



Kansas Messenger

Christian Church in Kansas (Disciples of Christ)



www.kansasdisciples.org

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Kansas Regional Office

Business Office
2914 SW MacVicar Ave.
Topeka 66611-1787
785-266-2914
Fax: 785-266-0174

Tom Stanley, Co-Regional Minister & President
Joanne Weddle, Corporate Secretary
Barb Koelling, Treasurer

Central & High Plains

Satellite Office

Clergy Care Office
5230 Broadway Avenue
Great Bend 67530-3208
620-792-6490; Fax: 620-792-1268

Ken Marston, Co-Regional Minister
Juli Reed, Admin. Assistant

South Central Satellite Office

Communication Office
8492 SW Tawakoni Rd.
Augusta 67010-8111
316-775-1236

Steve Hart, Communications Director
Jessica Marston, Communications Specialist

Disciples Center at Tawakoni

8492 SW Tawakoni Rd.
Augusta 67010-8111
316-775-1222
www.tawakoni.org
reservations@kansasdisciples.org

Olivia See, Camp Manager

Fellowship Groups

Carla Pearson, Disciples Women
Luis Mendez, Disciples Men
Travis Smith McKee, Disciples Youth

New Church Ministry

TBA, Regional Minister of New Church Ministry

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

Connect with us on
[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

Help make 2023

THE BEST SUMMER EVER

for the Disciples Center at Tawakoni

JOIN US FOR THE TAWAKONI GALA AND AUCTIONS

*Virtual Auction Oct. 8-9
9 a.m. on Sat. to 9 p.m. Sun.*

*Live Auction Oct. 15
10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.*

Come one, come all! Join us for our 2022 Tawakoni Gala and Auctions: virtually, Oct. 8-9, and in-person Oct. 15, at Tawakoni.

This year's focus capital improvement project is a new tractor with a fundraising goal of \$20,000. Proceeds from this auction will also support 2023 camp scholarships.

The Virtual Auction will be 9 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 8, through 9 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 9, and will feature specially curated items on Gala Auction page of the Tawakoni website www.tawakoni.org. After registering, look for an email from the Disciples Center at Tawakoni with your bid number and temporary password.

When the auction closes, auction winners will receive an automated message with the items won and payment instructions. Winners will have the option to pick up items at the in-person event or arrange for pick-up, delivery, or shipping from any regional office. Winners are responsible for shipping costs.

The In-Person Gala and Auctions, Saturday, Oct. 15, begin with registration at 10 a.m. in Leadership Lodge and the silent auction opens at 10:30 a.m. A welcome and mingle time is at noon followed by lunch at 12:15 p.m. and the live auction starts at 12:30 p.m. in the Dining Hall.

Following the live auction, come experience what summer camp is like

through the eyes of our youth beginning at 2 p.m. and a campfire celebration at 3 p.m.

Auction donations such as gift cards, products, services, experiences, baked goods, handcrafted items, sports team memorabilia and/or tickets, and themed gift baskets, etc. may be mailed or dropped-off with attached Donation Forms by **Monday, Sept. 26**, at one of these locations:

- **Topeka Regional Office**,
2914 SW MacVicar Ave, Topeka
- **C/HP Regional Office**,
5230 Broadway Ave, Great Bend
- **Disciples Center at Tawakoni**,
8492 SW Tawakoni Rd, Augusta

You choose how you want to participate — in-person, virtually, or both. Register online on our website, through your ENGAGE account, or by phone through any regional office. Registration cost is:

- \$8 for a virtual bidder ticket
- \$48 for an adult in-person gala ticket
- \$20 for a child in-person gala ticket
- \$280 for table sponsorship (6 seats)

For questions or assistance, go to our website www.kansasdisciples.org/gala, contact Camp Manager Olivia See at revoliviasee@kansasdisciples.org, or call 316-775-1222.



