



THE CHRISTIAN

ALABAMA-NORTHWEST FLORIDA

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The mission of the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region is to encourage and equip its congregations and pastors for the ministry of Jesus Christ in local communities and throughout the world, while seeking to nurture them into deeper relationship with God, with each other, and with the whole Church.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

DECEMBER

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 1 - 4 | Mission Council of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) - Indianapolis |
| 10 | Christmas Party for children and families served through Christian Services for Children in Alabama (CSCA) (Noon - 2:00 p.m.) - Selma, AL |
| 12 | Committee on the Ministry (10:00 a.m.) - Regional Office, Helena |
| 11 - 18 | Christmas Offering Promotion (for the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region) |
| 17 | Executive/Personnel Committee (10:00 a.m.) - Regional Office, Helena |
| 20 | Staff Planning Meeting (10:00 a.m.) - Regional Office, Helena |

JANUARY, 2017

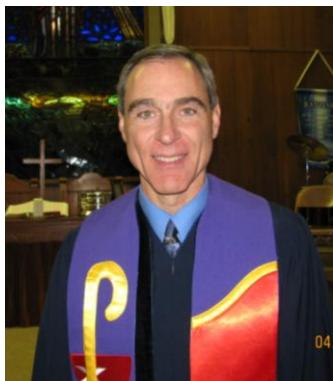
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| 7 | Program Committee on Church Development (10:00 a.m.) - Regional Office, Helena |
| 9 - 11 | Ministers and Mates Retreat - Hilton Garden Inn - Orange Beach, AL |
| 18 | Commissioning and Ordination North (9:15 a.m.) - Regional Office, Helena |
| 20 - 22 | Young Adult Winter Retreat - YMCA-Camp Chandler |
| 20 - 22 | “Youthtopia” - YMCA-Camp Chandler |
| 30 - 31 | Kick-Off Retreat for 2017 Colleague Groups - Joe Wheeler State Park |

FEBRUARY, 2017

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 4 | CWF/Disciples Women Cabinet (10:00 a.m.) - Regional Office, Helena |
| 7 | Commissioning and Ordination South (9:15 a.m.) - United Christian, Montgomery |
| 10 - 11 | Congregational Transformation Event - First Christian Church, Birmingham |
| 15 | Senior Adult Cabinet (10:00 a.m.) - Regional Office, Helena |
| 18 | Division of Administration and Stewardship (10:00 a.m.) - Regional Office |
| 19 - 26 | Week of Compassion Offering Promotion |
| 25 - 28 | General Board of the Christian Church - Indianapolis, IN |

"We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us."
– 2007 Disciples Identity Statement

REFLECTIONS FROM THE REGIONAL MINISTER



I hope all who are reading this newsletter will make plans to attend the Alabama-Northwest Florida biennial Congregational Transformation Event that is scheduled for February 10-11, 2017, at First Christian Church, Birmingham. The theme for the event is “Passion and Mission.” Our special guest will be Rev. Dr. Frank Thomas, professor at Christian Theological Seminary and former senior pastor with Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church, Memphis. Dr. Thomas is a excellent preacher, teacher, and author. It is a great opportunity for persons in the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region to have interaction with such a gifted leader, I hope to see a large crowd of Disciples in Birmingham on February 10.

My own thoughts about the theme may be different from the thoughts of our guest leader. When I think of the theme, “Passion and Mission,” I think about the need for all servants of Christ to have passion about what we do in his name (mission). The congregations that are most in need of transformation are those who do ministry by rote, as a matter of habit, with little or no thought to the power of their message to transform lives. Our service to Christ takes us out into the world, into mission, and it must be done with a sense of urgency and importance. Passion without mission is pointless, for it does not reach others. Mission without passion, however, can actually do harm, in my opinion. Mission may lead us to speak of Christ or the church, but the lack of passion communicates to others that our faith is not making a profound, positive difference in our lives. So why should others believe it can make a difference in their lives? Mission without passion could actually lead people away from a relationship with God.

But when we combine “passion” and “mission” it says to the world that we serve a powerful God, whose unconditional love can transform not only our lives as individuals but also our lives as communities. What a difference it would make if people would encounter our congregations as communities that are fired up about the good news, eager to express their belief in God’s grace through their hospitality and their concern for justice. I want first-time visitors to walk away from our congregations saying, “Wow...Those people have encountered and embraced a power that I need in my own life.”

