



THE NEW CHRISTIAN MESSENGER

www.gadisciples.org

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February 2007

New Ministers - Different Backgrounds, Fresh Ideas

by Charles Cochran

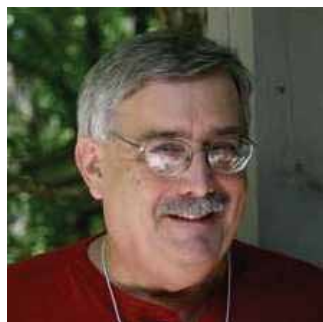
Some of the Georgia Region's newest ministers, like Lynn White, trace their Disciples heritage back several generations. Others, like Katie Hays, are newcomers who have transferred from other denominations.

It's sort of a Disciples thing - forging unity from diversity.

And one thing's clear: as a group, the seven ministers called to permanent appointments in the past year are passionate about being Disciples, said the Rev. Dr. Ray Miles, Georgia's regional minister.

And they bring with them new ideas about how to do ministry.

"Sometimes we all become locked into the way we have always done things," Miles said. "(But) when we combine the faithfulness and hard work of pastors who have been in Georgia longer than I have with this group of new pastors who bring different ideas to the Region, it gives us a chance for new and revitalized life in congregations."



Men To Hear Doug Skinner

March 2nd is the deadline for registering for the next Disciples Men Retreat at Christmount Christian Assembly near Black Mountain, North Carolina. The event will take place March 16-18 and will be keynoted by the Rev. Douglas B. Skinner, Senior Minister of Northway Christian in Dallas, Texas. A frequent contributor to Net Results and DisciplesWorld, Rev. Skinner has served in leadership positions of the Disciples of Christ, including Vice Moderator of the church. The Disciples Men Retreat is an annual gathering of Georgia men for inspiration, fellowship, worship and education. Reserve your place now for the retreat by contacting Christmount Christian Assembly, 222 Fern Way, Black Mountain, N.C. 28711-9771. A \$35 deposit holds your place. Complete information can be found at www.gadisciples.org/organizations/Men/Retreat/2007_Men's_Retreat.htm.



White, a 58-year-old third-generation Disciples minister, was called in August to lead the four-year-old Eagle's Landing Christian Church as it moves toward erecting a new sanctuary.

"We have a significant opportunity to grow along with the growth that's going on in Henry County," said White, a Kentucky native whose experience in ministry dates to his first student church in 1969.

Hays, 37, grew up in the Churches of Christ, and served 11 years as a pastor for Church of Christ congregations.

But after a stint as interim pastor at the First Christian Church of Lawrenceville, the congregation decided to make the appointment permanent this past July.

The Disciples offer more opportunities for female clergy, said Hays, who completed a masters of divinity degree at Yale Divinity School in 1994, and is working on a doctoral degree at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Hays very quickly became involved in the regional church, leading worship workshops during the regional assembly in November.

"My path was going to run out in the Churches of Christ. There just weren't that many congregations that were going to hire me (as a woman)," she said. "I found such a welcoming home with the Disciples overall, and particularly with the Disciples in Georgia."

"The Disciples here have just welcomed me beautifully."

— continued on page 7



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UPCOMING EVENTS:

February 17

Regional Board Meeting
10 am, Regional Office, Macon

February 26

Commission on Ministry Meeting
Ray of Hope Christian, Decatur

February 27

NW Clergy Bible Study
9:30 am, Lawrenceville First

March 10

North West District Women's
Spring Conference
First Christian, Decatur

March 11-14

Preaching Series, Dr. Joseph Jeter
Valdosta First

March 14

NW District Clergy Meeting
Peachtree Christian

March 16-18

GA Disciples Men Retreat
Christmount, Black Mountain NC

March 20

Lawrenceville/Athens Area
Ministers Luncheon
Golden Corral, Lawrenceville

March 31

SE & SW Districts Women's Spring
Conference
Welcome Hope, Berlin

April 14

W. Central District Women's
Spring Conference
Griffin First

April 18

NW District Clergy Meeting
Marietta First

April 21

East Central District Women's
Spring Conference
Central Christian, Augusta

April 28

North East District Women's
Spring Conference
First Christian, Lawrenceville

May 6

Disciples Men Meeting

May 8

Commission on Ministry Meeting
Atlanta Area Church

Michael's Memo

by Rev. Michael Weeks

First I want to thank all the youth, adult leaders and our Youth Activity Council for making Youth-A-Palooza 2007 such a great success. Our theme this year was **Go & Do!** The idea came from the story of the Good Samaritan in which Jesus tells the hearers to go and do likewise.

I read about the themes of this year's Week of Compassion and found out that many ideas and themes intersected with our weekend. **Who is my neighbor?** reminded me of a keynoter presentation I once heard. The speaker pointed out some people know the meaning of the term 'good Samaritan' but not that the story is from the Bible. That is a reality that we all face as Christians.

There is much need in our world and Jesus tells us that everyone is our neighbor. We have a responsibility to share the wealth and resources God has given us. One way to do this is through Week of Compassion offering. Many ask, 'How will my gifts be used?'

Gifts support programs that help our neighbors around the world build lives and communities that are healthy, safe and sustainable, making a huge difference in the lives of millions of families —

- **creating sustainable sources of income for rural villages**
- **providing women micro-credit to start poverty-escaping businesses**
- **teaching trades and job skills to people maimed by landmines**
- **offering children a chance to survive past the age of five and go to school**
- **helping rebuild communities ravaged by natural disasters**
- **and so much more.**

Week of Compassion gives each of us an opportunity to be the Good Samaritan to our neighbors. Through our gifts, we show kindness, compassion and mercy to which Jesus calls us. Let's celebrate Week of Compassion special offering on February 18 and 25.

Women's Ministry News

by Rev. Betty Brewer-Calvert

"Your Table is Ready at the Chalice Café!"

Where have you experienced holy moments around a table – at your grandmother's kitchen table, at the table of an unexpected host when you were traveling, during a worship service that particularly reached you? At spring events across the region, we will share "table stories," study scriptures, get ideas for service, and dine at the Lord's Table. For information: regional website (www.gadisciples.org), your women's ministry president, your pastor, Betty Brewer-Calvert (betty@gadisciples.org). Cost: \$10.00. An offering will be received for women's ministries in Georgia. Some events will have preschool childcare available for \$5.00. See calendar for dates.

Georgia Women Attend Cabinet Meeting

Rev. Cynthia Hale keynoted the recent International Disciples Women's Cabinet meeting in Greensboro, N.C. attended by Revs. Ann Haines and Betty Brewer-Calvert.

Pictured at right are Rev. Cynthia Hale and Sheila Smith.

IMPORTANT - New Curriculum Ordering Procedure

Looking for program resources for women? Try the 2007-2008 New Day material, "Come to the Table." Christian Board of Publication is offering pre-publication discounts for pre-paid orders. You **MUST** order by March 15th for the discount; and prices go up substantially after that date. See www.discipleswomen.org for an order form.

Leadership Opportunity

Have gifts to share? Interested in strengthening our ministry to women? We're looking for women ready to give of their heart, energy, pocketbook power, hands, or feet. To find out about opportunities for service on the women's commission or in other ways, contact me, Ann Haines (pahaines@gfb.org) or a current commission member.



CHURCH FOCUS: FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, GRIFFIN

Example of Love and Commitment

by Rev. Byron Wells

When you are located in a community that is rich in history, you have to work hard to make your mark on your community and its inhabitants. Spalding County has been home to many historical figures such as General Lewis Lawrence Griffin, John "Doc" Holliday of the OK Corral fame, and multiple Olympic Gold Medal winner Wyomia Tyus. It is in the midst of this history that Griffin First strives to proclaim and exhibit the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



With an ever-expanding program slate that reflects a variety of offerings to its community, Pastor Andy Campbell and First Christian Church are making an impact in the Griffin area. The congregation is actively involved in the All Faiths Christian Ministries organization which is an ecumenical community ministry which includes two important ministries to Spalding County: The Hope Health Clinic and The Five Loaves and Two Fish Food Pantry.



The congregation is also involved in the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity, Christian Women's Center, and Spalding Samaritans. The congregation has also been recognized as a Partner in Education with the Spalding County Schools for sponsoring the special education classes at Kelsey Middle School and Griffin High School.

But the caring heart of this congregation is not limited to its immediate area. The congregation of First Christian in Griffin takes seriously its covenantal relationship with

the Regional and General manifestations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Being faithful contributors to Disciples Mission Finance, Griffin First has been able to reach its compassion and Christian concern across the state of Georgia, our nation and around the globe. Many of the members of Griffin First have served on Regional Boards and Commissions, and the congregation actively participates in Regional Assemblies, Retreats, and Youth activities like Youth-a-palooza and summer camp. The congregation sponsors a young child in Jamaica through Global Ministries. In January of 2007, the congregation hosted a concert by the Transylvania University Concert Choir which was on tour, and is a Disciples-related University located in Lexington, Kentucky.

Rev. Andy Campbell and the members of Griffin First bless all of the Georgia Region with their serious commitment to reaching out beyond their walls and community. Their love and commitment set an example for us all.

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w'aa Shukriya Danyavad Kwakwhá
a Grácias **Thank You** Merci Dank
o Spacibo Arigato Kulo Tanikiu Háv
razie Eso 잔치에 동참 합시다 Gr

Your Gifts to
Easter Special Offering
Change Lives

Easter Special Offering:
to strengthen congregational life for mission

 Disciples Mission Fund
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

2007 Easter Offering
will be received
on April 1st and April 8th

Go and Do Youth-A-Palooza 2007



GO & DO was our theme and comes from the story of the Good Samaritan -- Jesus says go and do likewise (Luke 10:29-36). The youth discussed the various ways we respond to and serve God's mission, and how youth are a part of God's mission in their everyday lives. Participants gained a new understanding of how everything we do in our life impacts God's mission to the world.

YOUTH SAID...

- Youth-A-Palooza was great, as always! I made new friends and saw old ones. I can't wait for next year. -- Melissa, Macon
- Youth-A-Palooza rules! -- Anthony, Watkinsville
- Youth-A-Palooza was tons of fun! I can't wait 'til next year! -- Rachel, Athens
- This year was so amazing! I had so much fun meeting new people and hanging out with old friends. I couldn't have imagined a better last year. I will miss everyone and I love you guys. -- Elizabeth, Atlanta



Here is our group in Strickland Auditorium at Epworth By the Sea

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Georgia Outdoor Ministries 2007

Date	Event	Grade Completed
CAMP CHRISTIAN		
May 31 - June 3	Servants for Christ	9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th
June 4-8	Junior 1	3rd, 4th, or 5th
June 8-10	Chrysalis	1st or 2nd
June 11-16	CYF Conference	10th, 11th, or 12th
June 16-17	YADA	12th or 18 to 30 something
June 18-23	Chi Rho	6th or 7th
June 25-30	Mid Hi Conference	8th or 9th
July 6-8	Genesis	Kindergarten, parent or grandparent
July 8-12	Balaam	For qualifying 11th and 12th graders
July 16-20	Junior II	3rd, 4th, or 5th
CAMP CAROLINE Arapahoe, N.C.		
July 8-14	Created to Be Me	8th
CAMP KICKLIGHTER		
June 10-15	Senior High	9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th
June 17-22	Chi Rho Camp	6th or 7th
June 24-29	Junior Camp	3rd, 4th, or 5th
TBD	Young Adults	Young Adults

CAMP CHRISTIAN
CONFERENCE CENTER
www.gadisciples.org/camp



More information online at www.gadisciples.org Registration forms and brochures available now in your congregation.

Generosity Of Many Contributors Helps Finish 2006 In The Black

We anticipate that both camp and operational budgets for the Christian Church in Georgia finished the year with a slight positive balance. That is exciting news. However, the realization is that the ending balance was due to the generous and faithful support of over \$50,000 in designated gifts to the Region.

As we move into 2007, we are aware of the need to find nearly the same amount in designated donations. One way that is happening is through the Friendship Circle supporting the outdoor ministries of the Christian Church in Georgia. Several generous groups and individuals have already given or pledged an amount equal to 3 ½ months of mortgage payments.

First to step to the plate was a group of supporters from Sandy Springs Christian Church. Joining them have been the Men's and Women's groups from First Christian Church in Athens, a group of retired clergy, and the Regional staff and Regional Board members. Additional churches have individuals and groups considering the possibility of adopting a payment. We extend our deep and sincere thanks to each one who has given to support the Mortgage adoption program for the region.

2007 Months Adopted:

January - Retired Ministers
 March - The Regional Board & members of the Outdoor Ministry Advisory Team
 September - Members of Sandy Springs Christian Church (December 2006 was adopted by the Women's and Men's Groups at Athens, First.)

2007 General Assembly

Begin planning now for your congregation to be well represented at the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Among Georgia Disciples who will be featured will be Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale who will speak at the Church

Extension Banquet, Rev. Dr. Carlos Cardoza who will give the Bible lecture to the Assembly on Monday morning, and Dr. Fred Craddock who will speak at the European Evangelistic Society luncheon on Tuesday. Georgia

folks are invited to gather to connect with each other at a reception by all the regions in the southeastern United States (SERF Reception).



Pledges and Donations to the Mortgage adoption program include these groups and individuals:

Disciple Women at First Christian Church in Athens
 Disciple Men at First Christian Church in Athens
 Ray and Carol Austin
 Don and Nancy Brewer
 Betty and James Brewer-Calvert
 Susan Butts
 Gordon and Monalea Dalrymple
 Hal and Ann Doster
 Sid and Kathy Elliot
 Danny and Mary Michael Gulden
 Ann Haines
 Janis and Milton Hill
 Allen and Anne Knox Hodges
 Hoyt and Betty Huff
 Erin Iobst
 Matthew Iobst
 Disciple Women at First Christian Church in Lawrenceville
 Herb and Ferris Leslie
 Julie and Kenneth Linsley
 Kathy and Dave McDowell
 Pam Mikovitz
 John Novikoff
 Ray and Wendy Miles
 Brad andCarolynn Miller
 Sam and Sharon Nickols
 Chris and Landa Simmons
 Earl Shaw
 Roger Sizemore
 William and Cheri Thompson
 Jim and Marilyn Tolbert
 Ron Turner
 Darrell and Marsha Vandervort
 Michael and Michelle Weeks
 Milton and Paula West
 Linda S. Whitmire
 Anonymous \$500 gift given in Honor of Danny Gulden and the Youth of Sandy Springs



Thanks to all who have given to our regional outdoor ministry program in 2006. View a full list at www.gadisciples.org.



Use our online bookstore: www.gadisciples.org and Camp Christian Conference Center will earn a commission on all your purchases. Please use our link for all your Amazon purchases.

Dean Phelps Releases New CD

Dean Phelps, a Disciples' minister who previously served in Georgia, has released his second CD, "This Old House." Phelps currently serves on the staff of the Christian Church in Indiana and leads that region's new church movement. While in Georgia, he served as Director of Church Development for the Georgia region and served congregations in Marietta, Cherry Log and Fayetteville.

"This Old House" features fresh arrangements of Christian hymns and faith music as well as folk rock renditions of songs about people, life and faith. K.B. Travis of WDDK in Greensboro calls this CD "refreshing, uplifting and uncluttered."

"This Old House" can be purchased through the online bookstore on the Georgia region's website, www.gadisciples.org. A portion of sales from the online bookstore support the region's camp and conference ministries.

