



Tomorrow's Leaders Today

The good news from HELM and higher education institutions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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A road map for Disciples

Leadership Fellows learn where we are, where we're going

Where is the church going? What makes the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) unique and gives us such hope and potential? And what do new leaders need to know to live into this vision?

Answering those questions – and creating many, many more questions – was the core of the eighth annual HELM Leadership Fellows Conference, held this year at National City Christian Church in Washington, D.C.

Eighteen students from across the country and across the church gathered for a weekend of reflection, community, and worship. With questions about Disciples faith, structure, and theology as the foundation for the conference, a panel of distinguished leaders in the church provided some of the answers and left the door open for more exploration.

“This weekend gave us an amazing look into the different areas of our denomination, from general ministries to long-term pastoral careers to church history and to new church starts,” said David Weuste, a junior at Texas Christian University from Guthrie, Okla. “Overall we got a great view of our church in general.”

- Opening the conference was Marshall



The 2007-2008 HELM Leadership Fellows gather on the front steps of National City Christian Church. Students, HELM staff, General Minister and President Sharon Watkins and moderator Newell Williams joined with the congregation in the morning's gospel worship.

Dunn, pastor of University Christian Church in Hyattville, Md., for more than 30 years and recently the interim deputy general minister of the denomination. Dunn offered his ideas on how leaders, both pastors and

lay leaders, can create and support a healthy congregation or renovate a struggling congregation.

- Newell Williams, a leading historian on the Stone-Campbell movement,

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Transy, Hiram students join STEP Leadership Team

Two students from Disciples colleges will join the leadership team of the Student Ecumenical Partnership, the national student Christian ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ. STEP's mission focuses on social justice and mobilizing students.



COOK



STONEBRAKER

and the 2007 General Assembly. His home congregation is May's Lick Christian Church near his hometown of Georgetown, Kentucky.

- Chrissy Stonebraker is a sophomore at Hiram College majoring in accounting with a minor in religious studies and political science.

Also a member of the campus' Disciples student leadership team, she too was in Fort Worth for this summer's General Assembly representing her college. Her home congregation is First Christian Church in Niles, Ohio.

Students serve two-year terms on the leadership team.

- Meet the new STEP Leadership Team members:
- Brandon Cook is a sophomore psychology and German major at Transylvania University. A member of Transy's Disciples On Campus leadership team, he attended the Celebrate conference in New Orleans last New Year's holiday

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Ecumenical ministries restructures to give students more leadership

Ecumenical student ministries in the United States will have a new look with an emphasis on student leadership.

The Council for Ecumenical Student Christian Ministries gathered in St. Louis in September for a strategic planning session. The result of the four-day meeting: Significant restructure and increased leadership roles for the dozen students involved.

Prior to the reorganization, denominational staff and students shared a leadership role, and denominations provided the funding. Now denominational staff will have a primarily advisory role.

HELM President Dennis Landon agreed to serve as a staff liaison for four years.

“CESCM’s best-known contribution to ecumenical ministries has been Celebrate, the student conference that occurs every four years,” Landon said. “That will still be a major emphasis in CESCM’s work.”

The most recent Celebrate was during the 2006-2007 New Year’s holiday in New Orleans.

Denominations participating in CESCM are the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), The United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ.

CESCM will continue its relationship with the Higher Education Ministry Arena (HEMA), the primary structure through which these denominations plus the American Baptist Church, U.S.A., work ecumenically to achieve common goals in higher education ministries.

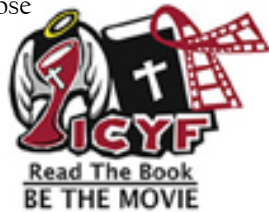
CESCM also will continue serving as the primary contact for American students with the World Student Christian Federation.

Gearing up for ICYF

ICYF (International Christian Youth Fellowship) is the premiere event for Disciples youth, and it’s coming up soon – July 24-27, 2008, at Chapman University in Orange, California. An informal poll of regions indicates close to a thousand youth plan to attend this event. Make sure the youth at your church are among them.

Registration for both youth and adults is \$200 by June 1, 2008. Forms and more information on ICYF is available at www.icyfchapman.org.

HELM is one of many sponsors for ICYF; others contributing to the event are Disciples Home Missions, Week of Compassion, the Office of the General Minister and President, and the Pacific Southwest and Northern California-Nevada regions.

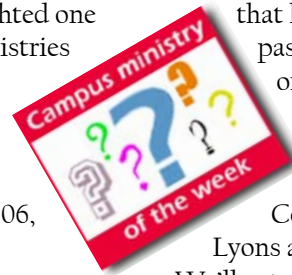


Campus Ministry of the Week starts back at the top

For the past year “Campus Ministry of the Week” has highlighted one of more than 80 campus ministries associated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on HELM’s web site.