“Passion and Mission” Let’s get a little closer to this theme at our congregational transformation event in February. Let us allow God to reach us and stir anew in us the passion for the good news which we proclaim.

Your Partner in Ministry,

John P. Mobley

Regional Minister

2017 MINISTERS AND MATES RETREAT - JANUARY 9 - 11, 2017



The 2017 Ministers and Mates Retreat will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Orange Beach, Alabama, on January 9-11, 2017. Rev. Dr. Todd Adams, President of the Pension Fund of the Christian Church, will be the guest keynoter.

The theme of the 2017 retreat is *Re-engaging with Your Call : What got you here? What keeps you here? What about beyond here?* Join Todd Adams as we think about our initial call to ministry, look at ways in which we sustain ourselves in ministry, and think about what life looks like beyond ministry. Rev. Adams offers these words to those who will be participating: *"Do you remember the initial struggle and movement of the spirit? When was the last time that you thought about what drew you to vocational ministry? Within each of us is a call story, yet the weekly routines of ministry can put distance between us and our initial calling!"*

Prior to his call to serve with the Pension Fund, Rev. Adams served as Associate General Minister for eight years. During the final two years of his work in this position he served concurrently as the Interim President for the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, giving leadership to this ministry in a time of financial uncertainty and helping them transition from their former facility in Nashville to a new home in Bethany, WV.

Adams is a 1994 graduate of Chapman University. In 1997, he completed his Master of Divinity at Phillips Theological Seminary. He earned a Doctor of Ministry from Wesley Theological Seminary in 2007. He was awarded the honorary Doctor of Divinity from Bethany College in recognition of his service to the church.

Todd has been married to Kimberly Hall Adams for over 22 years. Todd and Kim met at the Pacific Southwest Regional Assembly, hosted by Chapman University. They have two children, Claire and Jackson.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY - January 18 - 25

The Division of Mission for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Alabama-Northwest Florida is sponsoring a special emphasis in 2017 for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (set annually for January 18 - 25), which is a long-standing ecumenical observance that involves many denominations. The Division is encouraging all congregations in the Region to gather its members and friends for a special prayer service on Wednesday, January 18, 2017, which is the first day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The theme for the 2017 observance of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is "Reconciliation: The Love of Christ Compels Us." The Division believes this is a timely theme in a world that is experiencing division and brokenness in far too many places.

Congregations are encouraged to develop their prayer service in any way they choose. There is no script for how to develop the service. However, there are numerous web-sites that will provide background information and worship resources. one link below, but there are many. A Google search will give many options for resources.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/weeks-prayer-doc/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20160531_week-prayer-2017_en.html

Division of Mission members are writing prayers for each day during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. These prayers will be distributed to pastors so that they may be shared with church members for their own individual devotional time during the Week of Prayer.

2017 YOUNG ADULT WINTER RETREAT

January 20 - 22

The 2017 Young Adult Winter Retreat will be held at YMCA-Camp Chandler near Wetumpka, AL, on January 20-22. The theme of the retreat is “*Faith in the Midst of Tragedy and Loss.*” Mr. Monty Love, a layman from First Christian Church, Huntsville, will be the discussion leader for the retreat. The retreat will provide an opportunity for fun, fellowship, food, outdoor activities, and spiritual discovery. All young adults are invited to be a part of this event.

Because of a generous subsidy from the Region, young adults may register for this retreat for only \$50. Registration information was included in the November Leader’s Packet and may also be found on-line at <www.alnwfldisciples.org>. On-line registration and payment is also available through the Facebook page - Alabama-Northwest Florida Young Adults. Please contact John Mobley, Regional Minister, if you have questions about the retreat.

