



# The NTACC

Vol. 19 No. 1 A publication of the North Texas Area of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) January 2008

## Larry's Latest

### On Building Community with Intentionality

When I looked in the rear-view mirror, I knew I was in trouble. The traffic on I-30 in front of me was slowing to a crawl and then a sudden stop. I braked hard. I could see in my rear view mirror that the car behind me was really coming up fast, and I said to myself, "He's NOT gonna make it – brace for impact!" The collision sent me into the next lane over, but luckily no other cars hit me and I was able to get to the side of the interstate and stop. I was not injured, but my glasses were gone and I was dazed.

**No one stopped to help.** Dare I say it again? **No one stopped to help.** The police finally came after I called 911. But no one else came – not to witness, nor to see if I was hurt! Not one. I was out of their way; surely someone else had helped! No one stopped.

A week or so later, I got a message from a frantic lady. My Labrador Retriever, Sunny, was out wandering. The lady got my number off the dogtag and left a message that she had tried to get Sunny into her car to take home and keep safe, but Sunny wouldn't cooperate. Then, I got two messages from the neighbor behind me who first just told me that Sunny was out and then told me that he had retrieved Sunny, discovered our front door hanging open (the wind had blown it open) and put the dog back in the house for me. I called both people and thanked them for helping out.

The difference? I live in community. My neighbors see us walking our dog; we talk to them and bring plates of cookies at Christmas. We visit when our paths cross putting the trash out or getting the mail from the collection point. We have created a community because we work at it.

On the Interstate, there is no community. There is no community in some churches, either. Even when we THINK we have community, it

may exclude some of the every people WE think belong. Some of that is their fault – they choose to remain on the periphery. But some of it is our fault: we are not WORKING to build community.

What does it take to build community in a church? It takes work, participation, and intentionality. It takes persistent inquiry with those who make us think they wish to remain on the periphery. People may draw a circle to shut us out, but we can draw a circle that pulls them in, and persist in

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### Over 150 Attend NTA Leader Event

Saturday, January 19, was a cold day outside but for over 150 area Disciples gathered inside at Central Christian in Dallas the spirit was warm and inviting. **Rev. Rick Morse**, from Church Extension in Indianapolis started the day at breakfast with about 60 people to share prayer time together. After a short worship of praise songs the workshops began. The day concluded with a short worship service that included videos and music to help understand ways that high-tech options might enhance worship experiences. *"The best NTA Leadership conference I've attended."*; *"The workshop topics were excellent. I wish I could have attended more workshops."*; *"Great topics. Very Relevant."*; *"Excellent resources for a myriad of church leadership responsibilities. Very enlightening and uplifting to learn with other Disciples believers."* These are just some of the comments received from the event.

Our thanks to **Charlotte Coyle**, Chair of the Area Congregational Life Department who organized and led the planning team: **David Cartwright, Ken Crawford, Ann Dotson, Norm Stolpe**, and Area Staff, **Larry Ross, Irie Session** and **Lyn Robinette**. Thanks also to the workshop presenters: **Andrew & Rebecca Anderson, David Cartwright, Jennie Churchman, Charlotte & Jerry Coyle, Ken Crawford, Ann Dotson, Molly & Robert Goodrich, Johnny Loughridge, Deborah Morgan, Rick Morse, Peggy Nelson, Larry Ross, Irie Session, Norm Stolpe, Rhonda Tracy** and several others who served on panels for some of the workshops.

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North Texas Area  
Annual Board Meeting  
Saturday, February 16, 2008  
9:00 a.m.

