

## **Disciples Women's Ministries Report to the 2015 Assembly**

### **Upcoming Events**

Women's Luncheon at 2015 Regional Assembly: We look forward to a message by Rev. June Boutwell, Designated Conference Minister for the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. The luncheon will feature music by Rev. Ann Haines and Ms. Jasmine Heath, door prizes, food, fellowship, and worship.

Spring Conference 2016: Plans are underway for events across the region. Look for dates soon!

Disciples Women's Retreat Sept 23-25, 2016: Georgia Baptist Conference Center, Toccoa GA

### **Ministry Highlights from the Past Year**

Regional Assembly Nov. 14-15, 2014, in Sandersville: Women were inspired by the luncheon address given by Rev. Denise Bell. She was presented with welcome gifts from around the Region to express our support and excitement. "The Amen Sisters," a trio from our host church, provided wonderful music. Women gave an offering of over \$400 for women's ministries with a tenth designated for retreat scholarships. An exhibit highlighted the year's ministries and upcoming events.

Disciples Women's Day at Koinonia Farm in Americus GA, Feb. 28, 2015: Sixteen (16) women came together for a day of mission, learning, and fellowship at the South Georgia Christian community founded in 1942. We cleared orchards, prepared garden beds for spring planting, and worked in the bakery. We were inspired by the story of Koinonia (the birthplace of Habitat for Humanity), which has stood as a witness against racism and for justice and which seeks to embody the beloved community of God. Women who stayed overnight on Friday enjoyed an extra dose of rich table conversation and worship.

2015 Spring Conference: "Go and Tell: Responding to the Risen Christ"

- April 11 at Ray of Hope Christian Church

One hundred twenty-seven (127) women pre-registered for the event with approximately 117 in attendance. Opening worship featured Ms. Dorsey Jones, survivor of child exploitation and homelessness, who shared her story of an unimaginable childhood and how she is using her experiences to mentor and educate others. The Women of Hope Choir and the Movement Arts Ministry blessed the gathering with music and dance both in the opening worship and closing communion service. Continental breakfast and a tasty spaghetti lunch were served in the Family Life Center. Door prizes were given by Winder First Christian and commission members.

Mission items were donated for the Voices program at YouthSpark, which works with victims of human trafficking and at-risk youth. \$890.30 was given to the Women's Endowment Fund with a tithe to GA Disciples Women's Ministries.

- April 25 at First Christian Church of Eastman

Thirty-seven (37) women pre-registered, and 34 attended. Warner Robins First Christian provided a delicious breakfast, and our host church provided a springtime salad lunch. The keynote speaker was Erin Miller from WINGS (Women in Need of God's Shelter) in Dublin. Erin sought to dispel the stereotypes of domestic abuse and family violence, sharing her own story of moving across country seeking freedom from years of verbal and emotional abuse which escalated into physical violence. Cecelia Glosson Funderburk sang a solo in worship, and Rev. Ann Haines shared her keyboard talents.

Mission items were brought for WINGS, and \$241 in offering was divided (80/20%) between the Women's Endowment Fund and regional women's ministries.

At each conference, small groups discussed "The Women at the Tomb" using the Disciples Women Bible Study from *Just Women*. Workshops, varying slightly at the two events, included: Seeing the Invisible Women of the World, Aging as a Holy Pilgrimage, Finding Power and Promise in Living Single, Hoping and Helping: Caring for the Caregiver Within and Next Door, Breaking the Chains of Human Trafficking, Creating the Beloved Community: A Sacred Conversation about Race, Hope in the Face of Chronic Illness, The Prayer Box, I See You – Quadrennial Highlights Video, Continuing the Telling, and Domestic Violence – When Home is not a Haven.

Thank you to host churches, leaders from across the Region, and all participants.

General Assembly in Columbus OH, July 18-22, 2015: Georgia Disciples Women attending the Assembly participated in workshops, mission projects, worship, and other gatherings including the women's luncheon and after-session.

2015 Regional Women's Retreat in Toccoa, Sept. 25-27: One hundred thirty (130) women and five (5) girls attended. Keynoter Marilyn Williams, President of International Disciples Women's Ministries, explored the theme "Beloved Daughters of God." Rev. Ann Haines led the music. Cathy Moorehead led Western Night recreation with a "cowgirl sing-a-long," line and square dancing, and games.