Started in September 2006, the cycle is nearly complete, but there is room for new campus

ministries or for existing ministries that have added web pages in the past year. If you want to be listed on HELM’s “Campus Ministry of the Week” and other denominational resources, send your information to Communications Director Brad Lyons at blyons@helmdisciples.org. We’ll get you in the spotlight soon.




Now you can watch ‘Disciples Idol’ online

In case you couldn’t make it to Fort Worth – or if you just want to see it again – “Disciples Idol” is online. HELM’s official report to the General Assembly is, as far as we know, the first report to be presented musically. Join in “The Leadership Fellows Hymn,” take on the challenge of listing Disciples higher education institutions with “Disciples Almas Mater.” Hum along with the classic “STEP Has A New Vision” or “The Seminarians Conference Hymn.” See advertisements for the Disciples Leadership Institute or scholarship management programs. Learning about a general ministry has never been this musical. Just visit www.helmdisciples.org and click the “Disciples Idol” logo.



More than 40 high-school students gathered at Transylvania University for the 15th annual “Transy & TEAM,” the national Disciples program specifically designed for high school youth who are considering ordained leadership in the church. HELM’s Brad Lyons (right) spoke to students about attending Disciples colleges and universities and finding ways to make it more affordable. Why the guitar? Learning to be a minister is like learning to play guitar: You can be good if you teach yourself but excellent with the right teacher. (Brad hopes to take his own advice soon.) This program is funded by grants from the Lilly Endowment, Inc., the Oreon E. Scott Foundation, Disciples Home Missions, and HELM.



FELLOWS

and the president of Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas, offered an overview of the Disciples’ unique history and theology. Also the current moderator of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Williams helped Fellows take a fresh look at how our ecumenical roots offer great opportunities in our changing culture.

- Currently Yvonne Gilmore-Essig serves as interim pastor at First Christian Church in Baltimore, but she’s also in the process of starting a new congregation in Columbus, Ohio. She offered insight on starting new churches, ranging from evangelism to finding the right real estate for her new church.
- Sharon Watkins, the General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), offered a big-picture view of the Disciples right now and what the near-future may bring, particularly regarding youth and young adult ministries. This was Watkins’ first visit with Leadership Fellows and the third time a general minister and president has joined the conference.

Jean Ellen Cowgill, a senior at Dartmouth College from Lexington, Ky., is a history major, so the historical connections resonated for her.

“Hearing how my church and its members have been active participants in these stories, grappling with the issues, standing up for what they believe, reaffirms my faith in this denomination. I am part of a tradition I want to share. I want to say to others, ‘Look how cool



For reasons unknown to HELM staff, Leadership Fellows tend to build at least one human pyramid at each gathering. Crowning the pyramid is Caroline Hamilton, leaning on Alexis Westerhausen and Merillat Pittman. Chris Miller-McLemore, Katie Johnson, and Kelly Rand serve as the foundation.

my denomination is!’ It gives me hope that our members will continue in this tradition, continue to respond to the needs of the world and think critically and act critically with respect to the problems and challenges of both the church and the world.”

How our history connects to our future stuck in Kathryn Welch’s mind.

“It’s important as Disciples to know our history, and this weekend gave me a new appreciation and new insight into the history of our denomination,” said Welch, a sophomore at Transylvania University from Baltimore. “It’s so important for us to form an identity even if we are camped in the land of ambiguity.

I only wish that our whole church could hear some of the things that were shared with us.”

Worship is a key element of the Leadership Fellows Conference. Students led each of the four worship times, coordinated by the student-elected planning team of Welch and Katie Johnson, a sophomore at Texas Christian University from Nashville.

Sunday morning the conference moved to the landmark sanctuary at National City, joining the congregation for its morning gospel service. Pastor Stephen Gentle highlighted the group and offered a warm welcome on behalf of the congregation.

Each conference also spends a chunk of time on Saturdays exploring the local community. This year’s expedition took students to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the National Mall.

As is always the case with young adults like college students, the end of the day’s programming doesn’t mean lights out, either. The congregation of Leadership Fellows gathers only once a year and at General Assemblies, so students stayed up past midnight both nights creating a new community and sharing their faith stories.

“The most engaging times for me were those when we all just talked and fellowshiped and discussed our thoughts,” said Courtney Waters, a sophomore at Rhodes College from Memphis, “because I knew that no matter what I said, I would be accepted. This group makes me feel extremely comfortable with expressing myself.”

STEP

Disciples returning to the Leadership Team for their second year are Chapman University’s Katie Blaisdell and Eureka College’s Sarah Little. Both are juniors majoring in political science.

Students on the Leadership Team are committed to organizing resource reviews to post on the STEP web site, encouraging dialogue about ecumenical and social justice issues, and committing to attending up to four meetings. They are very involved in the day-to-day management of STEP

as well, having input on budget and programming decisions. As Cook and Stonebraker arrive, two students depart.