The Way, The Truth, and The Life  
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Lyn T. Robinette  
Editor

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July 1, 2008  
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The North Texas Area  
can be contacted at:  
3525 Lawler Rd., Ste. 101  
Garland, TX 75042-5338  
972-272-2900 (office)  
972-272-1300 (fax)  
nta@ccsw.org  
Office Hours:  
9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.  
Monday — Friday

Larry J. Ross  
Area Minister  
Irie Session  
Associate Area Minister  
Lyn T. Robinette  
Administrative Assistant  
Jerry Frazier  
Bookkeeper

## Search and Call

The following congregations are in various stages of the Search and Call process for ministerial staff. Please keep them in your prayers:

Midway Hills, Dallas  
First, Denton  
First, Paris  
Disciples, Plano  
Uniting, Richardson

# Irie's Insights

Lately, I've been reading *Radical Welcome: Embracing God, The Other, and the Spirit of Transformation*, by Stephanie Spellers, an Episcopal priest in Boston. The book serves as a "theological guide" for congregations that desire to move from being merely inviting and inclusive, to becoming a radically welcoming place that embraces "The Other."

Spellers makes the case that, a radically welcoming congregation embraces the "marginalized, silenced, oppressed Stranger." She considers it the "core of hospitality" to ask the questions, "May I know you better? Will you come closer, please?"

Affording visitors and new members an opportunity to be "known" can be quite scary for an existing congregation. It means showing genuine interest in them, and not simply wanting to assimilate them into our present pre-set plans and programs. Similarly, inviting others closer can be considered an infringement to our personal and sacred space, particularly if those being invited closer don't share our cultural milieu, socio-economic status, or our theological pre-understandings. Relating to "The Other" in a manner that suggests a desire to know them acknowledges they are interestingly different and unique, and that the congregation is open to learn from them. This way of interacting, levels the playing field, and reflects the notion that everyone of God's creation has a perspective that can potentially enhance congregational ministry.

In the North Texas Area, I've observed a smorgasbord of congregations. Some have been inviting, some inclusive, and yes, some are even, radically welcoming. How exciting! So, in the spirit of radical welcoming, I look forward to knowing and being known by you, and to discovering how our service together, can assist our congregations grow and thrive.

## Irie

### Disciples Men/CMF News

The Mike's Kids Ministry delivered 1,203 banana boxes filled with toys, clothes, rice and beans to Los Fresnos in December. In addition, a clothes washer and dryer, freezer, TV, and many other items too large for banana boxes were sent.

Tri-Area Men's Retreat is coming May 16 - 19. The Trinity-Brazos men will be hosting this event at Disciples Crossing in Athens. Be watching for registration information.

Sessions 2008, a gathering of Disciples men from all over the country, will be held in Oklahoma this year. It will be held July 17 - 20 in Edmond. More information can be found at <http://sessions2008.org>.

Bob Counts, President

### Larry's Latest *continued*

friendliness, invitations for involvement, eye contact, touch, phone calls, and conversations. Even a simple question: "What can I pray about for you?" establishes community over time even with the most reluctant of souls.

Look around your 'friendly' church. Who has been there less than a year? Are they still on the periphery? Or are you drawing them in to the community you are building by deliberate purpose? It is not too late...yet.



### Disciples Women

Information for the Spiritual Life Retreat, April 18-20, has been sent to all area churches. The theme is "Who Touched Me?" and the keynote speaker is **Rev. Jennie Churchman**, Minister to The Way @ Northway Christian, Dallas. Music leaders will be **Stevie Linn** and **Loretta Boddy**. Cost for the full weekend is \$75. or there are several options for participants who can only come for part of the weekend.

You are invited to bring an item for the Silent Auction and a gift for a baby shower. Both the auction and shower will benefit Inman Christian Center in San Antonio. Inman is a neighborhood-based community center serving the needs of low-income individuals and families in the inner city of San Antonio.

Registrations are due by March 30.