Avid shoppers visited the boutique, purchasing \$1543 of handmade items to support regional women's ministries. Sunday's offering of \$1740 was divided between Reconciliation Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Camp Christian, the 2014-2015 Woman-to-Woman Project (Eglantine Women's Shelter in France), and Georgia's Martha Faw Woman-to-Woman Fund. Blessing Box offerings were \$5472.51, and women gave \$316 for the DW Honor Tree in remembrance or honor of special women in their lives. \$150 in DW t-shirts were purchased. Women brought a vanload of household items, cleaning supplies, diapers, and other items for the women's shelters of the Partnership Against Domestic Violence. Several pounds of pop

tabs for Ronald McDonald Houses and 352 pillowcases for the Sweetdreams Pillowcase Ministry (Scottish Rite Children's Hospital) were donated as well. 200 of the pillowcases were made by Charlotte Curry of Warner Robins First Christian. Fabulous!!

Commission Meetings: The DW Commission met in Macon on January 17 and by conference call on March 15 and September 10. Health issues of several members prevented the commission from having its annual planning retreat, but we met by conference call on June 5 and 6.

### **Current Regional Book Club Selections**

Current selections, *The Lemon Tree* by Sandy Tolan and *The Boston Girl* by Anita Diamant, are available through Amazon by going to [www.gadisciples.org](http://www.gadisciples.org) (benefits Camp Christian).

### **Finances**

As of booklet deadline, the women's ministry balance was \$19,100.73. The Martha Faw Woman-to-Woman Fund has \$2,459.18. The 2016 budget is available at the women's luncheon or DW display table. Many thanks to the churches and individuals who give regularly to support regional women's ministries. Feel free to contact staff or commission members with questions.

### **Leadership Opportunities**

There are several openings on the DW Commission – Secretary, Study and Worship Coordinator, combined SE/SW District Coordinator, combined EC/WC District Coordinator, and Communications Coordinator (a new position). We're looking for:

- ✓ A woman with good organizational and writing skills, able to take meeting notes and assist with other written communication
- ✓ A woman adept at using technology and social media, with good communication/writing skills.
- ✓ A woman with a deep spirituality, a searching mind and heart, and desire to create meaningful worship and study experiences for women.
- ✓ Women who like planning events and are creative and energized.
- ✓ Women who want to deepen their faith and encourage others.
- ✓ Women who enjoy working on a team and sharing through life's joys and challenges.

If you or a Disciples Woman you know fits any of these descriptions and you would like to explore opportunities to serve on the regional women's leadership team, please contact Lavonda Shadix or Betty Brewer-Calvert. The DW Commission is committed to being a pro-reconciliation/anti-racist body; all are encouraged to serve. We need representatives from across the Region and across the age spectrum.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty C. Brewer-Calvert, Director of Women's Ministries  
Lavonda D. Shadix, President, Georgia Disciples Women's Ministries

### **2015-2016 Disciples Women's Ministries Commission**

President Lavonda Shadix, Eastman First ++ Vice-President Karen Boyd, Augusta Central ++ Secretary, open ++ Service and Life Concerns Coordinator Rev. Sylvia Ramos, Peachtree Corners, Norcross ++ Study and Worship Coordinator, open ++ Northeast District Coordinator Ann Smith, Watkinsville First ++ Northwest District Coordinator Dottie Gill, Sandy Springs Christian Church ++ Other District Coordinator positions open ++ Staff Betty Brewer-Calvert

*Our heartfelt thanks is extended to Lynn Chapman (Secretary), Rev. Wanda Collado (Service and Life Concerns), Rev. Sarah Moody (Study and Worship), and Ann Brooks (West Central), who recently completed their ministry with the commission. They are appreciated and loved.*



### **Report from Women's Ministry Director, Rev. Betty Brewer-Calvert**

In addition to supporting the work of the DW Commission in planning and implementing regional women's events, other 2015 highlights include:

- Disciples Women Leadership Council (formerly Church Women's Staff Fellowship) January 21-25 in South Carolina
- Church visits and preaching opportunities
- District ministers' meetings
- Co-presiding at the Memorial Service for Ann Brewer Berry, musician, teacher, and beloved aunt
- Co-teaching a Lenten series on "Simple Living: Life as a Work of Art" at Decatur First Christian Church alongside Rev. Dr. Stan Saunders and Rev. Dr. James Brewer-Calvert
- Music Workshop, Christmount Christian Assembly in Black Mountain, NC
- General Assembly in Columbus, OH
- Sabbatical taken in July and August accented by two family weddings
- "Real People, Real Faith" event at Sandy Springs Christian Church with speaker, Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, Sept. 11-12
- Kansas Disciples Women's Retreat Keynoter, Oct. 7-9 and 9-11

I am so appreciative of the generosity of GA Disciples Women and the Region in enabling me to be on sabbatical for much of July and August. Though family medical concerns changed the nature of the sabbatical, it was good to have a time for rest.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Betty C. Brewer-Calvert