Georgia Teen Explores Disciples' Colleges

by Dianna Gill

In November, 2006, I went to "Transy & T.E.A.M.," Totally Excited About Ministry. This weekend was for teenagers thinking about going into ministry. I met many people and learned about many different types of ministry. Every person I met wanted to do something different, but we all had a common goal: to serve the Lord through serving people. One person I met wants to be an Army Chaplain. A couple others want to go into youth ministry, as do I. The majority wanted to become pastoral ministers.



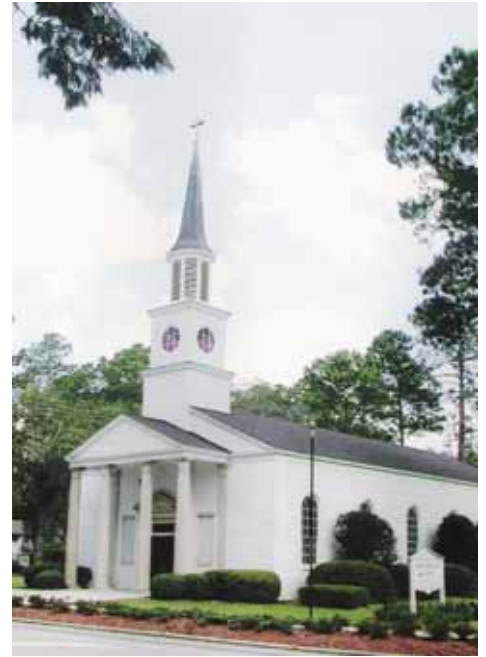
I left Thursday afternoon with a youth group from First Christian Church of Deland, Florida, arriving in Kentucky Thursday night. We ate at the first Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant and learned that Colonel Sanders was a Disciple. Friday morning we arrived in Lexington. After we took a tour of the Transylvania University campus, we went to historical Cambridge. On the way home, we visited Lynchburg College, as well as Barton College, two of our Disciple colleges. When I saw Lynchburg and talked to a few students, I decided that was where the Lord was calling me. I will soon go with my mother to take a closer look. I had a fun time, and I hope more teenagers from Georgia will take the time to go on this trip. (Dianna Gill is from Chattahoochee Christian Church in Duluth, GA.)

Valdosta Church Hosts Preaching Series

by Rev. Dr. Milton C. West

First Christian Church in Valdosta will hold the annual **Rev. William E. Moore Memorial Lenten Preaching Series** to appeal to clergy and lay leaders especially in the southern part of Georgia. The preaching series

begins Sunday morning March 11 and concludes on Wednesday evening March 14. Evening services begin at 7:00 p.m. Gatherings for clergy are planned for Monday March 12 through March 14 at noon with lunch provided.



This year's leader will be Dr. Joseph R. Jeter, a highly regarded preacher and professor. Dr. Jeter serves as the Granville and Erlene Walker Professor of Preaching at the Brite Divinity School of Texas Christian University. The theme for the evening services will focus on the "Good News from Beginning to the End." The theme for the Clergy Gatherings will focus on "Preaching from Those Ignored Verses Next to the Verses We Love."

For additional information or to reserve a seat for the Clergy Gatherings please call 229-244-1742 or send an email to mcwest@fccvaldosta.org.



Georgia Disciple Clergy gathered at Camp Christian Conference Center for their Annual Retreat Sponsored by the Christian College of Georgia earlier this month.

Reconnecting

By Rev. Brad Miller,
Regional Moderator

In graduate school one of my closest friends was a guy named Sam. I had lost touch with him until I came across his name and number on-line and called. Today I heard from him and it was as if no time had passed! Isn't it funny how you can reconnect with someone as if you spoke yesterday?

I have found the same thing to be true in the church.



For one reason or another, we lose touch with folks. People slip away, and before we know it, we aren't connected any more. It can happen to congregations,

too. One day we realize we've lost connection. Can we rectify the situation? Is there someone you have missed in church? Do you have a phone number? Why not make a call?

