



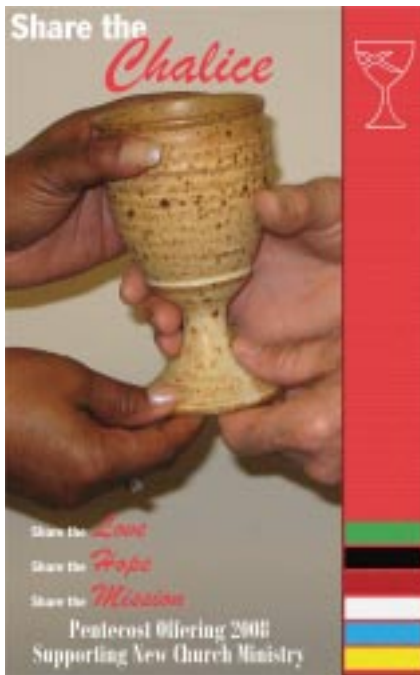
The

# Tennessee Christian

VOL. 90 NO. 2

April 2008

## Pentecost Offering



Pentecost is the day on which the Holy Spirit was given to the disciples. It is the day commonly thought to be the anniversary of the church. You can read about it in Acts 2. The author of Luke describes a very mysterious and exciting day.

Many Disciples congregations in North America will be taking a Special Offering on Pentecost. This offering is used to start new congregations. One-half of the offering goes to the General New Church Team and one-half stays in Tennessee to start new congregations in Tennessee.

The members of the General New Church Team are coming to preach in Tennessee congregations in May. The ministry of starting new congregations is unique. Unchurched people will often go to a new congregation when they might not go to an established congregation. New congregations bring previously unchurched people into the church. The number of Disciples in Tennessee has gone up during the past ten years in part because of the new congregations in our Region.

Your gift to the Pentecost Offering will be an essential part of starting or supporting new congregations in Tennessee.

## Disciples Missionary is coming to Tennessee

Krista Johnson, a Disciples missionary to Israel/Palestine, will be coming to Tennessee to speak in Disciples congregations June 8 - 30 and July 13 - 20. Please contact Marie Wiggins at [mhw626@comcast.net](mailto:mhw626@comcast.net) to schedule Krista at your congregation. Krista was sent to Palestine in 2006. She has witnessed the difficulties of life in the Mideast. She has experienced personal difficulties when she was refused permission to enter Israel after a recent conflict between Palestinians and Israelis. She has a great story about her ministry on our behalf in the Middle East.



## Regional Center to move

The Christian Church in Tennessee has signed a contract to purchase one-quarter of a small office building in the Bellevue area of Nashville. Purchase price is \$255,000. While closing on the purchase has been delayed for a variety of reasons, the closing, the needed work on the space and the move are expected to take place at the end of April. Our address, our phone number, the size of our space will all be changing. Before you come to the Regional Center for Ministry make sure you know where we are located. A map with our new address and phone number will be sent once the closing happens.

## 2008 Regional Assembly to be held at Fall Creek Falls State Park

The 2008 Regional Assembly, which will be held October 24-26, will be a worthwhile experience.

All Disciples will gather together at Fall Creek Falls State Park to worship God, enjoy special speakers and appreciate God's nature. The theme of the event will be "Caring for the Earth." Our outdoor setting for this assembly will be complimented by our speakers and all events in the Assembly. Put these dates on your personal calendar and the calendar at your congregation so everyone will be encouraged to gather at Fall Creek Falls in October. Registration forms will be sent to your congregation early in 2008.

# Words From the Regional Minister

What will the church and ministry look like in the latter part of this century? Every day I pray that God directs me to be the leader of the church God wants me to be. But am I leading the church in the direction God wants the church to be going?

While I see fewer and fewer people participating in church these days, I see people returning to the church in a few years. The church has gone through a number of cycles where more and more people participate in the church and at other times fewer and fewer people participate. Some people do not understand the relevance of the Gospel or the church in their lives. I think that as our society continues to be influenced by science and technology, one day people will start to want to be more human and will need answers to many questions of life that are found in the Gospel. I am confident that Christians will find the best ways to communicate the Gospel to people so that it speaks to the needs of people.

I am proud to be a part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). I am confident that in the year 2075 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will be larger and known all over the United States. Our ministry is far too important for it to die away. The message of the Gospel as spoken by Disciples will reach many Christians and seekers. We have a lot to offer people. When we find ways to serve others and turn our congregation into a mission station in our community, people will again participate and worship God in our church.