Linda Morrow, President

# Youth



# News

## 2008 Summer Camps and Conferences

(All camps at Disciples Crossing, Athens)

<b>Grand Camp (ages 4 - 10 with grandparent)</b>	<b>June 6 - 8</b>
Director: Kathy Albers	
<b>*Discovery 1 Camp (PYF) (grades 2 &amp; 3 with adult)</b>	<b>May 24 - 26</b>
Director: Lea McCracken	
<b>Discovery 2 Camp (PYF) (grades 2 &amp; 3)</b>	<b>June 27 - 29</b>
Directors: Dottie Cook and Melissa Lumpkin	
<b>*JYF 1 Camp (grades 4 &amp; 5)</b>	<b>June 23 - 27</b>
Directors: Ann Dotson and Karyl Dunne	
<b>JYF 2 Camp (grades 4 &amp; 5)</b>	<b>June 30 - July 4</b>
Directors: Kathy Barnes	
<b>JYF 3 Camp (grades 4 &amp; 5)</b>	<b>July 21 - 25</b>
Directors: Chris Wilson and Pam Holt	
<b>*Chi Rho 1 Camp (grades 6 &amp; 7)</b>	<b>June 9 - 14</b>
Director: Ken Crawford	
<b>Chi Rho 2 Camp (grades 6 &amp; 7)</b>	<b>June 16 - 21</b>
Director: Mark Bridges	
<b>Chi Rho 3 Camp (grades 6 &amp; 7)</b>	<b>June 23 - 28</b>
Directors: Megan Ammon and Bill Jeffreys	
<b>Eighth Grade 1 Camp (grade 8) (Eighter's)</b>	<b>July 13 - 19</b>
Director: Jed Hale and John Bowers	
<b>*Eighth Grade 2 Camp (grade 8) (Eighter's)</b>	<b>July 27 - August 2</b>
Directors: Jason Mangham and Dan Anderson	
<b>Niner's Youth Conference (grade 9)</b>	<b>June 30 - July 5</b>
Directors: Derek Tompkins and Michelle Harvick	
<b>NEA CYF Conference (grades 9 - 12)</b>	<b>June 9 - 14</b>
Director: Cory Glover	
<b>*NTA CYF Conference (grades 9 - 12)</b>	<b>July 7 - 12</b>
Director: Mike McConachie and Tammie Johnston	
<b>TBA CYF Conference (grades 10 - 12)</b>	<b>June 16 - 21</b>
Directors: Isaac Varner and April Culver	
<b>Wilderness Camp (grades 5 - 7)</b>	<b>July 11 - 13</b>
Directors: Will and Angie Leisure	

\* Camps staffed by North Texas Area  
Campers must have completed the grade indicated.

The registration deadline for each camp is the Monday closest to 3 weeks prior to the start of the camp.

Early Bird Fees (before April 15)	Regular Fees (after April 15)
CYF & Niner's Conference \$275	CYF & Niner's Conference \$300
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Camp \$310	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Camp \$335
Chi Rho 1, 2 & 3 Camp \$260	Chi Rho 1, 2 & 3 Camp \$285
JYF 1, 2 & 3 Camp \$205	JYF 1, 2 & 3 Camp \$230
Discovery Camp \$ 85	Discovery Camp \$ 95
Grand Camp \$110	Grand Camp \$130
Wilderness Camp \$ 85	Wilderness Camp \$ 95

*Youth listen to keynoter during the opening session at CYF Mid-Winter.*



*Youth Ministry Council members work on final details for the weekend.*



**Youth Ministry Council  
Applications must be received by  
February 22, 2008**

**Send to:  
Mrs. Tammie Johnston  
Creekwood Christian Church  
2660 Forest Vista Dr.  
Flower Mound, TX 75028**

**Interviews will be  
Saturday, March 8  
at First Christian, Garland**

**Adults who would like to be considered to serve as part of the adult leadership for the YMC should send a letter of interest and a brief data sheet to the Area Office by February 22 to: NTACC, Attn: Rev. Irie Session, 3525 Lawler Rd., Ste. 101, Garland, TX 75042**

# North Texas Area Bulletin Board

## We're Celebrating 60 Years of Christian Camping

A celebration for 60 years of outdoor ministry at Disciples Crossing in Athens is planned for Saturday, May 10, 2008. Over the years this camp has been known by several names, Camp Underwood, Christian Youth Foundation, or, simply The Camp at Athens. Lunch on the grounds will begin about 11:30 a.m. The day will include invited speakers and ground-breaking or dedication for the latest addition, a 20-bed self-contained cabin with meeting space for 40. There is no charge for lunch, although donations are appreciated. Reservations are not needed for Saturday. But if you would like to spend Friday night at the camp, limited facilities are available and you will need to reserve a space.

