



CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES of CHRIST) in the
SOUTHWEST

March 2007

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I will make rivers flow on
barren heights,
and springs within the
valleys.
I will turn the desert into
pools of water,
and the parched ground
into springs.

Isaiah 41:18

From Charlotte's Desk

It was an interesting metaphor, I guess, it was the one that came to me in the moment. I was imagining a cruise vacation. Which is odd – I've never been on one and that is not really my first dream of a vacation. But the metaphor worked, I think, to communicate what I was after.

The TRA cabinet gathered last Saturday in El Paso. With Moderator Pat Puckett's blessing, we convened what she described as happens at her church - a pastor's cabinet. I was running the discussion and agenda. We've been moving toward this since I arrived last year. Gathered last weekend, were the TRA board officers as well as chairs of TRA ministry teams – teams like men's and women's ministry, outdoor ministry, etc.

The cruise metaphor came to mind and out of my mouth, when one of the participants, looking at the printed agenda said, "What? We're only going to spend 10 minutes dreaming?" Well, I'm a first class dreamer – but we're not in a space that allows for full out dreaming yet!

If you were planning a cruise vacation, the things you would picture in your mind might be the luxury cabin, the incredible buffet meals, the expansive ocean horizon, the nap on the deck chair, the exciting adventures that awaited you upon embarkation and so on! Now you would probably give some initial thought about your planning – the cost, the time schedule, the travel arrangements – however, you would most likely not spend any time thinking about the fuel that it would take to carry the ship on the ocean, the food orders and preparations that would take place, not to mention the staff organization for service to table, room and pool side. Nor would you really think much about the captain – his training, his experience, or the tour guide's planning for your on shore adventure . . . and so on.

Well, folks, you and I have some dreams for Area Ministry – hopes of resourcing, supporting and coaching congregations in evangelism, stewardship, and even transformation and revitalization. We have dreams of new Disciple congregations reaching all sorts of un-reached communities in New Mexico and west Texas with the open welcome and gracious good news of Jesus Christ we have to offer. We have visions of developing new licensed and ordained ministers for our congregations, small and large, with the much needed support and training. Wouldn't it be fun to dream up new area youth ministries – both in outdoor settings and yet unimagined places!

But we've got to get the TRA ship up and running at full speed, before we ever get to those dreams! With the cabinet, we came to consensus about some working definitions and approaches to business as usual to under gird our future dream ministries! The cabinet is going to continue as a planning and ultimately dreaming group that helps keep our TRA ministries running smoothly. The board, when it convenes, will hold the staff, officers, and ministry volunteers accountable to their ministries, as well as, be the official body for approving policies. The TRA assembly will continue to gather for some worshipful work – celebrating the ministry of our area, as well as, holding all of us accountable for the work we intend to do together.

I encouraged the ministry team leaders to gather team members together for effective planning for the ministry for which they are responsible. I proposed an aggressive planning and publicity schedule for area events which will get information out to the churches in lots of time. The group talked about the importance of individuals and churches plugging into our area ministry plans through attendance at cluster gatherings, board meetings and assemblies. I saw lots of heads nodding in affirmation and even some comments at the end about it being a good meeting. We are on our way!

I will send out, in a separate e-mail to the ministers and churches, the outline of the material discussed at the cabinet meeting. I would love your comments, suggestions and yes, eventually your dreams!!

This is not exciting and imaginative stuff, but it is the basic work we need to do and get good at, so our dreams of vital ministry can reach across our area in the name of Jesus Christ.

Charlotte

From Charlotte's Odometer

Places I've been in the past month –

- ❖ Black River Board meeting, Carlsbad
- ❖ TCU Ministers' Week, Fort Worth
- ❖ DOC New Church Ministry - Church Planters' Training, San Antonio
- ❖ Los Altos CC search committee meeting, Albuquerque
- ❖ Regional staff and regional council meetings, Dallas
- ❖ Meeting with Las Cruces, American Baptist minister considering application for recognition of his ordination by Disciples and begin service with Disciple congregations
- ❖ And a drop-in visit with Denny Knotts while I was in Las Cruces!

Men's Retreat 2007



When: March 16-18

Where: Black River Center for Learning

Cost: \$85 full /\$45 partial

The deadline is passed, but if you are planning to attend please contact Ely Dorado directly to let him know. His email is ely.dorado@daltile.com and his phone numbers are office: 214-309-4274 and mobile: 915-373-2931. Please mail copy of registration form and payment to the Tres Rios Area Office and take a copy of the registration form with you to the Retreat.

Regional Men's Work Week 2007

Immediately following the annual TRA Men's Retreat will be the Regional Men's Work Week at Black River Center for Learning from March 19-24. **The cost will be \$10 per day to cover food expenses.** If you are interested in going, ask your church office for a copy of the letter and registration form that were sent to them or email our office requesting it and we will email you a copy. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact the TRA office.

Area Assembly 2007

"We, Who Are Many . . . "

(I Corinthians 10:17)

May 4 -5, 2007 - First Christian Church, Odessa Texas

Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, DOC General Minister and President preaching at Friday evening worship.

Rev. Charlotte Hoppe, TRA Area Minister and President leading Saturday morning Bible Study.

Fellowship and fun at Friday banquet, Saturday breakfast and lunch.

Worshipful work as we celebrate the many ministries of our TRA churches and area.

Celebrate our oneness in Jesus Christ around the Lord's Table before departing on Saturday after lunch.

The Area Assembly Planning committee is asking that each church bring a chalice and paten for use in our area assembly closing communion service.

The Committee is hard at work, so keep a watch out for more news of the Assembly soon.

Gearing Up for Camps 2007

Registration forms are now available from your church office. Forms are also available for anyone wishing to be a Youth Steward or Adult Counselor for the camps. There is no cost to staff persons except transportation to and from the camp..



Camper Early Bird registration deadline is to be postmarked by April 16. Final registration deadline has to be postmarked by May 18. If you want to register after this final deadline you must call the TRA office to see if there is space at the camp. Space available after May 18 depends upon beds available, number of counselors on staff and number of campers registered.

All TRA camps at Black River begin at 3:00 PM MDT and end at 10:00 AM MDT, except for New Beginnings Camp, which ends at 12 noon MDT. Children at New Beginnings Camp will be given a sack lunch for the ride home

CYF Conference June 3–8

Director – Michelle Tatlock, Monte Vista Christian Church, Albuquerque
 For youth who have completed grades 9, 10, 11 or 12.
 Registration Fee: \$285/camper before April 16 - \$300/camper after April 16

Chi Rho Camp June 11–15

Directors – David and Vickie Grousnik, El Paso
 Director in Training – Leslie Kelley, Monte Vista Christian Church, Albuquerque
 Phil Tozier, First Christian Church, Carlsbad
 For youth who have completed grades 6 or 7
 Registration Fee: \$235/camper before April 16 - \$250/camper after April 16

Junior Camp June 24–28

Director – Laurie Hart, Monte Vista Christian Church, Albuquerque
 For youth who have completed grades 3, 4 or 5
 Registration Fee: \$235/camper before April 16 - \$250/camper after April 16

ATTENTION Parents of 3rd graders – Children who have completed 3rd grade may register for Junior Camp or New Beginnings Camp. Please make your decision based on the maturity of your child.

New Beginnings Camp June 28 – June 30

Co-Directors – Jim Smith, First Christian Church, Ruidoso
 and Margaret Hime, Los Altos Christian Church, Albuquerque
 For youth who have completed grades 1, 2 or 3.
 Registration Fee: \$135/camper before April 16 - \$150/camper after April 16

Eighters Camp – Created to Be Me - July 1-7

TRA Co-Director – Keith Lewis, United Church of Los Alamos
 Lake Brownwood Christian Retreat Center – Brownwood, Texas
 Check-in time: 4:00p.m. CDT Sunday Camp ends: 10:00a.m. CDT Saturday
 Registration Fee: \$355/camper before May 7 - \$365/camper after May 7

For youth who will have completed the eighth grade. This camp focuses on self-esteem, Christian human sexuality, and transitions to CYF. We will combine with the Hi-Plains Area & the Central Area.

If you plan to attend this camp you must register through the Central Area and may download the registration forms from their site <http://central-area.org/CampAccess.html>.

Anyone interested in being a counselor for this camp can download the application forms at the website mentioned above.



2007 GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORT WORTH, TEXAS
JULY 21-25, 2007

YOUTH EVENTS

"Are you Hungry? Come With Me and Share The Feast!"

Youth will have an opportunity to "Share The Feast" at the 2007 General Assembly with activities that include eye-openers, dynamic youth-led worship on Sunday, July 22, powerful mission opportunities and plenty of fun times!

Housing will be available for youth groups at Texas Christian University.

Find more information and register at www.disciples.org/ga

JOIN A GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PRE-EVENT

July 18-21 in Fort Worth

Disciples Can... Disciples Share will begin Wednesday at 6 p.m. and conclude Saturday at noon. All ages and skill levels are welcome.

Various service opportunities in the Texas Christian University area will be offered at Homeless shelters, Food banks, Nursing homes, and Community clean up.

Cost is \$60 per person and includes a place to sleep at a church, showers, meals, insurance, t-shirt and work supplies.