THOUGHTS FROM YOUR REGIONAL MINISTER

Looking at Our World with Greater Compassion

BY KEN MARSTON, CO-REGIONAL MINISTER

I recently received a phone call from Dale Suggs, one of my college and seminary classmates. Dale is doing some very creative

ministry as the Co-Founder of **BELOVED** Way Church and Founder of **BELOVED** Compassion Network. These organizations center their ministry around bringing healing and wholeness in their community by helping people develop a greater compassion for themselves and others.

With so much anger and hatred being espoused in the world right now my friend Dale believes that compassion is key to addressing the tendency to divide ourselves into divisive factions that are tearing our communities apart.

This work begins with learning how to be more compassionate with ourselves so that we can become more compassionate with others. It is a living out of the Jesus, who

often encountered people who were wrestling with and seeking how to live in the Kingdom of God right then.

Scripture tells us repeatedly that as Jesus would relate to others, he would look upon them with compassion, whether it was the crowds or his antagonists. And out of his compassion, he would invite everyone to consider thinking and acting in new ways that were shaped by the values of God's will for life.

We, too, wrestle with how to do this from day to day, and I think my friend Dale's insight is helpful as we struggle to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. So, I invite you to consider this concept of compassion—an ability to not only put ourselves in another's shoes, but to see ourselves, others, and all of creation as God's beloved.

How might our lives and our communities, our nation and our world be changed if we had an ever-growing compassion towards life?

RECONCILIATION OFFERING FUNDS FOUR KANSAS MINISTRIES

Since the beginning of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) our purpose has been to bring healing and hope to a divided world. The Week of Reconciliation Special Offering which we receive Sept. 25 and Oct. 2 helps fund ministries in Kansas and throughout the United States and Canada that feed the hungry and heal divisions in the lives of people.

This year, we have received funding requests for \$9318 from four Kansas Ministries.

Home Sweet Home serves men, women, families and veterans in housing crisis. They have a variety of programs to help people establish a stable living way of life including life skill training and employment help. A staff chaplain provides spiritual and emotion support in addition to mentoring programs.

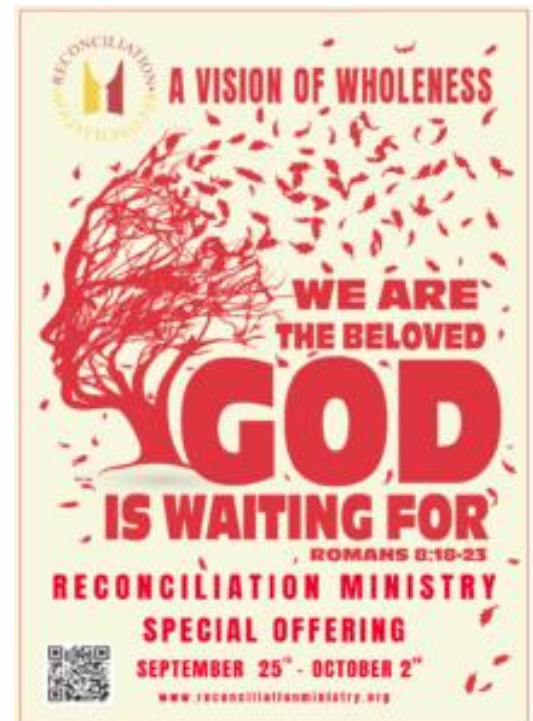
Books for Prisoners, sponsored by The North Heights Christian Church DWF group, Wichita, collects paperback books, and copies adult color sheets for inmates at the Butler County and Sedgwick County Jail.

Reading is a mental health coping strategy for many prisoners and something they can do at night when they can't sleep.

Birthday Backpack Program, sponsored by Pine Valley Christian Church, Wichita, provides surprise backpacks filled with items a family needs to celebrate a child's birthday. They are given to economically at-risk children, providing a message that children are loved and remembered.

Peace Camp, sponsored by Topeka's West Side Christian Church, for the elementary age children of the church and children in the surrounding community. Peace Camp offers a fun setting to teach young children the skills that will help them communicate positively with a variety of people.

