

Friday Letter March 15, 2024

Good Friday Friends,



I pray that everyone is safe after the storms yesterday! We have received some much-needed rain, and the grass is growing, and the landscape is becoming green. The foliage will soon thicken, and our view of the river will become less visible.

One week from tomorrow is our zoom gathering! Please mark your calendars and join us! This will be our last study in the 2023 Just Women Bible Study. If you don't have a copy, don't let that stop you from joining us, we have so much enjoyable conversation and if you look at the scripture and read the questions you can join in!

'Learning to Let Go', from Isaiah chapter 43:18-19 is by Rev. Tanya Lopez

Questions for consideration:

1. What are some of the " things that were " that we might have to grieve in our lives today?
2. How can you hold space for yourself as feelings come up in your grieving of these " things "?
3. What examples can you name of times in your life in which God made a way during a time of crisis or deep need.
4. How can you begin the process of " releasing the grip " on things of the past in your life today?

Don't forget if you have someone in your congregations that could benefit, encourage them to apply:

Christian Ministries Scholarships Available

The Christian Ministries Scholarship Fund provides financial assistance for those preparing for Christian ministries, both in seminary and undergraduate education. This fund is primarily aimed at supporting those persons from the Christian Church of Mid-America (CCMA) Region who are preparing for the Christian ministries. Our Disciples Women invite anyone interested to apply by May 30.

<https://www.mid-america-disciples.org/christian-ministries-scholarship-fund>

Exciting news from Indianapolis ...

From the **International Disciples Women's Ministries:**

It is with both sorrow and binding appreciation that the International Disciples Women Ministries Executive Committee received a letter of resignation from Rev. Angéle Saunders Johnson on March 5, 2024. As Executive Director, Rev. Johnson has served tirelessly for nearly three years, building healthy process structures, restoring regional connections, and leading extensive financial recovery for Disciples Women as it navigates new realities. Her work with Disciples Women has been a labor of love with lasting implications. We wish her and her beloved family well as she moves forward to her next executive call within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Rev. Johnson will conclude her ministry as Executive Director on March 31, 2024. Details about a virtual celebration for Rev. Johnson, to be held on March 25th, will be shared in the coming days. Our hearts are grateful for the gifts and strong leadership Rev. Johnson brought to Disciples Women.

Executive Committee called a meeting on March 7, 2024. In that meeting, the committee voted to extend a call to Rev. Dr. Debra Reid as Interim Executive Director of Disciples Women. This decision was made to ensure no momentum is lost in the notable ways God is moving in Disciples Women.

Rev. Dr. Reid is a native Memphian. She retired from the Federal Government after 35 years of public service as a senior manager in the Human Capital Organization. She is a member of Anointed Temple of Praise Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and is active in the Tennessee Region serving on the Regional Board as Second Vice Moderator, Commission on Anti/Racism Pro-Reconciliation and Commission on Ministry. Dr. Reid is also a facilitator for Clergy Healthy Boundaries training. Dr. Reid is deeply committed to Women's Ministry, and her dedication is evident through her notable service as the Director of Legislation, Vice President, and President of the Tennessee Disciples Women's Ministry (TDWM). Currently, she serves as the Vice President of the Disciples Women's Leadership Cabinet (DWLC), the First Vice President of the National Convocation Disciples Women, and the representative of the National Convocation Disciples Women on the IDWM Executive Committee. Additionally, she was selected as a 2023 Woman-to-Woman delegate to Japan and South Korea.



She holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Tennessee at Martin. Dr. Reid also earned a Master of Religion, Master of Divinity, and Doctor of Ministry from Memphis Theological Seminary. She is the proud mother of two adult daughters, Courtney and Amber, and of Mac, her shorkie. We are confident Dr. Reid will bring steady, intentional, collaborative leadership to Disciples Women during this transition.

Our love, prayers, and support are with both Rev. Angéle Saunders Johnson and Rev. Dr. Debra Reid in their new beginnings.

In the Bonds of Christian Faith,

Wanona Rogers Redd

IDWM Executive Committee

From the Weekly Update:

Time to Register for Convocation!

