

**General Board Report for 2023**  
**Christian Church in Oregon and SW Idaho**  
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Our regional church is in a time of transition. After 22 years our Regional Ministers, Rev. Dr. Douglas A. Wirt and Rev. Dr. Cathy Myers Wirt are retiring in June of this year. The region is involved in a transition process with a mentor from the College of Regional Ministers, Rev. Bill Spangler-Dunning. Over the past two years we have prepared for this transition with a reordering of our staffing, adopting a transition plan, adopting the Executive Search Model, amending our governing documents to reflect the manner in which a search will take place. The board has built this plan one piece at a time. meeting to meeting.

**Highlights of this year:**

- We celebrate gathering for an in person **Regional Assembly** after four years after our online assembly in 2020. Over 175 people came in person with another 50=60 attended online. The videos of the assembly were then used by congregations after the event. Our Speakers, Moderator Belva Brown Jordan, Week of Compassion Director, Vy Nguyen, General Staff Dean Phelps, and Global Mission Partner Blanca Puma from Ecuador rounded out a reunion of ministry together. Our General Church Partners from Disciples Church Extension Fund, Christian Church Foundation, Week of Compassion, and Pension Fund were with us for workshops. At this event we formally recognized three new congregations: Pacific Islands Family Church, Iglesia Nueva Vida, and Portsmouth Union Church.
- **Ordinations** are once again being celebrated in person. This year we recognized the ordination of a Pastor from Korea, Rev. Geonyul Beyon, with NAPAD Executive Chung Seong Kim preaching, and an ordination of a Federal Prison Chaplain, Rev. Chuck Varner.
- Our Regional Ministers are back to more frequent times of **visiting congregations** bringing greetings and preaching since the pandemic restrictions are somewhat lifted. They remain mindful of the risks of congregations and seek to keep people engaged in safety.
- Our clergy had a required **Financial Ethics training** with Bruce Barkhauer of the Center for Faith and Giving.
- While our DMF continues to inch downward slightly, our **Annual Fund** total of over \$33,000 and our special offerings were mostly robust, with **Reconciliation** increasing over 66% and **Thanksgiving** 27%. We made special regional videos about these offerings to increase visibility. We celebrate that our regional church in 2022 was the one giving the largest dollar amount to **Week of Compassion** in the entire church.
- Our **women's ministry** held two in person retreats, one in Idaho and one in Oregon, as well as three online events with speakers from regional/general staff and local women pastors. Our most recent event was held in January with Sharon Watkins as Bible Study leader and received an offering/with matching fund, that created a fund of \$4,000 to be given to local congregations to interact with domestic violence shelters in their area through a grant fund that will be distributed between March and June of 2023. Other events included Regional Ministers from Northern CA/NV, Tennessee, and retired RM Susan Gonzales Dewey. We also participated in the online Wild Women of the West event with 5 other regional church with speakers from around the globe.

- Our **Anti-Racism team** encouraged participation in the Kirkpatrick Conference in March and has since hosted four online follow up events with participants watching the lectures from the conference and then relating that to the history of our own regional church geography. These events highlighted Disciples Asian Ministry with guest Chung Seong Kim, Hispanic Ministers with guest Lori Tapia, Native American ministry with guest David Bell and African American Disciples History with guest Darrell Tukufu. The team also had a workshop at one of our women's retreats on the topic of micro aggression.
- As a regional church we banded together with one of our newest congregations, Pacific Islands Family Church, to raise \$10,000 to fund a **shipment of food and medical supplies to the Chuuk Islands**. We received financial grants from Week of Compassion and Regional Disciples Women.
- We are pleased to have people serving on **NAPAD** and **Obra Hispana** boards and to have a member of the **Week of Compassion** staff, Raiza Spratt, among our regional church membership.
- Our **Regional Elders** continue their care of our retired and specialized ministry pastors and are now branching out in a new district cohesion project that will launch later this year helping neighboring congregations deepen relationship.
- We celebrate that our largest congregation, **Northwood Christian Church**, has purchased new property and will build an expanded campus after a ground breaking this past year.
- Our **Church Camp ministry** is under revision, and a team of leaders are remaking our program and funding for this vital ministry. We received a \$15,000 gift to help to launch a new endowment for scholarships and cover some costs this summer.
- We are excited that the Treasure Valley Christian Church has donated a piece of property across the street from their building to be used to build **veteran's housing** and that Portland Portsmouth Union Congregation is about to dedicate **20 affordable housing units** built on the land where they tore down their fellowship hall – priority to be given to families moving past domestic violence.
- Our Board has appointed two new task forces: one will seek to update our **governing documents** with a first reading to be presented to the June 2023 meeting, and one will seek to rethink the way we do **regional assemblies**, seeking new ways to gather as a regional church.
- We have all of our **full time ministry congregations** but one covered at the time of this writing, some with vibrant new clergy arriving in the next few months.

### **Our Challenges include:**

- The inherent anxiety when a long time staff pattern is changing.
- Having a limited amount of staff dollars for a growing sense of needs from staff
- The complexity of finding pastors for part time calls
- The support of the legal and programmatic needs for congregations with low budgets.
- The changing size of congregations necessitating difficult conversations about property matters.

The next 1.5 years will be transformative for this regional church as they change staff, manner of gathering and rework governing documents. We covet your prayers for patience, sustaining hope and grace with all as we move into this season of change.

Cathy Myers Wirt  
Douglas A. Wirt  
Regional Ministers