Our goal for this special offering is to receive \$25,000. This is then split with 50% of the funds going to the General Church for Denomination wide Reconciliation Ministry projects and the other 50% goes to fund our regional grant program to fund ministries like those listed above.



We encourage all members of our congregations in Kansas to give generously. Give today through your congregation or through ENGAGE.

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



A MODERN PERSPECTIVE ON THE ANCIENT PRACTICE OF THE PRAYER LABYRINTH

Many Christians and churches are rediscovering an ancient prayer practice: a labyrinth. A labyrinth is a geometrically designed walking path leading to and from a central point. It is not a maze; you cannot get lost. There are no dead ends. The point is not disorientation, but orientation. Labyrinths have been used for centuries to facilitate prayer and meditation.

Prayer labyrinths are an ancient form of prayer that invite our bodies to participate in the process as we follow a path that mirrors the winding and circuitous journey of faith.

Your regional camp and conference center at Tawakoni offers a brick and gravel prayer labyrinth located just south of the chapel. Spend an afternoon in the quiet stillness of nature and recenter yourself.

If you plan to use the labyrinth outside a planned event, please call ahead (316-775-1222) and check-in with office staff or camp manager upon arrival.

An instructional brochure on walking a prayer labyrinth is available upon request.



***Have a special prayer service, workshop or retreat?
Bring the prayer labyrinth to your church!***

The region has purchased a portable prayer labyrinth that is available for check-out through the Central/High Plains Office in Great Bend. The 30 foot X 30 foot rugged canvas design is perfect for individuals and small groups of all ages.

Churches, ministry groups, or individuals who wish to check out any of these prayer labyrinths or want to know more about the spiritual benefits of labyrinths, contact Co-Regional Minister Ken Marston, kmarston@kansasdisciples.org, or call 620-792-6490 for details.

HAVE YOU TRIED ENGAGE?

This easy-to-use, mobile-optimized system allows you to give securely online, set up auto draft giving and view your giving history at your convenience.



ENGAGE goes beyond online giving to also provide you a way to connect with others in the region through common interest groups. You can also update contact information and register for regional and district events.

To get started, go to www.kansasdisciples.org/give and click the ENGAGE portal button. From there, follow the on-screen instructions to create an account or log into your existing account. If creating a new account, you will receive an email to reset your password and confirm the creation of your account. Mobile users will be prompted to add engage.suran.com as a shortcut app.

After account creation, you can update your information, manage regional and district giving, and register for events all from one login.

JOIN OUR TEXT ALERTS SYSTEM

Get CCK news right on your phone wherever you are. Sign-up to receive the latest CCK news and event information by text message. There are three ways to join:

1. Text KSMESSENGER to 316-465-5352 and follow the on screen prompts to sign-up.
2. Go to our "News" tab on our website at www.kansasdisciples.org/news. Look for the "Text logo" on the right-hand side of the page.
3. Call the CCK Communications Office, 316-775-1236



This is just one more example of how your Communications team is working to connect you to the ministries of your Kansas Region. You will receive no more than one text message per day as a part of this service. Standard SMS and data charges apply.

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

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

BLESSING BOXES: A NEW TAKE ON AN OLD TRADITION

For 60 years, the women of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have had a special way to express their gratitude to God for the blessings they have received – the Blessing Box.

Since 1953, Blessing Boxes have been kept in the homes and offices of women across the church to enable them to express their gratitude for everyday blessings by giving to others.

Now there is a new twist on this tradition that has everyone involved.

Outside Arkansas City Central Christian church sits a yellow box that sits upon a five-foot post.

Inside the box are nonperishable food items and toiletries. On the box a sign reads “Take what you need, leave what you can.”

This type of blessing box serves as an example of how we can follow Jesus through serving our community. Residents who are in need can pick up items and those who want to give can drop off items 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The idea began from the concept of Free Little Libraries where library books can be taken or borrowed free of charge and other books put back in their place.