The Disciples Crossing Alumni Association will be forming to keep you informed of the continuing ministry of the camp. A small fee will be charged to help cover costs.

In 60 years many lives have been touched by the beauty and dedicated ministry of this camp. We would like to hear from you if you would like to share a special memory. We have received messages from former campers, staff and counselors, but we would like to hear from more of you.

Send your recollections or make Friday night reservations by contacting **Reba Gibson**, 124 W. Harvard Dr., Garland, TX 75041 or e-mail [rcgibson1@verizon.net](mailto:rcgibson1@verizon.net). Or call 972-840-2818 or 214-287-8339.

## Western Heights/First Christian, Richardson Seek New Vision

In October, Western Heights Christian, Garland celebrated 43 years of ministry and began a new vision with First Christian, Richardson. After months of meeting together and visioning, they have begun to form a new congregation using the name, "a uniting" Christian Church during the transition. The congregation is voting on a name in February.



*Rev. Phillip Ward, minister of Destiny Worship Center Christian Church in Cedar Hill receives Area check in preparation of receiving New Church property for the church building.*

## Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

### Joys

**Sara Miller**, daughter of **Amp** and **Barbara Miller**, was selected as a Rhodes Scholar in astrophysics. They are members at Midway Hills Christian, Dallas.

### Minister News

**Rev. Susan Martin** has been called to serve as Associate Minister at Casa View Christian, Dallas. She began February 1.

**Rev. Johnny Loughridge** completed his transitional ministry at "a uniting" Christian, Richardson in December and began another transitional ministry in January. He is now serving Trinity Christian, For Worth.

**Rev. Nita Allen** has been called to serve as Minister at Oak Cliff Christian, Dallas. She began in January in a part-time capacity.

**Rev. Janice Hill** has been called to serve as Minister at First Christian, Ennis. She begins February 10.

### Sympathy

Sympathy to family of **Rev. Marvin Wright** who died in December.

Sympathy to **Dr. Frank Mace** and his family at the death of his mother, Merlee, in January. A memorial service was held at South Hills Christian, Fort Worth.

Sympathy to **Dr. Oran Nabors** and his family at the death of his brother, **Tom**, who died January 27.

Special thanks to **Rev. Deborah Jones**, **Rev. John Burton**, and **Maria and Joe Garza** for participating in the reading event at Pierce Early Childhood Learning Center in Irving.

## Area Calendar

### February

Area Annual Board Meeting  
The Way, The Truth, and The Life  
Christian, Dallas - 9:00 a.m.  
February 16, 2008

### March

Stalcup School of Theology for the Laity  
Patrick Henry - 8:30 a.m.  
Northway Christian, Dallas  
March 1, 2008

Youth Ministry Council Interviews  
First Christian, Garland  
March 8, 2008

Office closed for Good Friday  
March 21, 2008

Area Cabinet  
Area Office - 5:30 p.m.  
March 25, 2008

Stalcup School of Theology for the Laity  
Schubert M. Ogden - 8:30 a.m.  
Northway Christian, Dallas  
March 29, 2008

### April

Licensed Minister Training - 8:45 a.m.  
Rush Creek Christian, Arlington  
April 12, 2008

Area Committee on the Ministry  
Area Office - 9:00 a.m.  
April 14, 2008

Disciples Women Spiritual Life Retreat  
Disciples Crossing  
April 18 - 20, 2008

Stalcup School of Theology for the Laity  
Darren Middleton - 8:30 a.m.  
Northway Christian, Dallas  
April 19, 2008

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(Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest  
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