YOUTHTOPIA - JANUARY 20-22, 2017

(Youth in grades 6 - 12)

All youth of the Region (grades 6-12) are encouraged to participate in the annual winter retreat called “Youthtopia” on January 20-22, 2017. The retreat will be held at YMCA-Camp Chandler, near Wetumpka, AL. The Regional Youth Council and Nisha Warbington, Regional Youth Ministries Staff, will be planning an exciting event of activities, learning, and inspiration for all participants. The theme of the retreat is “*Writing Our Call Stories.*” During the retreat on Saturday afternoon, there will be a service of ordination for Nisha Warbington, who has served as the Region’s Youth Ministries Staff Person for more than 12 years. Congregations are asked to register at least one adult from their congregations to accompany the youth who attend. The cost of the weekend event is \$125. More information about Youthtopia was included in the November Leader’s Packet. Forms are also available on the Region’s web site.



Jeremy Hartbin (pictured in center with his wife, Mandy) was ordained into the ministry on Sunday, November 13, 2016, at First Christian Church, Valhermoso Springs, Alabama, where Jeremy serves as pastor. Pictured here with Jeremy and Mandy are other participants in the service.

CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION EVENT
FEBRUARY 10-11, 2017
“Passion and Mission”
First Christian Church, Birmingham

The Region’s Program Committee on Church Development has sponsored six congregational transformation events since 2008. Offered on an every-other-year schedule, the next event will be held on February 10-11, 2017, at First Christian Church, Birmingham. These weekend events have included prominent preachers and a variety of workshop leaders. These events have provided ideas and inspiration to help congregational leaders to be agents of transformation in their own congregations. Our Friday night preachers have included Dr. Fred Craddock, Dr. Sharon Watkins, Dr. Bill Lee, Dr. Todd Adams, Dr. William Willimon, Dr. Richard Hamm, all of whom have brought us powerful messages.

In 2017 the Program Committee on Church Development is excited to sponsor a seventh Region-wide congregational transformation event. The theme is “Passion and Mission.” The Friday evening worship service on February 10 will feature Rev. Dr. Frank A. Thomas, Nettie Sweeney and Hugh Th. Miller Professor of Homiletics and Director of the Academy of Preaching and Celebration at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. For many years prior to this faculty position, Rev. Thomas served as senior pastor with Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis, TN.

In addition to preaching on Friday night, Dr. Thomas will lead a plenary workshop on Saturday morning. The title of his workshop will be “Preaching For Moral Imagination.”



Dr. Thomas says the following about this workshop: *“What is needed more than ever in our churches and our nation is ‘moral imagination,’ the ability to see God’s right order in our families and communities. This workshop will help to stimulate the moral imagination of the participants in preaching and the church.”*

Following Dr. Thomas’ plenary workshop on Saturday, February 11, there will be opportunity for persons participate in workshops that will help them to become agents of transformation in their own settings. Persons may choose from a variety of workshops, listed below:

– (In Spanish, morning) **“Señales de esperanza en un mundo en conflicto”** (led by Rev. Gilberto Collazo, President, Hope Partnership) Escuchamos de los muchos retos que enfrenta la iglesia, ministerios cerrando, iglesias siendo vendidas, personas dando la espalda a Dios y la iglesia, y tantas otras noticias deprimentes. Pensamos que estos son problemas de las iglesias norteamericanas, pero nosotros no estamos exentos de estas realidades. Es hora de prepararnos para enfrentar los retos de este nuevo siglo. Dios todavía nos tiene en su agenda. Dios aun nos llama a servir y transformar por medio de su Espíritu las comunidades donde estamos ubicados. Entendamos que Dios no nos llama a ser exitosos, sino a ser fieles a su llamado. Conozcamos cuáles son las características de las iglesias que están ofreciendo ministerio transformador en sus comunidades y como su congregación puede desarrollar un plan de trabajo misional que lleve a su iglesia a nuevas oportunidades de ministerio y empoderamiento para los miembros de su iglesia.

– (In English, afternoon) **“Signs of Hope in a Troubled World”** (led by Rev. Gilberto Collazo, President, Hope Partnership) We hear of the decline of the church; ministries closing, buildings being sold, people giving up on church, and so many more depressing news flashes. It is time to flip the script. God is still invested in God’s people and the communities we are called to serve and transform. Join us in a conversation about the new things God is doing in the life of our church. Learn about how we redefine metrics of success from profitability to faithfulness and sustainability. Learn about the marks of congregations that are becoming vital, sustainable ministries in their communities and how your congregation can also develop a mission pathway that can lead your congregation to new places of ministry and empowerment for your church.

– “**Spiritual Disciplines for Transformational Leaders, Clergy and Lay**” (led by Rev. Mark Benson, Senior Minister, First Christian Church, Meridian, MS) Do you ever find yourself carrying the responsibilities of leadership in your church? Feel yourself stretched thin and at times tired and stressed? Come to this workshop and learn more about spiritual practices and disciplines that can help you recharge. You'll learn about the importance of maintaining good spiritual health so that you can be an example and leader in your congregation.

– “**Worship as an Inclusive Transformational Act**” (led by Rev. Jim Brooks, Interim Minister, First Christian Church, Tuscaloosa, AL). We misunderstand the purpose of worship when we become spectators for the performance of the preacher and musicians. Theologian Soren Kirkegaard is quoted as saying that God is the audience at worship and we are the actors. But what if we and God are the actors and audience? "Lights, camera, action!"

– “**Church Technology 101: An Introduction to 21st Century Tools for Ministry**” (Led By Rev. Troy Tatum, Senior Minister, First Christian Church, Birmingham). It can be difficult to keep up with rapidly changing technology, but there are a number of tools available to churches that can help them to be more effective and efficient in their ministry, often allowing them to have a greater impact with a smaller investment of time, energy, and resources. This workshop will provide participants with an overview of options and best practices around subjects like digital communications, social media, online giving, database management, and related topics.

– “**The Pain and Promise of Building an Inclusive Church**” (led by Rev. Shane Isner, Senior Minister, First Christian Church, Montgomery)- This workshop will focus on helping congregations and their leaders embrace the joy - and hurt - of including greater diversity in their ranks. The new Senior Minister with FCC, Montgomery, will draw upon the congregation's unique story to identify several necessary and relevant issues and also the pitfalls that may or may not be avoided. Radical hospitality, Rev. Isner has learned, comes with a cost, one that churches often struggle to bear. Yet it always has been the way of the future for every new generation of Jesus' followers. Therein lies the church's mission, and so its enduring hope.

– “**Things a Congregation Need to Know When the Pastor is Bi-Vocational**” (led by Rev. Dr. Dale Braxton, Associate Regional Minister and Pastor, Snow Hill Christian Church, Mt. Willing, AL) Being a bi- vocational pastor brings challenges and opportunities for the pastor as well as the church. An effective pastor will include and nurture the help of others, empowering them to share in the ministry by providing clear responsibilities and duties in the overall care of the church.

There will be program activities for elementary school-aged children on Saturday. Leigh Tatum, member at First Christian Church, Birmingham, will provide leadership.

The congregational transformation event will include lunch, fellowship, and worship in addition to the workshops. The event will end around 2:45 p.m. on Saturday.

The cost of registration for “Passion and Mission” is \$25 for an individual registration (\$10 per child age 12 and younger) or \$200 for a congregational registration (which covers registration for as many as the congregation would like to bring). It is imperative, however, that congregational registrations include a listing of all of the persons who will attend so that adequate preparations can be made. The registration deadline is February 1, 2017.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Wingate Hotel, 800 Corporate Ridge Drive, Birmingham, AL 35242 (off Hwy. 280), at a rate of \$79/night, plus tax, for single kings and \$84/night, plus tax, for double rooms with two beds. A deluxe, hot breakfast is included. The block of rooms will be held until January 20, 2017. Individual reservations may be made by calling 1-205-995-8586 and mentioning the group, “Christian Church.” The local hotel number is 205-995-8586. The fax is 205-995-2124.

Flyers and registration information was included in the November Leader's Packet. Please contact the Regional office if more information is needed.

2017 MEN'S RETREAT SET FOR MARCH 17-18



The annual Men's Retreat is planned for March 17 -18, 2017, at YMCA-Hargis. For a nominal added cost, men have the option of arriving on Thursday, March 16, for fishing, hiking, and fellowship prior to the beginning of the retreat on Friday afternoon. The Disciples Men's Cabinet has put together a great retreat filled with fun, fellowship, and challenge for all men in the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region. The theme for the 2017 Men's Retreat is "Men Following Jesus." The guest leader for the retreat will be Rev. Clint Coffey.

Clint Coffey began his service as Pastor with First Christian Church, Athens, in 2014. Clint grew up in the First Christian Church in Decatur, Alabama. He received a B.A. in History at University of Alabama and received his Masters of Divinity from Assemblies of God Seminary in Springfield, Missouri. Since ordination Clint has served three Disciples of Christ congregations. Clint is married to Anna Shirey, also an ordained Disciples minister, and they have two children together - Shirey and Raiden. Clint likes to ride his motorcycle, hang out with his family, and plant a garden every spring.

The Men's Retreat formally begins with dinner at 6:00 p.m. on Friday and concludes by 2:30 p.m. on Saturday. All men of all ages are encouraged to participate in this time of renewal, inspiration, and fellowship.

Each year at the Men's Retreat there is an important offering collection which provides resources for the Disciples Men to support specific mission efforts in and beyond the Region. Men's groups in congregations are urged to collect their money in advance of the retreat so that each congregation's gifts may be included with the offering collected at the retreat. Registration forms and information on costs were included in the November Leader's Packet. The early-bird deadline for registration is March 3. After that date there is an increase in the registration fee. Please contact the Regional office if more information is needed.



Jose' Matos-Hernandez and Ana Rivera were ordained to Christian ministry on Sunday, October 2, 2016, at Primera Iglesia Cristiana, Anniston, AL. Pictured here (l to r) are: (front row) Regional Minister John Mobley, Jose' Matos-Hernandez, Ana Rivera, Gilberto Collazo, who preached at the service, Hilda deJesus, elder of the congregation, (back row) Zenaida and Roberto Rodriguez, Carlos Martinez and Carmencita Ortiz, host co-pastors.

STATEMENT AFFIRMING AN ANTI-RACIST IDENTITY

Recognizing the division that exists within the human family due to the sin of racism, the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region confirms its commitment to the call of the gospel of Jesus Christ to be an ambassador of unity and reconciliation. The Alabama-Northwest Florida Region confesses its own participation in the sin of racism and is committed to the dismantling of racism wherever it exists in its own institutional life and in the life and witness of its congregations.

Therefore, the Regional Board, on February 23, 2002, affirms all current and future efforts within the Alabama-Northwest Region to become an Anti-Racist manifestation of the Body of Christ. This affirmation will be demonstrated through prayer, allocation of resources, and organized efforts to challenge racism wherever it exists within the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region.

Congregations that have formally committed to expressing “true community” through intentional efforts to work against racism and toward reconciliation.

First Christian Church, Anniston
Primera Iglesia Cristiana Hispana, Anniston
Village Christian Church, Auburn
First Christian Church, Birmingham
Valley Christian Church, Birmingham
First Christian Church, Dothan
First Christian Church, Florence
Snow Hill Christian Church, Ft. Deposit
First Christian Church, Ft. Walton Beach
Primera Iglesia Cristiana Hispana, Ft. Walton Beach
Sellers Memorial Christian Church, Hayneville
First Christian Church, Huntsville
Grateful Life Community Church, Huntsville
Madison Christian Church, Madison
Mt. Pleasant Christian Church, Mathews
First Christian Church, Pensacola
Mt. Calvary Missionary Christian Church, Tuskegee
Union Christian Church, Tuskegee
First Christian Church of River View, Valley



Israel Martinez (pictured in center with his wife, Jeanette) was ordained into the ministry on Saturday, November 5, 2016, at Westwood Christian Church, Pensacola, Florida. Pictured here with Israel and Jeanette are other participants in the service.

IS YOUR CONGREGATION A CANDIDATE FOR HOSTING THE NEXT MIRACLE DAY IN ALABAMA-NORTHWEST FLORIDA?

The Alabama-Northwest Florida Region has held eight successful Region-wide Miracle Days since 2000. These Miracle Day projects have attracted Disciples from all across the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region to work together to enhance a host congregation's capacity for ministry.

The Region's Division of Mission hopes that Miracle Days will continue to happen in Alabama-Northwest Florida. The date for the next Miracle Day has been set tentatively for Saturday, June 9, 2018. Applications from congregations that have an interest in hosting the next Miracle Day are welcomed. An application can be found in the January Leader's Packet, or you may contact the Regional office to request an application. If your congregation has a vision for a new ministry that requires physical preparation and that can only be achieved by a large number of volunteers working alongside volunteers from your congregation, you may want to consider hosting Miracle Day in 2018. The deadline for submitting applications is March 31, 2017.

