

REGION OFFERS GRANTS TO CONGREGATIONS ENGAGED IN TRANSFORMING MINISTRIES!

As the NWRCC implements the RISE Mission Plan, the Executive Board announces the availability of Transformation Grants of up to \$1,000 for congregations that are seeking to follow God's direction in new and exciting ways. The Mission Plan states: "We celebrate that God is always doing a new thing" and "Our faithful response is to continually be open to new ways of being church together". The Region is responding by offering this financial assistance as well as other coaching assistance to congregations that want to intentionally step out in new directions or approach ministry in new ways.

Funding for the grants comes from a pool of money specifically set aside for congregational transformation. This pool of funds originated from the faithfulness of several congregations that, after closing their doors and selling their property, directed that a portion of the funds generated from the sale be used for new church starts and/or congregational transformation in the Region. Additional funds have come from the specific bequeaths of faithful individuals in our Region. A number of Regional congregations already have been involved in intentional transformation work for several years.

Exciting and unique results have begun to surface from their efforts. These transformation grants are being offered to encourage any of our congregations to seek how God may be calling them to new forms of ministry in the immediate future.

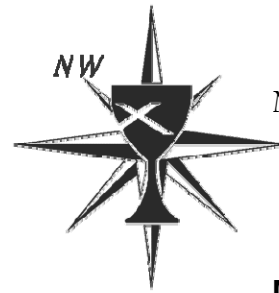
Information about eligibility, limitations, and the application process can be found on the NWRCC website www.disciplesnw.org or by calling the Regional Office at (253)893-7202.

CONFERENCE ON MISSIONAL CHURCH & CHURCH PLANTING - Coming to Seattle, April 29-30, 2011

Please share the news with new and renewing congregational leaders about a West Coast ecumenical event focused on empowering people to be missional communities. Inhabit Conference will be held on April 29 and 30, 2011 at Mars Hill Graduate School in Seattle, Washington. TRANSFORM Network (www.transformnetwork.org) and The Parish Collective (www.parishcollective.org) are joining forces to present this regional gathering on missional community formation. The primary intent is to network with, train, and mobilize people to form new missional communities of practice with a special emphasis on rootedness in neighborhoods and a robust theology of place. Disciples Pastor Rich McCullen, of Missiongathering Christian Church of San Diego, California, will be one of the workshop leaders for this event. Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation -- a collaborative effort of Church Extension, Disciples Home Mission and Higher Education Leadership Ministries -- is co-sponsoring the event. Steve Knight, consultant for Hope Partnership and Church Extension is one of the main organizers for the gathering. We encourage you to join in supporting this exciting conference. Visit www.inhabitconference.com for more details, including registration information or call 1-888-977-2002. Register before March 27 and receive the Early Bird rate of \$79 or \$59 for students.

MISSING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS?

Each month we bring you news from our faith communities across the Region. This month, we have so much to share, there will be a special NW Passage edition next week!



March 2011

REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY...

Rev. Sandy Messick

How Shall We Live Together in the Wilderness?

I found the book on one of the bookshelves as we were moving out of the Regional Office. I don't know how long it had been there, but the title caught my eye: Behavioral Covenants in Congregations: A Handbook for Honoring Differences by Gil Rendle. It caught my eye because I knew of congregations struggling with making decisions and living together in community. I hear stories, not only within this region, but across regions, of congregations faced with difficult decisions who descend into arguing, uncivil behavior, or, on the opposite spectrum, refusing to even have the discussion because of the fear of the conflict that might arise. Rendle argues that in this time of transformation and transition conflicts are inevitable. And conflicts themselves are not bad. Healthy conversations, open debate, sharing of opinions, listening to those who disagree can all be ways of allowing the Spirit to speak within a community. Too often though, in times of transition or change we allow our anxiety to take over. We become focused on what is best for me, or what do I want, rather than what is God calling us, the community, to do and be. Rendle reminds us that, as people of faith, we are called to ask not what do I want most (personal freedom), nor what do I have to do (what does the law require?), but what is God calling us to do and be (what he defines as the third way). And then he argues that the role of leaders in these times

of anxiety is "to hold people steady in their own faith and to ask, 'How shall we live together in the wilderness? What promises, covenants, behaviors will we offer to one another and to God while we live, search, and experiment together in this wilderness?'" (p. 39) It is as I have said to congregations in the past: "How we decide what we are called to do is as important as what we decide we are called to do." It is the "how" as much as the "what" that serves as a model to others both within and beyond our faith communities. How we live in community together as a people of faith speaks volumes to those who are wondering "What is this faith all about?"

May God's rich blessings of health and wholeness rest upon you and upon your congregations this day as we seek to be church together.

Sharing the journey with you,
Sandy

STM ANNOUNCES SEARCH FOR ASSOCIATE DEAN OF ECUMENICAL & INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Seattle University's School of Theology and Ministry seeks a teacher, scholar, practitioner to serve as Associate Dean of Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue. Candidates should be formed in a Protestant tradition, and bring theological acumen and visionary focus to ecumenical and interreligious relations.

For position description, requirements and application materials, visit: <https://jobs.seattleu.edu>

TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE TO SUPPORT OUR NORTHWEST REGIONAL MINISTRY

Last year the Northwest Region was blessed to receive a significant gift from the Cliff and Donna Albright (Rhay) fund from Christian Church Foundation. The Regional Board has designated \$12,500 of that gift to be used to help support the ongoing ministries of the regional church through the General Fund, but we are challenging you to match that gift! Will you help us meet our goal of an additional \$12,500 in Individual Gift Donations to the Northwest Regional Christian Church this year? How quickly can we reach that goal? Donations can be made by sending a check to the Regional Office (PO Box 23819, Federal Way, WA 98093) or by credit card online at www.disciplesnw.org. Your gifts help support transforming congregations, new congregations, pastors and congregations in Search and Call, support for clergy and congregations, camps, youth events, and much, much, more. Thank you for your generous giving! To date we have received \$2,775.

NEWS FROM THE WIDER CHURCH

General Assembly is Coming to Nashville: Tell it! July 9 - 13 – Nashville, TN

Registration is open now at www.disciples.org

How can you participate? Here are a couple of ways...

Disciples Cookbooks: *Attention CWF/DWM Groups*

KK Wiseman of Nashville, TN is working on a project for the upcoming General Assembly. She is attempting to compile a collection of CWF/DWM or congregational Cookbooks that have been created over the years. If you have copies from your congregation and are willing to share, you may send them to: KK Wiseman, 4301 Wallace Ln, Nashville TN 37215. After the Assembly, KK will be sending the collection of cookbooks to the Disciples Historical Society. As she writes, "if they really want to know the history of this Church, this 'people of the Table' they might look to the women...and since many of our stories are bound and published along with our recipes it seems like we should gather them together & see what they have to say."

HELP MAKE MINISTRY HAPPEN AT YAKAMA CHRISTIAN MISSION

Serve the Body of Christ by sharing your time and skills with other caring people at Yakama Christian Mission in White Swan, Washington April 9 through 16. You can help improve this great facility for mission and ministry during all or any part of that time. Our focus during this time is remodeling of the Parsonage and finish painting of the Friendship House.

\$150 for the week or \$25.00 per day will provide you the following:

- A bed: you provide the bedding
- Showers: you provide the towel
- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Snacks
- Great fellowship
- Opportunity to help enable lives to be changed
- Up-building the Body of Christ

To register, call 509-874-2824 or visit: <http://www.disciplesnw.org/docs/YCMParsonageRemodelRegForm11April.pdf> to open and print the registration form.

Habits of Wholeness: A developing idea is to have Regions sponsor rooms in each of the hotels to offer spiritual practices for those who are staying at the hotels. The Northwest Region will be staffing one of those hotels and offering three choices for spiritual practices each morning (Monday-Wednesday of the Assembly) from 7:00-8:00am. If you would like to offer to lead a spiritual practice be it yoga, Bible Study, labyrinth, meditation or prayer, please let me know. Spaces are limited to please contact Sandy Messick right away.

Denver pastor named VP for Christian Church Foundation



INDIANAPOLIS, IN – The Rev. Gerald Lang, senior minister of Central Christian Church in Denver, CO, since 2001, has been named the new vice president of development for the Christian Church Foundation's Mountain West Zone, Foundation President Gary W. Kidwell has announced. Lang will begin his new duties June 1. He will replace Dr. Don Sarton, who is retiring after serving on the Foundation staff since 1998. "Jerry brings a deep love for the church, and a proven track record of success in ministry," Kidwell said. "Jerry has the right mix of pastoral skills and financial knowledge to serve the Foundation well." In his new role, Lang will be responsible for cultivating planned gifts with Disciples in Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho and the areas served by the Central Rocky Mountain and Northern California-Nevada regions. He also will work with Disciples congregations and other ministries in establishing best practices to receive planned gifts, including institutional investments. Lang will be based in Denver. Lang has served in pastoral ministry continually for more than 30 years, including several years as a missionary to Nigeria. He earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree and graduate degrees from Lexington Theological Seminary and the University of Alabama. Before seminary, he served as a mortgage banker. Lang is married to Ginger and they have two children. Sarton will retire in July and be honored by the Foundation's Board of Directors at the board's November meeting in Denver. The Christian Church Foundation is a general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with the mission of undergirding ministry through permanent funds, planned gifts and prudent investment of funds owned by Disciples ministries. It is a donor-directed Foundation designed to benefit Disciples ministries and institutions. At the start of 2011, the Foundation had \$438.6 million in total assets.

Columbia Leadership Northwest Upcoming Event: Church in the Digital Age

"Church in the Digital Age: Faithfully Navigating the New World of Social Media," will be held on Saturday, May 7, at University Christian Church in Seattle. Will Boyd, owner of 3 Story Church, will help church leaders, staff and members, journey into the brave new world of social media and online communications for churches. Topics of the half-day workshop include: * reaching out through Facebook and Twitter * podcasting and online video * what makes an effective church website * and more. Participants will have the chance to ask whatever questions are on your minds and get hands-on help. Workshop leader, Will Boyd, has been helping churches navigate these waters for over four years, working with a number of Seattle based congregations as well as congregations in other parts of the Northwest and the nation. The workshop is from 8:30 to noon. Registration is \$35 a person, or \$25 per person if you bring a team of three or more from your congregation. A great event for church staff, a communications or PR team/ committee, and for clergy leaders.