



Regional Ministers' Report, June 6, 2020

Since the last Regional Board meeting in November, we have **visited in the following**

15 congregations for worship/events in person before we began stay at home orders:

- **Snake River:** Red Rock Boise, New Hope Meridian, Treasure Valley CC Caldwell, Ontario
- **Columbia River Gorge:** Midway Portland, Portland FCC (2), Hood River Valley
- **Santiam River District:** Salem FCC, Jehova Nisa Keizer, Keizer CC, Albany FCC (twice)
- **Scenic Rivers District:** Northwood Springfield, Junction City FCC
- **Blue Mountain Rivers:** Pendleton FCC

Since the Stay at Home Orders we have visited worship on line at least once in most of the congregations providing online worship. In addition, Cathy spoke at the Zoom/YouTube farewell worship event for Dan Bryant and preached at Eugene FCC on Zoom/YouTube.

Meetings attended in person before stay at home orders:

- Disciples Seminary Board Meeting Claremont
- Commission on Ministry (Caldwell Idaho)
- Albany Search Committee
- Red Rock Visioning Event and second visit for evaluation
- Lynchwood Search Team two times
- Murray Hills Transition Committee once and Murray Hills Board once
- Homedale CC leadership visit
- Burley FCC Board Meeting
- LaGrande FCC Search Committee
- Pendleton FCC Search Committee
- Salem FCC Regional Assembly Planning Committee
- General Board/College of Regional Ministers in Indianapolis
- Eugene FCC Transition Committee twice
- Albany and Ontario Women's Pray and Play Events

Ministerial Groups attended include:

- **Santiam River** on zoom twice,
- **Columbia Gorge** once in person and twice on zoom
- **Blue Mountain** twice on zoom,
- **Scenic Rivers** twice on zoom,
- **Snake River** once in person and three times on zoom,
- **Ecumenical Ministries Bishops and Executives** once in person

Zoom or Phone Conference Meetings

- Pastoral Relations twice
- Regional Board Executive Cte.
- New Church Committee twice
- Disciples Seminary Foundation Board and several committees of the board multiple times
- Commission on Ministry three times
- Anti Racism Team
- Oregon Disciple Foundation
- North American Pacific Asian Disciples Executive Cte and Board
- Pendleton Search team 2 times
- Eugene FCC Board Meeting
- Summer Camp leadership western districts 2 times
- Weekly with College of Regional Ministers
- Murray Hills Board 2 times, Transition Cte once
- Lynchwood Search Cte. Twice, Board, Congregational meeting and Pastor's first Sunday
- Week of Compassion Board of Stewards Executive Cte twice, Board of Stewards once
- Wild Women of the West mini event
- Burley Board meeting
- Nominating Committee 2 times

Additional Staff Work

- **Stacy Shelton** accomplished the collection of data and filing of the annual Yearbook Reports from our congregations to the General Church office with the assistance of Staff Member **Bernice Rivera** working with Spanish speaking congregations.
- **Stacy** also set up a new YouTube Channel for us and helped to transition the western district camping program from an in person program to a “camp in a box” concept.
- **Liz Cronin** helped to prepare the materials for the PPP loan.
- **Bernice** stayed in touch with the New Churches as well as helping to facilitate a set of grants to families funding by Week of Compassion and helping to transition the CMS program for ministry training into online format, and helping to plan a graduation for the students on completion of their two years of study this summer.

Worked with 8 congregations doing search and call since last meeting:

- **Lynchwood** voted to call Rev. Giuseppe Amato as their pastor, and he has begun his ministry.
- **Albany** called Rev. Eric Eide to be their Associate Pastor, and he has begun work in that role.
- **Silverton** has a transition committee in place that has met with Cathy twice and is working toward a retirement celebration for Rev. Steve Knox after over 20 years as Pastor and is seeking an Interim Pastor.
- **Pendleton** has interviewed candidates for Associate Pastor and is awaiting a second batch of names for consideration.
- **La Grande** Interim in place, Shari Eggleston. Search cte has interviewed candidates and is awaiting a second batch of names
- **Murray Hills** Interim in Place, transition committee working to listen to the congregation around the issue of staffing plan moving forward. Has held four rounds of listening and will hold fifth round in June.
- **Eugene FCC** Pastor Rev. Dr. Dan Bryant served the congregation for just short of 30 years. Interim is in place, Jerri Handy, having started since last board meeting.
- **Burley** pastor has resigned. Final Sunday was May 31. Cathy is working with the congregation to seek future direction.

As you might imagine, much of our work in the spring has centered around responses to current events. We have engaged in multiple communications with pastors’ groups, individual pastors and congregations regarding the closure of the buildings to prevent spread of the Covid-19 virus, and then about concerns related to re-opening the buildings. We have attended several webinars on this topic and related concerns such as the CARES Act, the Families First Act, and the Paycheck Protection Program. We attended online the annual meeting of western Regional Ministers (WRIM), which devoted a lot of attention to these concerns. Congratulations to Nampa FCC and Murray Hills CC who have received grants from National Benevolent Association to support their emergency food efforts during the public health and economic crisis. Our application to the PPP gained approval resulting in funding on May 6.

Among the Regional Ministers, and with the regional Anti Racism Pro Reconciliation team, we have had discussions about the police killing of George Floyd in Minnesota and the days of protest to follow. The church is called to reflection, repentance and action.

We greatly miss visiting with congregations in person due to the pandemic. However, we have had ongoing contact with many people in the regional church, learning to adapt even while congregations learn to adapt. Our disruptions certainly have brought unwelcome challenges. We also have the opportunity to deepen our appreciation for the many times of crisis and calamity faced by people in the Bible and in the history of the church. These put our own times in longer perspective. The early church had much greater communication challenges than we have today when Paul wrote these words in 2 Corinthians:

¹¹ Now, brothers and sisters, I say good-bye. Live in harmony. Do what I have asked you to do. Agree with each other, and live in peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you.¹² Greet each other with a holy kiss. ¹³ All of God’s holy people send greetings to you.

People totally take these words literally and today we would need more social distancing. But the call remains for us to remain united in the Spirit, in the love of Christ and the peace of God. We continue with this ongoing challenge, grateful to do so with you.

Doug and Cathy Myers Wirt