Registration is now open for our African American Convocation happening on Saturday, April 13 at Fifth Street Christian Church in Columbia. Join us for a wonderful day beginning at 9:00am and ending at 4:00pm. We are thrilled to welcome our guest speaker Dr. Delesslyn Kennabrew who serves as Executive Director of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Associate General Minister. Registration is due by April 3 so don't delay! We can get you registered via mail, phone, or online.

Celebration for ARM Katherine Kinnamon

Our Associate Regional Minister for Commission on the Order of Ministry Rev. Katherine Kinnamon is retiring effective March 31. We are grateful for her many years of ministry in Mid-America and invite all to join the celebration at Compton Heights CC in St. Louis on Sunday, April 7 during their morning worship. More details will be posted as they become available.

ARM for RCOM

Our Regional board has confirmed the search committee's recommendation to name Rev. David Woodard as Transitional Associate Regional Minister for the Regional Commission on the Order of Ministry. David serves already as ARM for the Greater St. Louis Area, as well as pastor of Affton Christian Church. He will begin his new responsibilities on March 15 for a six-month initial period. Congratulations!

Lenten Dinners Continue

Last week FCC in Maryville served about 60 people at their third Unsung Heroes Lenten Dinner for this year. At this dinner they honored the local Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization, thanking them for being such an important and inspiring group in the local county and nationwide. They gave out door prizes and a special potted flower to the director, as well as giving each Big and Little a matched set of small pictures of a heart puzzle that said "I love my Big!" and "I love my Little!" that they could exchange with each other.

News from the farm:

Last week our black and white hound dog had been missing almost a week and I told my husband that we needed to put him on Facebook and see if someone has seen him. Facebook was how I found my horse years ago when he had crossed the river.

I contacted a Lost Pet site on Facebook and posted him there and they gave me some pointers. I put him on my homepage and then made it shareable (that was a deal, I'm not real savvy). We made posters and took them to the vet's offices and put it on available bulletin boards around town. After about 24 hours we heard from an individual that had seen him. Apparently, the neighbors had him and he was confined, okay and taken care of, but in a fenced area and on a chain. He had never been accustomed to that. He's a dog that watches after our cattle, our goats, our chickens, our cats, and his fellow canines. We were so incredibly thrilled when we got the message, he was okay, and my husband was guided to him. Tim said he was so happy when he heard his voice and couldn't get enough of him on the way home!

The other animals now are very happy to have him home. He sits out in the field with the cattle and watches them. The cats are feeling freer to wander around. His buddy the other black and white mix that we

have is very happy to have his friend back. My husband has a bigger smile on his face when he goes out in the morning.

Life never stays the same, we all know that. We all have transitions and new chapters in our lives but it's nice when chapters find a way to be continued and transitions are not as soon as they could be.

Using this form of social media, Facebook, to find him was a blessing. Had we not put that on Facebook, made the flyers, contacted the vet's offices etc. I don't know if we would have ever seen him again. Not that he was not cared for, not that he would not have had a good life, but his life would not have been on the farm with those who already love him and need him.

A community, we all need a community and I pray that we each have a community in our churches, our church families. Reach out to those that don't have a church family, who don't know the value and the joy that comes from a community of believers. You never know what has kept someone from church. You never know if they have been fenced in or chained up to something that has kept them from reaching out and leaving the shackles of life.

Have a wonderful week full of God's beauty.

Blessings,

Pastor Jennifer

Jennifer Long is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Disciples Women

Time: Mar 23, 2024 09:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88123748611?pwd=aGU5cnFBKzVCdW1VdFU1YWZFeFZ5QT09>

Meeting ID: 881 2374 8611

Passcode: 290238

Dial by your location

• +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcNrk4ZkVK>

Rev. Jennifer Long

Associate Regional Minister for Disciples Women's Ministries, Christian Church (DOC) of Mid-America

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Micah 6:8 Message: Do what is fair and just to your neighbor,

be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don't take yourself too seriously— take God seriously.

C.S. Lewis : "Believe in God like you believe in the sunrise. Not because you can see it, but because you can see all it touches."