Leaving the Leadership Team after two years of service are Kelly Rand, a senior social work major at Texas Christian University, and Trayce Stewart, a senior elementary education

major at Hiram College. Stewart has also served as the Disciples student representative on the Council for Ecumenical Student Christian Ministries and spent 2007 as the CESCM co-chair.

STEP’s ministries receive significant support from the James I. Spainhower Campus Ministry Endowment and the Raymond F. McCallister Campus Ministry Endowment.

Returning for 2008		Completing service	
			
BLAISDELL	LITTLE	RAND	STEWART

Don't wait any longer for your Advent guide

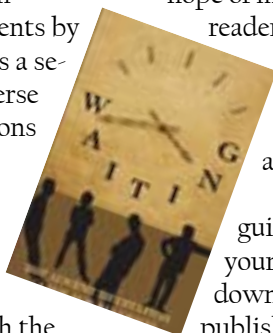
"Advent: Waiting," the 2007 Advent Reflection Guide, was written for college and university students by college and university students. The guide contains a series of daily reflections, each of which includes a verse of Scripture, a reflection, and a prayer. The reflections engage lectionary readings for the four Sundays of Advent.

The Student Ecumenical Partnership of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ (UCC) and other Disciple students embarked on this ecumenical project with the

hope of making music the heart of the devotions. Accordingly, readers are invited to sing a Christmas carol as a closing canticle.

Disciples writers include Leslie Dobyns, Jon Hall, Kelly Rand, Trayce Stewart, Beau Underwood, and Esther Lee.

To order our 2007 Advent Guide, e-mail advent-guide@stepnetwork.org. No matter how many copies your order, you'll pay only for shipping. You can also download it free at www.stepnetwork.org. The guide is published by the Higher Education Ministries Arena.



On campus

Bethany College appoints Miller as 19th president

Dr. Scott D. Miller will begin his service as president of Bethany College effective January 1. A national leader in higher education, Dr. Miller has been the president of Wesley College in Dover, Delaware, since 1997.

He will take the helm from G.T. "Buck" Smith, who is retiring after four years of service to the institution.

The 48-year old Miller was one of 17 college presidents nationwide featured in The Entrepreneurial College President published by the American Council on Education in 2004. In 2002, his achievements at Wesley were touted as representing an "amazing turnaround" in The Small College Guide to Financial Health.

During Miller's tenure, Wesley College's enrollment tripled, fund raising has been robust, the endowment doubled, and the institution was named to the prestigious Regional Best Colleges list of U.S. News and World Report for four consecutive years.

A western Pennsylvania native, Miller's new post will bring him closer to his personal roots, as well as those of his wife, Annie, a native of Ohio. He is a 1981 graduate of West Virginia Wesleyan College and was a newspaper reporter for three central West Virginia newspapers. He earned his Master's Degree from the University of Dayton in 1984, and his Ph.D. from The Union Institute and University in 1991. Dr.



MILLER

Barton College calls Woodruff to serve as chaplain

Hollie Woodruff has begun her service as the chaplain to Barton College.

A native of Lubbock, Texas, Woodruff is a graduate of Belmont College and earned her Master's of Divinity at the Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt. She had been working for the Tennessee Department of Health prior to being called to Wilson, N.C.

"Being a chaplain and doing college ministry is new for me. I feel I'm in



WOODRUFF

a very creative place right now," Woodruff said. "Barton College is on the cusp of wonderful and exciting new things: new focus, new curriculum, and now new ministry. This is a great place to be and I am privileged to be a part of it."

Woodruff is also a participant in the Disciples Leadership Institute, a HELM program created to bring together younger leaders from both new and established congregations.

Miller also earned an Ed.S. degree from Vanderbilt University in 1988.

Vanderbilt Divinity House students receive valuable lessons from pastors

Ministry students at Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt gathered during fall break, Oct. 23, to meet with experienced Disciples pastors Janet Long, senior pastor of Washington Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Elyria, Ohio, and Roger and Michelle Jenks, pastors of Grace Community Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Aurora, Ill., to talk about leadership in congregations from a Disciples point of view. Each of the ministers presented distinct but effective ways of leading for Disciples churches.

The "Wise Practice" events occur twice a year and address topics that previous Disciples House students, now pastors, wished they had covered prior

to beginning congregational ministry. It is part of the Midterm Congregational Immersion Project, an effort at Disciples House-Vanderbilt funded by the Lilly Endowment to improve the quality of preparation for ministry in the local church. The first event focused on the "priestly" ministries for Disciples (funerals, weddings, and baptisms) and involved six Disciple pastors. Elizabeth Knowles-Bagwell is the Project Director.



\$1M gift to fund scholarships at Transylvania University

A scholarship program has been established at Transylvania University in honor of James G. Kenan III, a Transylvania University Board of Trustees member. The JGK III scholarship was established with a \$1 million gift by Kenan's sisters, Clay Kirk of New York City and Sarah Kennedy of Atlanta, Ga. The gift will fund full tuition for two entering first-year students every four years.

