What is Mission First?

Mission First! seeks to help Disciples identify the next mission priorities God has for us as we move toward the year 2020 and beyond. Disciples will give their input on what’s important in their communities through Mission Gatherings. Congregations will gather in regional areas and tell their stories. After the Mission Gatherings, a Mission Council will meet to read through the stories, suggestions, and testimonies and identify common mission themes important to Disciples. The mission directions are forwarded to ministries to resource congregations for those areas. A governance board would continue to hold covenant ministries accountable for their mission direction. With appropriate resources and support, Disciples can make an impact within their communities. As mission directions evolve or change with the needs of the time, the process can begin again and refocus Disciples’ mission.

If you wish to watch General Minister & President Sharon Watkins’ State of the Church from the 2015 General Assembly describing how Mission First! will help Disciples find our mission focus, please use the link below in your browser.

https://youtu.be/0DgfQRUvvis
PASTOR’S PEN

Greetings.

With Labor Day behind us and the events of fall beginning in earnest, I thought of a few ideas as to consider as you witness the start of another season on this fast-moving planet traveling through time (September 7, 2015 – which is the month/day calendar date of my father’s birthday) and space (third rock from the Sun in the Milky Way Galaxy of a vast Universe of which only a small portion is knowable).

The changes in the seasons can be symbols of our human existence. Winter is a time of rest and waiting, while spring is a time of new growth and seeds sprouting. Summer is the time of fullness of life and productivity, and autumn is the time for visible change and potential harvest from seeds planted.

As you grow older and reach the autumn or early winter of your life, you might wonder how you reached this time and place that was once a long way off. Your “leaves” just don’t produce the chlorophyll they used to, and the results of who you’ve become are revealed in a variety of colors.

In each stage of life, God blesses as the process of life unfolds. God blesses you, and you can be a blessing blooming and withering in the soil in which you are planted. Live well along the journey, knowing that, each day, the truth is that you will never again be as young as you are today. With God’s grace, joyfully do what God requires that you will never again be as young as you are today. With God’s grace, joyfully do what you can now, and don’t worry about not being able to do what you might have done in former days.

The changes in the seasons, like changes in your life, can be a good thing. In its time, life responds to forces at work in creation to affect what can grow and thrive. For example, if I plant a tomato vine in September, I have little hope for a harvest of quality tomatoes. Wishing it could be springtime doesn’t change the fact that the calendar says “September.” Good things can happen with the change of seasons amidst the mystery of God’s created order. Celebrate and embrace the changes around you, knowing that each day is a blessing, and someone bigger than you or me has it all under control in the Divine design of life.

Growing in and through God’s Grace,
Pastor Gerald

RECONCILIATION SPECIAL OFFERING, SEPT. 27 & OCT. 4

The Reconciliation Special Offering is used to fund the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)’s mission imperative to become a pro-reconciling and anti-racist church utilizing the tools experiential education, inclusive worship and intentional dialogue. Our efforts to promote healing, relationship and restoration in the whole family of God are enlivened by funds from this offering providing for programs of leadership development, curriculum for dialogue and learning, and partnerships within the Church and our communities. The year 2015 has catalyzed the conversation about human brokenness. Your generous giving to Reconciliation Ministry is transforming lives and strengthening Christ’s witness in the world that we love one another, even as Christ continues to love us!
ELDER’S PRAYER

God of all Creation,
You give us the seasons to mark our journey through time. We thank you for the transition to autumn, with its change of color and falling leaves which remind us that sometimes things must die and fall away for new life to arise. Such is the message of the cross that, through death, we find life in all its richness. In those moments when we experience the setbacks for failures, help us to remember that You are with us always, and that there is no failure or sin Your love cannot heal. No matter what season, we are saved not by what we do, but by what Jesus Christ has done. Amen.

—Kathleen Mancinelli, Elder
SEPTEMBER 13

NATIONAL GRANDPARENTS DAY - AND - LIGHT-A-CANDLE- FOR-CHILDREN

40-DAY PRAYER VIGIL

We will honor all grandparents and great-grandparents during worship.