I am impressed that when the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) went through growth spurts lay persons were empowered to do ministry and women were organized to do ministry. I think as we continue in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, lay people will be given more responsibilities and will be outstanding leaders. More women will organize to do ministry and missions in a variety of places including their own neighborhoods. I continue to see more women attending seminary and being ordained to ministry. When young women see other women in ministry, they too will want to serve in similar ways. Men, you will still be needed.

What will ministry be like in the latter part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? What will the church look like in the year 2075? I am not sure I know the answer to either of those questions. But I do know God's church, and especially the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), will be around then. Outstanding leaders, both lay and clergy, will be called by God to lead and serve in special ways. Some will need to be educated in special ways and others will be able to serve with their special abilities.

What do you see when you look into the future?  
See you in church.

*Glen Stewart*



## THE TENNESSEE CHRISTIAN

is published by the Christian Church in Tennessee,  
50 Vantage Way, Suite 251  
Nashville, TN 37228

**Editors: Virginia Brooks/  
Glen Stewart**

News reports and information for publication in the Tennessee Christian should be addressed to 50 Vantage Way, Suite 251, Nashville, TN 37228



Pictured above are some of the young people who attended the Young Adult Winter Retreat that was held at Bethany Hills Camp in February.

### First Worship Service of a Spanish speaking congregation in Nashville

On Sunday, March 30, 2008, at 1:30 p.m., the first worship service in Spanish of a Disciples congregation in Nashville was held at the Donelson Christian Church. Oru Regional Minister, Glen Stewart delivered the sermon. 61 adults and several children attended the service. The group plans to continue to worship each Sunday afternoon with a prayer service on Tuesday evening. Justina Rivera is the organizer.

## CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN TENNESSEE 2008 Calendar

### May

20 Executive Committee Meeting, Regional Center

### June

1-7 CYF Conference 8-11 Discovery Camp

12-14 Firsters Camp

29 8ers Camp begins

### July

5 8ers Camp ends

6-10 Junior Camp

10-13 Family Retreat

20-25 Chi Rho Camp

27-30 Hope Camp

### August

8 Executive Committee, Bethany Hills

9 Regional Board, Bethany Hills

### October

24-26 Regional Assembly, Fall Creek Falls State Park

January 8, 2008

Dear Disciples in Tennessee,

A year ago, I was privileged to go on a mission trip to New Orleans with members of my church and some from other congregations. We were stunned by the terrible devastation that was and still is New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Our task last year was to help rebuild Westside Christian Church's sanctuary, parsonage, and the mission center, a place to sleep, eat, fellowship and worship for groups who came to help rebuild. We worked long, hard days and saw real progress at the end of our week.

This past Christmas holiday, many of the same missionaries from Tennessee returned to New Orleans to find that work had been completed on the church, parsonage, and mission center. Disciples from all over America had come throughout the year to work at the church and on restoring and rebuilding homes and churches in the area. It is amazing to realize what Disciples of Christ can accomplish when they work together.

At the end of every exhausting day in New Orleans, when the community gathers to worship, the pastor Brother Vance asks, "Where did you see God today?" It is easy to see God when people of faith come together to build up God's church and to reach out to their neighbors in need. We may not always be able to go on mission trips, but we are able to build up God's church and to help our neighbors every time we give our special offerings in worship or when we send gifts to the Tennessee Disciples Mission Fund.

All of the gifts of time, effort, and money that you give are greatly appreciated.

Where did you see God today?

Rachel Eva Dixon  
Chair, The Commission on Stewardship and Interpretation  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Tennessee

### Dedication of New Entrance



On February 3, 2008, First Christian Church, Chattanooga, dedicated a new entrance to the building. After significant work on the building and in the parking area, a new entrance was created. Glen Stewart preached the sermon this day. Pictured with Dr. Stewart are Paul Rebelo, pastor, and leaders of the congregation.

### Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt Places First Two Pastoral Residents

A new program at the Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt will place two recent Masters of Divinity graduates for two years as "Pastoral Residents" in strong Disciple congregations beginning this summer. Cara Gilger has accepted a call to ministry at Geist Christian Church in Indianapolis, IN, and Allison Lanza will begin her ministry at St. Andrew Christian Church in Olathe, KS, following graduation in May and ordinations.