The Blessing Box has brought together several Arkansas City community organizations from Soroptimist Club and Rotary Club to a local Girl Scout troop and the church youth group. Anyone can help with the blessing box. All it takes is a caring heart.



HAVE NEWS TO SHARE?

Your Church could be featured here!

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 October issue is:

Monday, September 26

NEWS FROM THE REGION

60TH ANNIVERSARY FIESTA

**9/17/2022
11am-1pm**

Join us for **FOOD, LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, and SILENT AUCTION** to benefit **Legacy of John**

1035 S.E. 3rd St Newton, KS

ADMISSION BUTTONS
\$30 Adults
\$10 Kids (13 and under)

The Kansas Christian Home will be hosting a 60th Anniversary Fiesta Fundraiser on Sept. 17 from 11a.m to 1 p.m. with a silent auction with proceeds benefiting the *Legacy of John* fund.

The fund was established to support KCH's mission to help those who do not have the means to pay for care by no fault of their own.

IT'S A FIESTA! KCH TO HOST 60TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY AND FUNDRAISER FOR LEGACY OF JOHN

Come out to KCH and enjoy musical entertainment, antique cars, a silent auction, and walking tacos.

Admission buttons are \$30 for adults and \$10 for kids 13 years and younger.

Event sponsorships are available ranging from \$250 to \$1000 and include the following items:

Bronze (\$250) – Signage posted at the event and/or name recognition in the KCH newsletter

Silver (\$500) -- Signage posted at the event and/or name recognition in the KCH newsletter, and four free event buttons

Gold (\$750) -- Signage posted at the event and/or name recognition in the KCH newsletter, four free event buttons, and an event t-shirt

Platinum (\$1000) -- Signage posted at the event and/or name recognition in the KCH newsletter, four free event buttons, event t-shirt, and name recognition in *Newton Now* publications “Thank you” ad.

Silent auction items are also being collected.

For more details call KCH at 316-283-6600

NEWS FROM YOUR REGION

KANSAS DISCIPLES MEN 2022 FALL RETREAT

The 2022 Disciples Men's Fall Retreat is Friday, Sept. 16, through Saturday, Sept. 17, at Tawakoni.

"I am looking forward to seeing everyone who has registered for the Men's Retreat," said Luis Mendez, KDM Coordinator. "It's going to be a good time!"

If you would like to come, there is still time to register. You can register at the camp and pay the \$70 registration fee when you arrive.

The theme is "The Courage to Let Go(d)" and will feature the Mid-America Regional Minister Rev. Paul Koch.

Friday kicks off with an optional pre-event camp service project beginning at 10 a.m. that includes trimming trees at the lakefront and walking trails; pruning and cleaning-up landscaping in the prayer garden; and pruning hedges between road and Leadership Lodge. Please bring your own gloves and tools.

Event Registration begins at 5 p.m. on Friday followed by dinner at 6 p.m. An evening bonfire will complete the night.

Saturday starts off with morning devotionals at 7:30 a.m. followed by breakfast and morning keynote by Paul. After lunch, enjoy another keynote presentation, vote on new officers during the business session, and enjoy closing worship.



2022 FALL KDW RETREAT



Have you registered for KDW Women's Retreat? Our annual fall retreats will be Oct. 5-7 (midweek) and Oct. 7-9 (weekend) at Tawakoni. We are planning a full schedule where we will join in fellowship, learning, and worship.

The speaker, Rev. Christian Watkins, is the Executive Director/

Campus Pastor at Ecumenical Campus Ministry (ECM) at Kansas State University (KSU) in Manhattan. She also teaches in the School of Education and Human Sciences at the University of Kansas (KU).

Her ministry passions include fostering alternative faith communities, spiritual mentorship, creative liturgies, interbelief solidarity and supplying abundant enthusiasm. A member of the Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation Team, she is committed to anti-racist and inclusive LGBTQ+ institutional practices.

Using our theme scripture, 1 Peter 3:8-12, we will learn together how we can BEE church and make a difference by being a blessing to others in our lives and world.

Workshop opportunities include presentations on a variety of topics such as hospice care, ministering with inclusive communities, church communication, BEE gardens, lay person education, eating healthy, and different service organizations we can help as partners. Hands on crafts and service projects will also be offered.

Early Bird discount ends Thursday, Sept. 15. Register online at www.kansasdisciples.org/events, through your ENGAGE account, or by phone through any regional office.

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL CHURCH



SAVE THE DATE! DISCIPLES GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2023

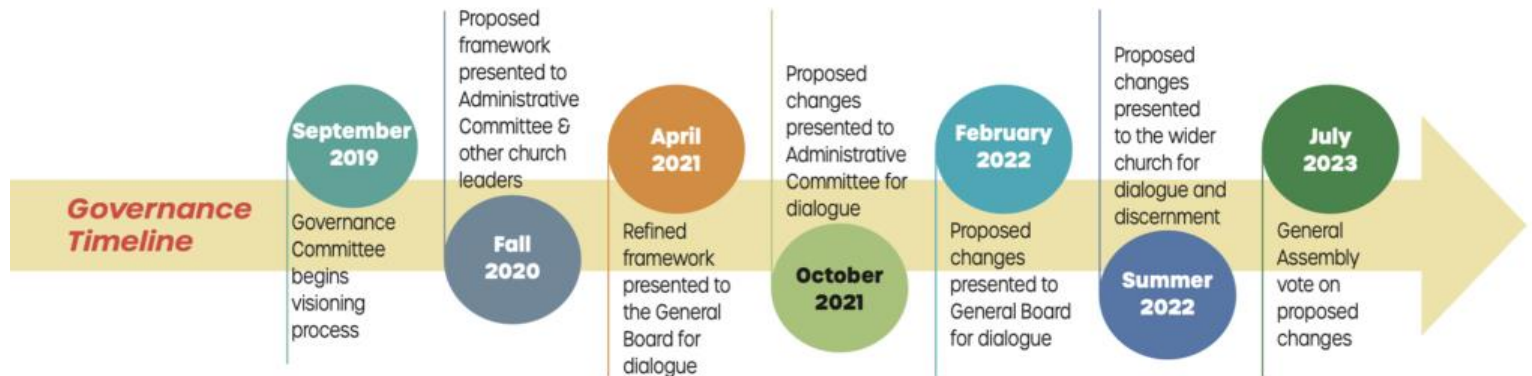
Mark your calendars and start making plans to attend the 2023 General Assembly "The Kindom of God Within Us, Among Us" July 29-August 1, 2023, in Louisville, Ky. The theme for the assembly is based on Luke 17:20-21, Genesis 11:1-9 and 2 Peter 1:3.

This four-day event will encourage Disciples who gather online and in person to celebrate the way that God's expansive love connects each of us as "kin" and to part of the larger Kindom of God. Join us to explore Louisville and share opportunities for worship, workshops, Bible study, mission, and the sacred work of the church for children, youth, and adults across the life of the church.

Registration will begin in October 2022.

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL CHURCH

THE COVENANT PROJECT: HOW WE DO CHURCH IN A NEW TIME AND PLACE



The future of the church is more connected. The future of the church is in deeper conversation. The future of the church is a future with deeper covenant. The Covenant Project is the work of changing structures to be more just and relationships across the church to be more connected.

The Covenant Project began more than three years ago as part of the work of Governance Committee of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). When the Governance Committee met in retreat in the fall of 2019, they committed to the work of aligning The Design with God's design for the church and to claim the power and potential of covenant. To that end, the committee took two important steps: the first was the development of the Covenant Curriculum, a small group resource for congregations to explore their identity as covenantal partners in the wider church. The second was a process of a review of The Design, with an aim to explore how the church's structures and practices might shift to better serve the church, with two main areas of focus.