OUTREACH GIVING UPDATE

The giving by congregations in Alabama-Northwest Florida to the Disciples Mission Fund and the four Special Day Offerings (Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving, and Christmas), at the end of October, 2016, shows a 6.36% decrease from the amount given for the same time period in 2015. Church-wide gifts to Disciples Mission Fund and these four Special Day Offerings have decreased by 5.12% from the year-to-date amount in 2015. Gifts by Alabama-Northwest Florida congregations to Week of Compassion through October, 2016, have increased by 6.59% from the amount given through October, 2015. Church-wide giving to Week of Compassion, regular and designated, is showing a year-to-date increase of 0.8%. Gifts by Alabama-Northwest Florida congregations to Reconciliation through October, 2016, have increased by 27.0% from the amount given through October, 2015. Church-wide giving to Reconciliation is showing a year-to-date decrease of 1.5%.

Disciples outreach ministries are carried out in partnership between general ministries, ministries of higher education, Regions, congregations, and other related ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The financial support given by your congregation enables this partnership to be effective in carrying out the ministry of Jesus Christ. Your commitment to our shared ministries is greatly appreciated.



The Hispanic Ministries Commission sponsored its second annual Hispanic Encounter at YMCA-Camp Chandler on October 14-15, 2016. The Hispanic Encounter is open to all members of the predominantly Hispanic Disciples congregations in the Region. These congregations include Primera Iglesia, Anniston, AL, Primera Iglesia, Birmingham, AL, Primera Iglesia, Fort Walton Beach, FL, and Iglesia Cristiana-Arbol de Vida, Pensacola, FL.

NEWS OF THE CLERGY

Jose M. Matos-Hernandez and **Ana Rivera Acevedo** were ordained at Primera Iglesia Cristiana, Anniston, on October 2. **Phillip Gilbert** was ordained at Cedar Plains Christian Church, Falkville, on October 23. **Israel Martinez** was ordained at Westwood Christian Church, Pensacola, on November 5. **Jeremy Harbin** was ordained at First Christian Church, Valhermoso Springs, on November 13. A service of ordination is being planned for **Nisha Warbington** on January 21, 2017, at YMCA-Camp Chandler, in conjunction with Youthtopia.

Wendell Miller is serving through December as Supply Minister for Pleasant View Christian Church, Camp Hill. Beginning in January, **Jeff Damron** will begin his service as Pastor with Pleasant View Christian Church, Camp Hill.

A service of installation for Pastor **Chris Whitehead** took place on December 4, 2016, at Azalea Hills Christian Church, Mobile. A service of commissioning and installation is planned for December 11, 2016, for **Cassandra Smith**, pastor with Mt. Zion Christian Church, White Hall

CONGREGATIONS SEEKING A MINISTER

Huntsville, First (Cameron Douglas is Interim)

Jasper, First (LaMon Brown is Interim)

Tuscaloosa, First (Jim Brooks is Interim)



Rev. Samuel Bustillo, Executive Minister with the Evangelical and Reformed Church in Honduras, visited with Primera Iglesia Cristiana, Fort Walton Beach, for its church anniversary on November 6, 2016. Rev. Bustillo (pictured right) is accompanied by his wife, Josefa Patricia, and his son, Josue. Pictured to the left are Regional Minister John Mobley, and host co-pastors, Jose and Ana Diaz. The Alabama-Northwest Florida Region is in a formal partnership with the Evangelical and Reformed Church in Honduras and this was the second visit by Rev. Bustillo to the Region.



Phillip Gilbert was ordained to Christian ministry on Sunday, October 23, 2016, at Cedar Plains Christian Church, where he serves as pastor. Pictured here (left to right) are Committee on the Ministry representative Cameron Douglas, Rev. Gilbert, Associate Regional Minister Dale Braxton, and Regional Minister John Mobley.

