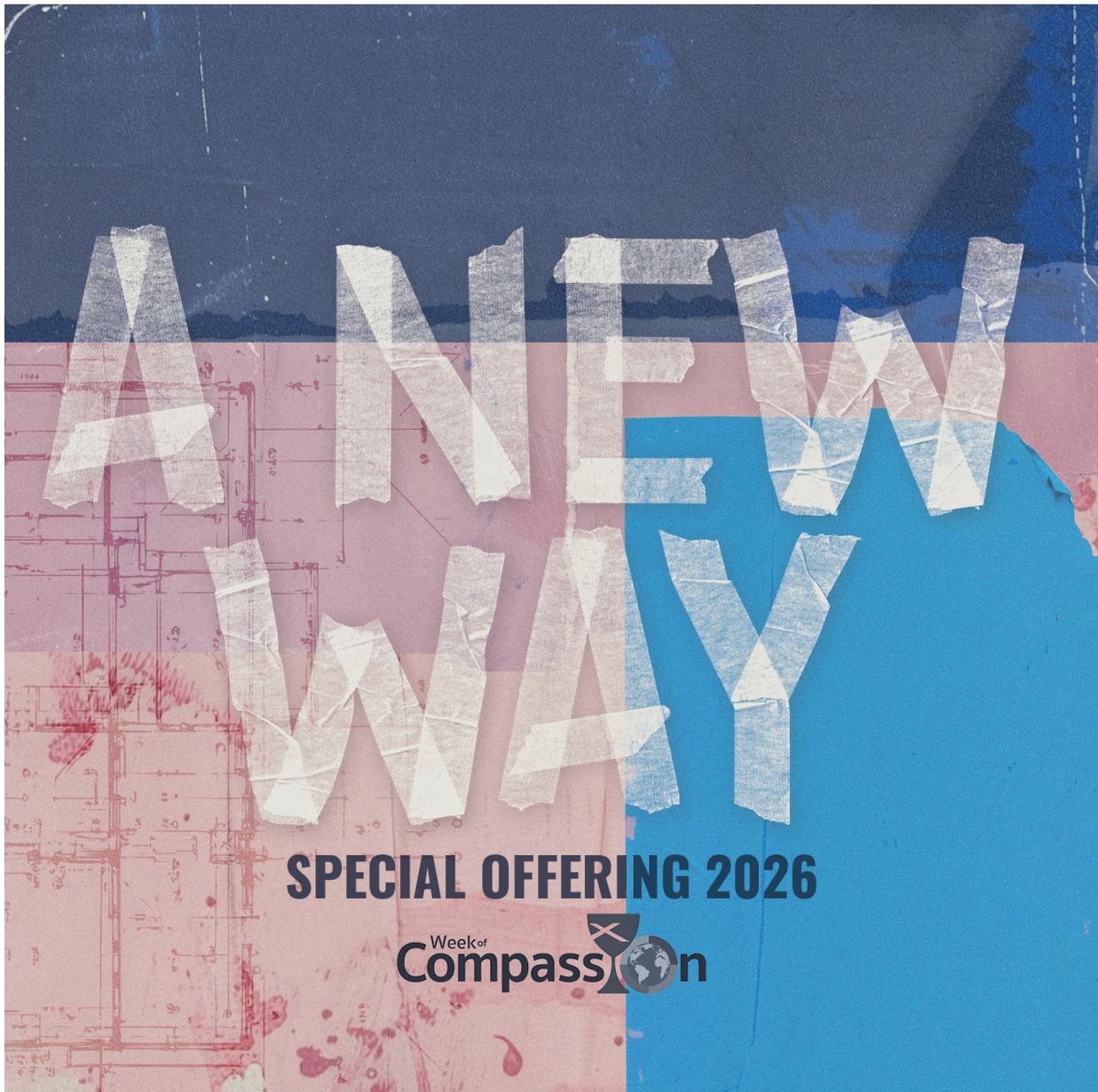


the Kentucky Christian

February 2026



**Week of Compassion Special Offering –
Received in Many Congregations February 15 & 22, 2026**



[Learn more at weekofcompassion.org/2026](http://weekofcompassion.org/2026)

A WORD FROM THE REGIONAL MINISTER



PREPARED TO FACE ANYTHING

*Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, II,
Regional Minister*

I contend for my generation and those that follow: we are in some uncharted times. There is a lot that we must be prepared to face in the coming days. I was recently reminded of that night that our modern-day prophet Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. turned to prayer for strength. He was alone in his kitchen feeling saturated by fears and ready to give up. The moment is captured in his autobiography:

It seemed as though I could hear the quiet assurance of an inner voice saying: “Martin Luther, stand up for righteousness. Stand up for justice. Stand up for truth. And lo, I will be with you. Even until the end of the world.” I tell you I’ve seen the lightning flash. I’ve heard the thunder roar. I’ve felt sin breakers dashing trying to conquer my soul. But I heard the voice of Jesus saying still to fight on. He promised never to leave me alone. At that moment I experienced the presence of the Divine as I had never experienced Him before. Almost at once my fears began to go. My uncertainty disappeared. I was ready to face anything.

As we celebrate African-American History month, with what our eyes see, our ears hear, and our hearts are feeling, we too must lay bare before God and admit our fears and our dependency upon God so that we may be prepared to face the fight of the injustices of our time. I believe as we go to God, God will give us a **Divine Assurance** (with God’s felt presence) and a **Renewed Strength** (dispelling our fears), leaving us with renewed determination to continue the fight. Beloved, God hears the cries of indigenous people, immigrants, those locked into generational poverty, the incarcerated, and the left out and looked over. And God seeks restoration, reconciliation, and redemption. If we heed the words of Dr. King quoting the prophet Amos, we will band together in love and live out the ideals of the Beloved Community. We must work together in God’s love, until justice runs down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream. We must continue to stand up for



On January 18, Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, II worshipped with Dry Ridge Christian Church, and is pictured here with Rev. Don Chase.



Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, II worshipped with Beargrass Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky on January 4.

righteousness, we must continue to stand up for justice, and we must continue to stand up for truth. We must continue to stand up at the ballot boxes, statehouses, and in the streets. James Cone reminds us, “Freedom must be actualized in history by oppressed peoples who accept the intellectual challenge to analyze the world for the purpose of changing it.”

I continue to be honored and privileged to serve the clergy, laity and the nearly 200 congregations that make up the Christian Church in Kentucky. In such a time as this, let us remember that God promises never to leave us or forsake us.

Hear these words of Dr. King that led to the closeness of God at that moment 70 years ago at his kitchen table in Montgomery, AL on January 28:

Lord, I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. But now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership, and if I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter. I am at the end of my powers. I have nothing left. I’ve come to the point where I can’t face it alone.

“We are a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.”



On Christmas Eve, Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, II worshipped with New Union Christian Church. Pictured here are Rev. Deb Phelps and Rev. Dean Phelps.

On December 9, Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, II attended the Kentucky Council of Churches' Installation of Executive Director, Rev. Rich Ginsero. Pictured here are Rev. Rich Ginsero, Rev. Lisa Lewis Balboe, and Ms. Melissa Holland.



Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, II travelled to First Christian Church, Jeffersonville, IN on January 19 for their Memorial Service honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He is seen here with Rev. Jeremy Skaggs.



On December 28, Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett visited Third Central United Christian Church, and is seen here with Rev. