying a challenge on which you want to make progress.

As you begin the process of defining what your adaptive challenge is for your congregation, the team developed a collective adaptive challenge for the region of Kansas. The collective adaptive challenge we have defined is: *We want more people leading so that we can strengthen/empower and equip the leadership within the congregations that make up the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kansas, as our church navigates an everchanging world.*

Plan to focus 90 days on the process: prework, the training and its application, beginning 21 days before your event.

In addition to congregational teams, CCK plans to send interested staff, moderators, and other regional leaders. Trainings fill fast and registration early in the year is encouraged.

The KLC Partnership Grant covers tuition and a Kansas Bible Chair Grant covers books, housing, and meals.

Apply online at www.kansasdisciples.org/grants and pay a \$25 commitment fee. After your application has processed, follow the emailed instructions to register with Kansas Leadership Center and arrange for securing books from regional staff.

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

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

HIAWATHA HOSTS A MULTI-CHURCH ELDERS TRAINING

On Saturday, Jan. 29, elders from the Christian Churches in Everest, Horton, Hiawatha, and Falls City, Neb., gathered at Hiawatha First Christian Church for a special morning of Elders Training, followed by a soup and sandwich lunch prepared by the host church.

"I am very big on getting churches to work with each other," said Hiawatha pastor Ron Stair. "My hope is that this article inspires them to get together with neighboring churches to do things. The Elders from the four churches at our training expressed a desire to get together for other things - even just a social."

The topics covered were: Taking Communion to Shut-Ins and Nursing Homes, The Elders Shepherding Program, and a discussion of How to Make Elders Meetings Relevant. Participants commented that the training was useful and expressed a desire to continue to get together for events and times of fellowship.

WEST SIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH LAUNCHES 5TH SUNDAY MISSIONS OUTREACH

West Side Christian Church in Topeka started a 5th Sunday Missions Outreach on January 30. Instead of meeting for a traditional morning worship service, members and friends served the Topeka community by supporting children in foster care in Topeka.



One mission group met at the KVC office in Topeka to organize supplies, fill backpacks for children who are placed in foster care, sort food to create a small food pantry, and help with office work. Another group met at the church to fill Valentine goody bags and write Valentine notes for foster children.

The 5th Sunday Mission Outreach program is an extension of West Side's WEAR Love vision:



"Welcoming all, Encouraging love, Accepting others, and Returning love through mission."

SHELTON MEMORIAL CC RECEIVES THE PTS FAITHFUL PARTNERS AWARD FOR CONGREGATIONAL GIVING

Shelton Memorial Christian Church in Ulysses, received the "Faithful Partners Award" from Phillips Theological Seminary during the seminary's



Remind & Renew event.

Founded in 1926 with a donation of \$500 coming from the Women's Society. The church dedicatory sermon was preached on May 27, 1927 by H.W. Newby, son of Eric Newby, a Christian Evangelist, who in 1892 held a meeting in the schoolhouse at Ulysses, Kansas.

Several young folks in attendance were converted, then baptized in the North Fork on January 28, 1893, one of whom was Albert Shelton. Shelton was educated in medicine at the University of Kentucky and was ordained as a Christian minister. At his request, the Christian board of Missions sent him to Tibet. He was the first white doctor to go to that land and became a martyr for the cause of Christ. Shelton Memorial was so named in memory of Albert Shelton.

The church is striving to live in the here and now and at the same time look to the future with the promise of a new settled pastor to guide them forward. They ask for your prayers as they move ahead in this venture. "Embracing the love of Jesus through ministry, mission and witness."



SCOTT CITY FCC TO CELEBRATE 135 YEARS OF MINISTRY

Join us in celebrating with Scott City, First CC as they celebrate 135 years of service to the Scott City community this year.

HAVE NEWS TO SHARE? SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES AND PICTURES TO US.

We are glad to receive your news articles and photographs for publication. Submit your items online at www.kansasdisciples.org/km-submissions. The Kansas Messenger editorial team reserves the right to edit all materials for relevance, clarity, and space. Submission deadline for the April issue is:

Monday, March 24

Check us out on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/kansasdisciples), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/kansasdisciples) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/kansasdisciples)

CAMP NEWS

OUTDOOR MINISTRIES TEAM ANNOUNCES 2022 SUMMER CAMPING PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Come join us at Tawakoni for another exciting year!

Camp registration is now open for the 2022 Summer Camp Program. Six, age appropriate, camp sessions and three specialty camps are planned throughout June and July.

This year's theme, "What's in a Name," will explore the power and meanings we apply to names and how God equips us to care for others.

Camp Scholarships are available for families who have need. Contact your church office for details. **Scholarship application deadline is March 31.**



Registration fee includes lodging & meals, program expense, nurse, theme T-shirt and water bottle, and \$10 for the camp maintenance fund. Register online at www.kansasdisciples.org/events, or through your Engage account.

Registration and health forms are also available through your church office. **Register before April 30 and SAVE \$40!** Registration

will close two weeks prior to each camp session or when a session reaches maximum compacity. A wait list will be maintained in the Topeka Regional Office.

HELP US GET THE CAMP READY FOR THE SUMMER SEASON!

This Winter weather will soon be history and Spring will bring warmer days. That will mean it's time to meet at the camp and get the facilities ready for the summer!

The Spring Work Camp to get Camp Tawakoni ready for the summer will be Thursday, April 21, starting at 10 a.m. and will conclude after lunch April 23.

The projects are: Clean all of the dormitories, de-winterize Cabins 1, Directors Cabin, the Clergy House and the Training Lodge, service all of the lawn equipment, the truck/van and tractor, clean all of the flower beds and gardens, mow grass if needed, clean around the lagoon, spray the trails, trim trees, do minor electrical and carpentry projects, and stain the decks.

We will provide food and lodging for all of you. Please let Vern Failor know if you will be coming via email ulfailor@gmail.com, or call him at 785-231-3960.

ARE YOU PLANNING A CHURCH LEADERSHIP RETREAT, FAMILY GATHERING, OR OTHER SPECIAL EVENT?

The Disciples Center at Tawakoni, your regional camp conference and event center is here to help!

Tawakoni rents out cabins and meeting spaces for a variety of events and meetings. It's your year round camp, conference, retreat and event headquarters!

Fees and deposits vary depending of size and nature of each event. For more information, go to www.tawakoni.org, email reservations@kanasdisciples.org or call 316-775-1222.

The 2022 Camp Season is right around the corner.

More camp news about the upcoming season including schedule and volunteer opportunities is in the accompanying

Tawakoni Camp News Special Edition

Help us go green!

To save paper and processing time, we encourage everyone to register for camp through our online registration system. We have added a partial payment option for churches who are offering camp scholarships through their children and youth programs.

Have Questions?

We are here to help! Contact the Topeka Regional office at cck@kansasdisciples.org or call 785-266-2914 for assistance.

NEWS FROM YOUR REGION

The Art of Church Communication Seminar April 2022

REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS APPROACHING FOR THE 2022 ART OF CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOPS

Are you a pastor struggling to keep up with the changes in technology? Do you work in the church office and need help with some effective communication strategies? Are you a ministry leader wanting to make an impact in your church and community?

Join us for the weekly Art of Church Communication Workshop Seminar in April.

Workshops begin with a Welcome and Introductions Zoom Meeting on Thursday, March 24 at 7 p.m., followed by five weeks of lessons, and close with a wrap-up Zoom Call on Thursday, May 5 at 7 p.m.

Taught by CCK Communications Specialist Jessica Marston, sessions will combine in-person, live streaming, and online “at your own pace” learning styles to provide church leadership – pastors, office staff, and members – with tools and strategies to improve their church’s overall communication ministry.

Each week participants will discuss a different church communication topic through discussion boards, a video presentation, interactive Q&A session, real-world applications, and more.

This seminar is for anyone (not just church office staff). If you’re interested in church communication ministry, regardless of current skill level, you are welcome and encouraged to attend.

In addition to all the great information, strategies, and resources presented at the Art of Church Communication workshops, every participant is eligible to win a \$50-\$75 gift card for their church.

Learn more and register at: [kansasdisciples.org/aocc-workshops](https://www.kansasdisciples.org/aocc-workshops), through your ENGAGE account, or the regional Facebook Events page.

The early bird deadline is **4 p.m. Friday, March 11**. A minimum of eight paid registrations is needed by the early bird deadline to hold workshops. Registration will close at **4 p.m. Friday, March 18**.

2022 SPIRIT FEST: WHAT DOES GOD REQUIRE OF ME?

Disciples Women are invited to attend one of three Spirit Fest opportunities this Spring. The Bible study will be based on “Micah for You”, written by Stephen Um. Copies of the book will be available for purchase at Spirit Fest. Amazon also has the Kindle version of the book available.

Rev. Angéle Saunders Johnson, Executive Director of Disciples Women will provide the keynote address. Her prior experience includes



faith-based community organizing, executive pastoral leadership, and serving as Director of Christian Education for New Covenant Christian Church in Nashville, Tenn.

She will join us by recorded message at Belmont Blvd. CC, Salina, on April 2, and Emporia FCC on April 9 before joining us in person on April 30 at Riverside CC, Wichita.

As we have done in the past, our Blessing Box monies will be dedicated during our morning worship. Checks for Blessing Box offering should be made out to Christian Church in Kansas.

Registration for the event is \$20 per person which includes all materials and lunch. If you prefer, you may register to join in the worship service via Zoom on April 9 for a cost of \$8 per person. Registration is open online at www.kansasdisciples.org/events, through your ENGAGE account, and the regional Facebook Events page.



REST, RELAX, AND RENEW CLERGY RETREAT

All Kansas pastors are invited to Tawakoni for a time of rest, relaxation, and renewal at this year’s clergy retreat April 26-28 at Tawakoni. The retreat begins with dinner at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, April 26 and will end before noon on April 28.

Each year during the last week of April clergy from around the region meet at the Disciples Center at Tawakoni for fellowship and conversation with a resident theologian. This year, Dr. William Willimon will be our resident Theologian.

The cost is \$70 for two nights lodging at the camp and four meals. If you will not be staying at the camp the cost is \$50. Registration is open online at www.kansasdisciples.org/events, and through your ENGAGE account.

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL CHURCH

NBA GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Program: Incubate Partner Applications

Application Period: February 1 – April 15, 2022

About: The NBA is accepting Incubate Partner applications from Disciples health and social service organizations. Being in partnership with NBA involves a multi-year relationship that includes a specialized menu of resources and support for your young ministry/organization. Our Partners receive up to four years of access to professional consultants, opportunities for learning, peer support, and grant funding.

Application Link: <https://www.nbacares.org/event/incubate-partner-applications-2022/>

Program: Mission & Ministry Grant Applications

Application Period: February 15 – April 6, 2022

About: Your congregation or nonprofit ministry may be eligible for grant funding to support programs for older adults, or education for youth and young adults! NBA's Mission & Ministry Grants program utilizes purpose-restricted funds to provide grant funding for Disciples health and social service projects that work with adults ages 50+ and at-risk youth ages 5-25.

Application Links:

English: <https://www.nbacares.org/grants>

Spanish: <https://www.nbacares.org/programs/las-becas-de-mision-y-ministerio/>

Korean: <https://www.nbacares.org/programs/mission-and-ministry-grants-korean/>

RESTORING NATURE: WHAT PEOPLE OF FAITH CAN DO TO HEAL THE EARTH

Douglas Tallamy will raise our awareness and equip us to make a difference from our own yards and church grounds in a UCC/DOC Webinar Wednesday, March 23 at noon. His books have awakened thousands to the problem of wildlife decline and the solution that resides in habitat restoration. This is a solution of which you and your faith community can be a part. The solution can be as close as your backyard or the property

surrounding your place of worship. In this webinar, Tallamy will outline the crisis faced and what we can do in response.

The green teams and green thumbs of faith communities will learn not only about cultivating native plants in the landscapes around them, but also what can be done to create a transformative movement full of actions ordinary people everywhere can take. To care for God's creation,

we can start by simply stepping outside the doors of where we gather for worship to make the most of our sacred places.

This webinar is co-hosted by the Rev. Dr. Brooks Berndt who serves as the Minister of Environmental Justice for the United Church of Christ and the Rev. Carol Devine who serves as the Minister of Green Chalice for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

WHAT A GREAT WEEKEND AT THE KCYF SPRING RETREAT



With nearly 40 people gathered at the Disciples Center, we were able to gather, worship, have fun, and grow together with God. Brad Green from Atchison was our keynote speaker, and helped us to find a focus with God's grace. As well, our KCYF Cabinet led games, worship, and provided leadership.

Thank you to all the adults for sponsoring, volunteers for being present, and youth for coming back to Disciples Center for a wonderful weekend! See you at camp this summer. Remember to get registered now!



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