The first area of evaluation and recommendations is the General Assembly which refers to not just a gathering but the structure of how congregations relate to and engage with the larger church to provide feedback, prioritize vision and lead. The second area of evaluations and recommendations is centered around the General Board.

Why Now? Why This?

When the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) established The Design in 1969, much of the structures and practices were adapted from the existing structures. As our church has grown more expansive and diverse, we've made adaptations on the model. However, the changing composition of the church and a growing desire to have our structures reflect our commitment to be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world means rethinking how we engage and relate to one another. Put simply, if we are going to be the church we say we are, we need to dismantle structures that aren't working well and reimagine how we relate to one another as the body of Christ. We want to be more connected, not less. We want congregations to be more connected to one another and the General Board, to have more of a voice in the present and future of the church. These changes will allow congregations to be able to provide feedback, set agendas and weigh in on the present and future of the church. They will allow the General Board and General Assembly to hear with more frequency and with more nuance from congregations so that more voices are heard and shape the church.

For a more complete discourse on The Covenant Project go to <https://disciples.org/covenant-project>

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL CHURCH

DISCIPLES INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN GMP RE-ELECTION SURVEY



With great joy and anticipation, the General Board received Terri Hord Owens' desire to serve a second term as General Minister and President (GMP).

Over the past five years Terri has challenged the denomination to "imagine God's limitless love" as we

seek to be the church we say we are – "a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world." She has also challenged us to "imagine" what the church could be like in years to come. Following the General Board's acceptance of her intent, a Review/Search and Call Committee (RSCC) was formed to lead Terri's review.

We are asking for your assistance as we complete a review her work, ministerial and pastoral presence. The RSCC will provide information to the Administrative Committee of the General Board that will inform their recommendation for our 2023 General Assembly in Louisville, Ky.

Throughout the next few months, this committee will be gathering information from all expressions of the church. One method is through a survey open to every area of the church's life so the committee can have as broad an understanding of the desire of the church as possible.

Your answers to the survey are vital in offering a well-rounded view of the church's hopes and desires for the next six years. The committee encourages you to participate in the process by providing your feedback via the survey found at: www.disciples.org/gmpsurvey.

As our church begins this time of reflection, the RSCC invites you to join in a season of prayer, as together, we begin to discern the call of Rev. Hord Owens for a second term as GMP in the United States and Canada. We specifically ask that you pray for:

- Terri as she listens and reflects on God's call.
- The RSCC as we seek the wisdom and guidance from all expressions of our church and ecumenical partners.
- The Christian Church (DOC) as we are called to a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.

DISCIPLES GENERAL BOARD NOMINATIONS SOUGHT



God is calling the next group of Disciples leaders! Can you help identify them?

In service to the wider Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the General Nominating Committee (GNC) holds the responsibility of recruiting faithful, dedicated, and diverse leaders for a number of roles critical to the work and witness of the denomination.

The GNC is currently seeking nominations for the General Board, which is the governing body that meets in between General Assemblies to oversee the business and support of the church.

Additionally, the GNC is tasked with nominating a Moderator Team to offer leadership to the denomination during the 2023-2025 biennium. The Moderator-Elect, First Vice Moderator, and Second Vice Moderator are nominated by the GNC and are elected by the General Assembly. The Moderator-Elect shall serve for two years and then serve as Moderator for two years.

In identifying these leaders, the GNC seeks leaders with strong connections to the life of our denomination, especially at the congregational level. The GNC also prioritizes the recruitment of diverse leadership in a broad range of categories to reflect the rich diversity of the church.

The GNC is also paying close attention to the potential changes being explored by the [Covenant Project](#) and is looking for new leaders who will offer bold and visionary leadership for the church in a time of change.

If you know of a person who is qualified and gifted to provide faithful leadership to the church, please submit their name by using the online nomination form below. Self-nominations are welcomed. Nominations are due no later than Saturday, Oct. 15. You can read about them here and find the form for submission: <https://disciples.org/congregations/nominations-sought-for-general-board-and-moderator-team/>

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL CHURCH

WOC RESPONSE IN UKRAINE CONTINUES

Six months ago, on Feb. 24, the Russian invasion of Ukraine began. From the beginning, Week of Compassion, through ecumenical partnerships with ACT Alliance and other partner networks, has been and continues to respond both to immediate needs and long-term recovery plans.