A great opportunity for a local mission trip for your high school or middle school youth groups.

A great chance for families to serve together or for adults in a local church to go on a mini-mission trip!

Register at <http://www.homelandministries.org/2007GeneralAssembly/GA07Mission.htm>

WANTED: YOUR VIDEO TO PROMOTE THE 2007 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Disciples will soon have a place to feature witty and interesting videos other than on YouTube and MySpace. Communication Ministries is inviting Disciples to submit short video clips that feature "you" (and friends or family) inviting other Disciples to attend this year's General Assembly. The videos will be posted on the General Assembly web site, www.disciples.org/ga and the most watched ones may be featured at General Assembly in Fort Worth, Texas.

You needn't be a filmmaker to apply. Just have a lot (or even a little) creativity, and a camera to record your General Assembly commercials.

To see how one group of Disciples young adults is using video to invite others to the 2007 General Assembly, visit: www.disciples.org/ga/media/?id=100.

To learn how to submit your video to Communication Ministries, go to: www.disciples.org/ga/promotion/cometofortworth

BRITE LECTURE TO FOCUS ON HOLOCAUST

March 26, 2007 – Fort Worth, TX

"The Holocaust is a Christian Issue", a complimentary public panel discussion, will take place on the TCU Campus in Robert Carr Chapel on Monday, March 26, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Sponsored by Brite Divinity School and the Program in Jewish Studies, the panel will feature a range of scholars of theology and religion who will discuss the centrality of the Holocaust for Christian theology and identity formation. Dr. Clark Williamson (Indiana Professor of Christian Thought Emeritus, Christian Theological Seminary) will deliver the keynote address "Why the Holocaust is a Christian Issue," which will be followed by a moderated discussion of the topic among the members of the panel and questions from the audience. This event, and the reception that follows, are free and open to the public.

For more information and to RSVP visit www.Brite.tcu.edu or call (817) 257-6646.

SEMINAR ON LEADERSHIP AND ANXIETY IN THE CHURCH

March 22, 2007 – Albuquerque, NM

The Lombard Mennonite Peace Center is offering its seminar on Leadership and Anxiety in the Church: A Family Systems Perspective on March 22, 2007, in Albuquerque, NM.

Many topics will be covered, including: "The Road to Damascus: The Church and Change in an Age of Anxiety," "They Know Not What They Do': The Scapegoat Mechanism and Church Conflict," "The Importance of Not Being Earnest: Reversals, Playfulness, and Paradox," "The Road to Damascus: Lessons for Leadership in Anxious Times."

Those who attend the seminar will be exposed to material that could have an impact in preventing destructive conflict from emerging in churches served by your judicatory. Most judicatory leaders indicate that they spend too much time addressing conflict in churches -- so this is an opportunity to help you shift some of your attention from dealing with conflict to helping churches focus on their mission!

The registration fee is \$99. More information and registration forms can be found at <http://www.lmpeacecenter.org/schedule.html>

SPIRITUAL RETREAT FOR LAY MEMBERS OF CONGREGATIONS

June 22-25, 2007 – Albuquerque, NM

Called Back to the Well, a program of the Samaritan Counseling Center in Albuquerque, NM is offering a special retreat for lay members of congregations.

Anyone who holds leadership positions in the church or desires to "go deeper" spiritually, is encouraged to participate in a retreat June 22-25, 2007. The retreat is not a "how to" retreat, but an experiential retreat.

Participants will have time for silent reflection, group process, and the opportunity to connect with the grounds of the Norbertine Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Cost for the retreat is \$150. Space is limited so register early. The retreat will begin at 3 pm on Friday and end at noon on Monday.

You may register online at: www.samaritancc.com/affiliated/cbtw.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Sue Joiner at sjoiner@samaritancc.com or call 505.332.8020.

Here are a few highlights of happenings in our local congregations. We aren't able to include every congregation each month, but hope to highlight all during the next few months. Your church can be featured sending a report with pictures to tresriosarea@sbcglobal.net.

Albuquerque

Monte Vista Christian Church

Sunday, February 18 at 2 pm in the Monte Vista ushered in the Lenten season with a celebration: "Barkus" Pet Parade featuring fun events for neighborhood folks, families and furry friends. The event was well attended and fun for all.



El Paso

Bethany Christian Church

The Bethany CMF (Christian Men's Fellowship) hosted their annual "Valentine's Luncheon" after church on February 11th at the Vista Hills Country Club in El Paso. More than 100 adults and children attended and enjoyed a "sumptuous buffet." For more than 10 years the CMF have sponsored this Valentine luncheon after church, as a traditional way to show their appreciation to the members of Bethany Christian Church. This has been a way for church members and guests to enjoy a time of celebration, fellowship and good eats...*and the ladies don't have to cook or clean up!* What a wonderful way to celebrate Christ's Love and Valentine's Day at the same time.