Youth Sunday

9:30AM Oct. 18

The youth will lead worship on October 18. The Rev. Brent Furlong, youth minister, will plan and coordinate the worship service. All children, ages toddler through college are welcome and encouraged to participate. Please tell Pastor Brent if you would like to be in a skit, perform a musical selection, do a reading, etc. He will be calling the children and youth so please be ready to confirm your participation when he calls. Older youth and college age are also needed for diaconate and as worship leaders.

GIFT CARDS FUNDRAISER

The congregation is participating in a gift card fundraiser to benefit the church’s general fund. You may purchase gift cards from Patty Miller, coordinator, before or after church services. This is a great way to help the church while remembering birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, holidays, or while shopping or dining out. Our church receives a percentage for each card purchased. A lengthy list and order forms are available in the narthex.

REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

DISCIPLES MEN’S RETREAT

OCTOBER 2 - 4

- Cedar Lakes Conference Center - Ripley, WV
- “Our Faith Stories Continue…”
- Rev. Kenneth Hardway, Pastor FCC Wheeling and Assoc. Regional Minister for Youth/Young Adults
- Early Bird Registration Ends September 10
- Golf outing (Friday 9AM) - for additional cost
- Retreat begins at 3PM on Friday
- Register www.wvdisciples.org/men
- (or use printed registration forms in narthex)
- Registration $30 before Sept 10; $35 after Sept. 10
- Lodging - from $14 to $45 per night depending on choice of dormitory, motel, or lodge private room
- Meals - cost for each meal: breakfasts $6.25; lunches $7.75; dinners $9.00

DISCIPLES WOMEN’S RETREAT

SEPTEMBER 25-27

- Hartman Center, 5725 Old Hwy 322, Milroy, PA
- “Bridging the Gap to a Global Sisterhood”
- Rev. Dr. Pat Donahoo, DWM Executive Director
- Registration/Check-In begins at 7:00 pm
- Registration deadline - September 18
- Cost - from $40 to $120 (see below)
- Bring: snacks, beverages & breakfast; bed linens, pillow, mattress pad, towel, wash cloth, toiletries
- Registration forms are in narthex
- All Weekend (no Sunday lunch), $120
- Friday through Sat after dinner/program, $82
- Friday 7pm through Sat 5pm (no dinner), $70
- Saturday only (with dinner), $52
- Saturday only until 5pm (no dinner), $40

INTERGENERATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND PLAY OCT. 17

10:30AM - 4:30PM at Laurelview Camp

- Prayer Walks, Recreation, Shared Meal, Silent Reflection

SCHOOL FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

JOIN US FOR THE DAY!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14

9AM to 5PM

- Toftrees Resort - State College, PA
- A day of intensive, in-depth workshops on congregational life, as well as an inspirational message, worship, fellowship and great food!
- Before Oct.18 $50/adult; $15/child-youth
- After Oct. 18 $60/adult; $20/child-youth
- Lodging is available for an extra fee at the Toftrees Resort 814.234.8000

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to John Bulboff and John F. Bulboff Plumbing for winning the Trib Total Media Valley Independent “Valley Favorites 2015” for the category of “new business.”

Congratulations to John Bulboff and Pat Miller, coordinator, before or after church services. This is a great way to help the church while remembering birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, holidays, or while shopping or dining out. Our church receives a percentage for each card purchased. A lengthy list and order forms are available in the narthex.

THE RUDY RANCH

AT COAL CENTER

6:00 PM OCTOBER 25

- All ages welcome!
- Hot Dogs & Drinks provided
- Marshmallow Roast
- Hayride (or two, if time)
- Dress warmly & come, enjoy!!
- Bring chips/dip or a side to share

See Julie or John Bulboff, Martha or Paul Rudy, or the church bulletin for directions.

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INTRODUCE THE CROWD TO THE CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Before Oct.18 $50/adult; $15/child-youth
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