The impact of the war is being felt around the world through the energy crisis and food insecurity brought on by the geopolitical situation. At the same time, other crises persist worldwide, and Week of Compassion continues to respond to needs in Afghanistan, eastern Africa, Syria, the Philippines, recent U.S. flooding, and more.

As millions have fled their homes for neighboring countries, and millions more are still displaced within their own nation, the work in and around Ukraine has been strong. Week of Compassion's partners have provided shelter, food, clothing, job support and training, legal and language assistance, psychosocial and spiritual support, and much more to hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians.

For example, Nadia spent several days with her daughter and her mother at a transition center run by the Evangelical Reformed Church in Switzerland. This gave her time to figure out where to go next, how to get there, and what to do.

Fighting tears, she said, "I am afraid of the situation. In Kyiv, I lived with my husband in a wonderful apartment, I had a car. Now, no one has a normal life. Everyone is on the run. I have no idea what my future will be and if I will ever be able to return. But the main thing is this: We are safe, away from the bombs."



Crisis response demands this attention to basics first - food, shelter, safety - especially in areas where fighting remains intense, but our ecumenical partners are experienced in adaptability, too.

Hungarian Interchurch Aid opened border welcome points in the early days for those driving and walking across the border, transitioned to supporting those

arriving by train shortly thereafter, and have now opened a centralized refugee hub in Budapest to offer wrap-around response serving ongoing needs.

Churches have been at the forefront of the response. Because they are part of the community, churches can respond quickly and then engage for the long haul, serving in a sustained way to meet emerging needs. Clergy also meet people's spiritual needs, offering prayer and support, and churches are significant contributors of volunteer and financial resources.

Plans are underway for addressing key issues: ensuring children's access to education while schools are being used as shelters, and providing safe, warm, dignified accommodation during the winter months close at hand. As the war carries on, the needs will not diminish in Ukraine, nor in other parts of the world. Week of Compassion, alongside ecumenical partners worldwide, will continue to support those displaced by the war as long as there is need.



IN TRANSITION

Dighton, First Christian Church has called **Jennifer Bradford** as their new pastor. Jennifer began her ministry on Aug. 14 and was installed on Sept. 11.

Pine Valley Christian Church, Wichita has called **Rev. Dr. David P. Hansen** as their new pastor. David has served in ministry in the Disciples and UCC traditions for more than 40 years. Over the past several years, he has served twice as interim minister for Pine Valley CC.

IN MEMORIUM

Dee Winter, South Central Disciples Women Cabinet Representative and South-Central District 5th Wednesday Women's Treasurer, died Aug. 19. She was a member of Central Christian of Arkansas City. Dee will be remembered for her commitment to the mission of Kansas Disciple Women (KDW), the Winfield Christian Church, Arkansas City Central Christian Church, 5th Wednesday group of SC District, Women's Retreats and Spirit Fest each.

Rev. William (Bill) Bowles, 90, died July 30. Bill attended 12 years of higher education at Manhattan Bible College, Phillips University, and Vanderbilt University. He was ordained into Christian ministry in 1952, and pastored ten churches in five states: Kansas, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Iowa, and Colorado.

John Gould, husband of Christian Church Foundation Vice President, Kirby Gould died on Monday, Aug. 15, in Olathe. At Hillcrest Christian Church, Olathe, John served as elder, trustee, and chair of the property committee. His most satisfying call to service was being nominated to serve on the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) from 1996-1999.

Claudia Ewing Grant, former Deputy General Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) died Aug. 10. After serving as pastor to churches in Arkansas and Indiana, she was called to serve in 1987 as Deputy General Minister. Claudia was the highest-ranking woman to ever serve in the church at that time, a position with national and global reach.