Farmington

Bethany Christian Church

Bethany's Outreach Ministry is organizing a mission trip to Lake Charles, Louisiana for June to help rebuild homes for victims of the 2005 hurricanes.

Rev. David Evans also reports that the Jamaica Medical Mission included 25 members from New Mexico, Texas, Indiana and Oklahoma who spent eight days in Jamaica and assisted a total of 816 patients, of which 142 were dental patients. This has been a much needed ministry for the last 20 years, but now there are a lot of teams assisting the Jamaican people and the decision has been made to plan future mission trips to Africa, most possibly Zimbabwe.

Transition

The **Rev. David Grousnick** of El Paso has resigned from his position as pastor at First Christian Church in El Paso. Please keep David and **Vickie**, his wife, in your prayers as they seek to discern where they are being called to next.

In Sympathy

Please keep in your prayers The **Rev. Bobbie Dobbs** of Ruidoso and her family as they grieve the passing of her stepmother last month.

Please pray for the family of the **Rev. George Frank Brown** who passed away at the age of 86, in Manhattan, KS on Saturday, March 03, 2007. Pastor Brown served churches in Alamogordo, Las Cruces, Ruidoso, Artesia, Carlsbad NM and El Paso. He also had taught at the Alamogordo High School and the Alamogordo Community College.



Memorial contributions can be made to the First Christian Church, Alamogordo, NM or the Alzheimer's Disease Association and left in care of the funeral home. Online condolences can be sent to www.irvinparkview.com.

Prayer Concerns

The **Rev. Keith Pierce**, Minister Emeritus, FCC, El Paso had quadruple bypass surgery on March 8.

The **Rev. David Rogers**, Minister, FCC, Carlsbad. He will have gall bladder surgery on March 12.

The **Rev. Elizabeth Thomsen** in Albuquerque who is struggling with melanoma.

The **Rev. Chad Davis** and his family. Rev. Davis, an Army Chaplain stationed in El Paso, is currently deployed to Iraq.

Keep **TRA Camp and Conference 2007 Directors** in your prayers as they gather this weekend to continue preparation for the summer camping season.

The **12 congregations** that are seeking pastors.

Please remember to keep the Area office informed of transitions and prayer concerns pertaining to your pastors and staff.

Upcoming Events



- March 10** – Outdoor Ministries Camp Directors' Meeting, Ruidoso
- March 16-17** – Christian Men's Fellowship Retreat
- March 17** – CMF Pancake Day
- March 18-24** – Regional Men's Work Week at Black River Center for Learning
- March 23** – Licensed Minister Training, Monte Vista Christian Church, Albuquerque
Rev. Chuck Fisher, Hi-Plains Area Minister will be the presenter
- March 26** – Holocaust Lecture at Brite Divinity School in Forth Worth, TX
- April 2-5** – Regional Staff Retreat
- April 13-15** – CCSW Hispanic Convention Men's Retreat
- April 16** – Early Bird Camp Registration Deadline
- April 20-21** – Black River Center for Living Board Meeting
- April 23** – Border Cluster Clergy Meeting at Julio's Cafe Corona in El Paso. 11:30 a.m.
- May 1** – New Mexico Conference of Churches Board Meeting
- May 4** – Combined Cabinet & Board Meeting, Odessa, TX
Camp Counselor/Steward Registration Deadline
- May 4-5** – Tres Rios Area Assembly – First Christian Church in Odessa, TX
- May 18** – Final Camp Registration Deadline
- May 18-20** – Southwest Regional Hispanic Convention in Houston
- May 20-27** – Pentecost Offering
- May 30** – Fifth Wednesday Border Cluster Gathering – Northgate Christian Church, El Paso
- June 3-8** – CYF Conference – Black River Center for Learning
- June 11-15** – Chi Rho Camp – Black River Center for Learning
- June 24-28** – Junior Camp – Black River Center for Learning
- June 24-30** – Christian Youth Leadership Training and WIRED event
- June 28-30** – New Beginnings Camp – Black River Center for Learning
- July 1-7** – Eighters Camp / Created To Be Me – Lake Brownwood Christian Retreat
- July 14-21** – Navajo Work Camp Mission Program sponsored by Virginia Region
- July 18-20** – Pre-Assembly Events – see www.disciples.org/ga for more details
- July 21-25** – General Assembly – Forth Worth, TX
- September 7-8** – Cabinet and Board Meeting
- September 28-30** – Women's Retreat