The "Congregational Immersion Project," funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc., is part of a larger program intending to address problems in the "Transition into Ministry." It builds on the awareness that the early years of pastoral experience are critical in shaping subsequent ministry and that the move from school to church is especially hard. In fact, there is a significant drop out rate for newly ordained pastors in their first 5 years of ministry. The Disciples House project seeks to ease that difficult transition by providing two promising graduates each year with an initial experience in a healthy congregation, incorporating intentional mentorship by strong pastors, special readings and study, and collegiality with their fellow pastoral residents. The program also includes return visits to the Disciples House, so that residents can share learnings with current students. The House shares funding of the residencies with participating congregations and helps to shape the structure of the experience for each resident.

Disciples Divinity House seeks to shape outstanding ministers for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in partnership with the Vanderbilt Divinity School and the Christian Church. Mark Miller-McLemore is Dean, and Elizabeth Knowles-Bagwell is Project Director. For more information on the Disciples House at Vanderbilt or the Congregational Immersion Project, go to <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/divinity/disciples.html>, or contact 615-321-0380. For more information on the "Transition into Ministry" program, go to <http://www.staging.transitionintoministry.org/index.php>



### Bethel Christian Church, Jonesboro

On Sunday, April 6, 2008, three new deacons were ordained and two elders emeritus were commissioned. Pastor Perry Wiggins, pastor of Alameda Christian Church was the preacher. Regional Minister Glen Stewart led the Communion Service. Vincent Dial is the pastor of Bethel Christian Church.

## ***Together in Christ* Theme for 17<sup>th</sup> Global Gathering**

**Nashville, Tennessee:** The 17<sup>th</sup> World Convention will convene July 29-August 3, 2008 in Nashville, Tennessee under the unifying theme of *Together in Christ*. Dr. C. Robert Wetzel, President of Emmanuel School of Religion, is serving as Convention President. It is the only ministry in the Movement that brings together Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, Churches of Christ (*a cappella*) and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) from around the world. Presently these heirs of the Stone-Campbell Movement can be found in nearly 180 countries.



A fantastic line-up of main sessions speakers will speak each evening, including Bob Russell, former Senior Minister of Southeast Christian Church, Louisville, Kentucky; Cynthia Hale, Minister of Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur, Georgia and Mike Cope, Preaching Minister at Highland Church of Christ, Abilene, Texas. Bob Wetzel will preside over the Sunday afternoon Communion Service, which is also slated to be the kick-off for the Bicentennial Celebration marking the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the debut of Thomas Campbell's the *Declaration and Address*, considered by many to be the seminal document of the Restoration Movement.

In addition there will be a full compliment of workshops, seminars, meal events, an exhibit hall will more than 250 booths, a children's program and a teen program featuring a house build to benefit Katrina victims.

"We are excited that Nashville is hosting the Convention, says Executive Director Jeff Weston, "it is the first time in sixteen years the Convention has been in the United States; never before in Nashville. Being centrally located to most of the United States means a diversity of people from across the family will be able to attend. We also expect a large international contingent with as many as 40 to 50 countries being represented. For five days in the summer of 2008 Nashville will be the center of the world! Will you come?" For further information or to register visit [www.worldconvention.org](http://www.worldconvention.org)

## **Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Vida**



A revival was held at Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Vida January 16 - 20, 2008, with our Regional Minister preaching, with a translator on Sunday, January 20. Martha Medina is the pastor.

## **Ordinations**

One of the special celebrations in the Region and congregations is an ordination. Recently two ordinations were held in Tennessee.



Robert Palmer was ordained at Decatur-Trinity Christian Church, Memphis on Sunday, January 13, 2008. Bob was ordained after finishing requirements to receive a Master of Divinity Degree at Memphis Theological Seminary. Bob has previously served as a pastor in Memphis. Congratulations, Bob!



Al Gritten was ordained at Central Avenue Christian Church, Humboldt, on Sunday, January 27, 2008. Al recently finished all requirements for his Master of Divinity Degree. Al has served as the Associate Minister of First Christian Church, Tullahoma, and currently serves as Pastor of Central Avenue Christian Church. Congratulations, Al!

## **Installation of Pastor**

On Sunday, February 24, 2008, Patt Hardaway was installed as the Senior Minister of the Collierville Christian Church. Patt began her ministry at Collierville Christian Church after having served as an Associate Minister at Lindenwood Christian Church, Memphis.