Approximately 30 persons participated in the 2016 Senior Adult Retreat on November 3-4, 2016, at the Saint Bernard Retreat and Conference Center in Cullman, AL. The theme of the retreat was "Pay It Forward!" and the retreat leader was Rev. Mary Pat Spencer (pictured in front).



VALLEY SENIORS ARE TRAVELING!

Valley Seniors, renamed AAA (Active Ageless Adults) recently traveled to Gee's Bend, Alabama to visit with the famous quilters there and see their historic and beautiful quilts. At Selma we were joined by members and friends from the Snow Hill Christian Church. A group of twenty-seven from the two churches enjoyed seeing the beautiful quilts and visiting with the quilters. We gathered for a wonderful lunch at historic Gaines Ridge Restaurant and Dinner Club in Camden, Alabama. The hostess, Betty Kennedy, who is also a quilter, gave us a tour of her home and her lovely quilts.

Our two churches, Valley and Snow Hill, are not close together in miles, but "we are one in the spirit and one in the Lord ... and they'll know we are Christians by our love."

Lola Kiser

THE ALABAMA-NORTHWEST FLORIDA REGION EXPRESSES ITS SINCERE GRATITUDE TO ALL WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE 2016 ANNUAL FUND

(* denotes a Board member, **denotes a staff person)

Mr. & Mrs. William Bagby	Phillip & Ann Gilbert	James E. & Carolyn R. McGee	Jeff & Sue Seward
Jack & Marti Baldwin	*John & Beth Gregory	Jayne Meyer	Doris C. Shaw
Matt & *Karen Ball	Ed & Ginny Guindon	Alfred & Paulette Miller	Joe & Martha Shelton
Deryll & Lorraine Banning	Clarissa Harms	**John & Valya Mobley	Sara Simon
William Barham	Nathan Hartley	Marylou Morgan	Jim & Jerrye Smith
Dorothy A. Battle	Carl Hinger	Russell & Mary Morrow	Tom & Marylou Smith
Judy Blalock	John & Sheryl Holmes	Mt. Zion Christian Church	Edd & Mary Pat Spencer
**Dale & Mercedes Braxton	Dottie Hughes	Catherine Walker Murphy	Mr. & Mrs. Henry L. Spencer
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Rob Davis	Michael & Jacquelyn Longmeier	Russell & Linda Reeves	Mark & Dawn Underwood
*Katie Wallace-Davis	Glenda Luft	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Renner	Valley Christian Church
Bernard & Nancy DeVore	Myra Mabry	Flora Richardson	*Margaret J. & Mack M. Vann
*Kanessa Miller-Doss	Louis & Melinda Mapp	Jerry Ridling	Daren & **Nisha Warbington
*Cameron & Diane Douglas	*Carlos Martinez	Ana Rivera-Acevedo	Wes & Kathy Weathers
Sarah & Stewart Draper	*Kathy Mason	Les & Robin Roberts	Ben Webb
George & Judy Dudley	David & Betty Massey	Rev. Wallace & Judy Robinson	Pete & Jean Willis
Gary & Stephanie Edge	Jose' M. Matos Hernandez	Loretta Rucker	
Harvey Fearson	Eleanora Mauritsen	Louise Sanderson	

YOU CAN BE A PART OF THE ALABAMA-NORTHWEST FLORIDA ANNUAL FUND

The **Annual Fund** is.....

.....an invitation for individuals to give additional financial support for the ministries of this Region. While the Region is supported through the Disciples Mission Fund and through the Christmas Offering, these dollars alone will not maintain current ministries and develop new ministries that are envisioned.

.....an opportunity for individuals to make a difference in the lives of children, youth, young adults, men, women, pastors, and students. Gifts to the **Annual Fund** directly impact people right in your own congregation and in neighboring Disciples of Christ congregations.

.....an opportunity to undergird this Region so that we can achieve excellence in everything we do. Nothing less is worthy of the Christ we serve.

-----Please clip and return-----

Enclosed is my/our gift to help the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region continue its current ministries with excellence and to develop exciting new ministries which will strengthen congregations for mission and ministry.

Name _____ E-mail _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Congregation _____

Amount of Gift \$ _____

Payable to: Christian Church in Alabama-NW Florida, 861 Highway 52, Helena, AL 35080

Thank You for Your Support!!!