The same is true of our connection with each other across congregational lines. When individual congregations go it alone we lose the richness of what it means to be church. Are there ways that your congregation might partner with another? Is there a time when you might gather in fellowship? Or worship? What would it cost to try? The better question: what wonderful rewards might there be?



Do you have that number in front of you? Make the call!



WEEK OF COMPASSION • FEBRUARY 18-25, 2007

New Ministers (cont'd from page 1)

In addition to Katie Hays and Lynn White, five other Disciples ministers have been called to full-time appointments in the past year. They include:

Dale Andrews, First Christian Church of Sandersville

A Disciples minister for the past 12 years, Dale's background includes ministry in the Churches of Christ. During a seven-year break from ministry, he operated a private counseling practice in west Texas, where he also hosted television and radio call-in shows. A self-described "college-a-holic," he also teaches social philosophy at the Springfield College in Charleston.



Marla Brock, First Christian Church of Waycross

Marla accepted the call to serve as senior minister in Waycross after 16 years as associate minister at First Christian Church of Maysville, Kentucky. "The people here have been so wonderful - warm, accommodating as can be. I believe I am in the right place," she says. Marla started work on a Sunday morning in mid-January: "The first thing we did together was to worship - which is as it should be."



James "Jim" Crockett, First Christian Church of Glennville

Jim and his family moved from Oklahoma, where Jim had been pastor of First Christian Church of Pauls Valley for 10 years. Jim is a second-career pastor. He was a practicing chiropractor when his call to ministry was affirmed - and still holds an Oklahoma license in that field.



Chris Goss, church planter, First Christian Church of Marietta

Chris, who transferred his ministerial standing into the Disciples, is working to gather a small group to begin a new church in the area northwest of Atlanta.

Jon Ford, Mount Vernon Christian Church

When the 164-year-old Mount Vernon church called Jon in August, it was an independent Christian church, having voted in 1997 to withdraw from the Disciples. The church voted this past November to rejoin the Disciples - a decision that the regional board was expected to affirm in mid-February. The church's membership had dipped to just 10 people at one point last year, but typical Sunday attendance now is around 70 - and growing. "It's the Lord's work. I am just making myself available," says Jon, a Disciples minister for 16 years.



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From Georgia’s Regional Minister:



Dr. Ray Miles

Just over two years ago I never imagined that I would be Regional Minister for the Christian Church in Georgia. It wasn’t in my plans, wishes, or even suspicions. Then God moved and I said yes. Rapidly, things fell into place. to what we need to talk about in relation to the life of congregations. As we move ahead into the 21st century the realization is that congregations need to be transformed. Many congregations are dwindling in attendance and resources. We have to change if we are to exist as a witness to Christ even 10 years from now. Before change can happen, there needs to be openness and receptivity to change. To let God work, we need to be open to transformation.

That is an expectation that perhaps God will do something we never even imagined. God may have something completely different in mind for our congregation. God may intend something we have not thought of. God may lead us in a direction we hadn’t considered or feel comfortable going.

Perhaps God intends the very thing we have thought of but dismissed. A number of years ago I thought of applying for the Regional ministry position in Georgia and said “No”. If I had stayed with that former attitude, I’d never be here, and would have missed this opportunity to work with and know you.

***... be open to something new.
Try it and see if it is of God.***

Before we can be the kind of congregations which God has called us to be and intends us to be, we have to first let go. We have to let go of our conceptions of what the church will be like, what it will do, and how it will be shaped. We have to let go of the way we have done things in the past. That’s difficult, but I have found the way to do it is to be open to something new. Try it and see if it is of God. Change only comes if you are willing to try something new. Change only comes if you admit that what currently exists is no longer working.

Our church can be alive and vital and filled with power if we let God have the directing control and if we let things change in our church..

If I had not done that, I might never have been in Georgia and I sure would have missed it.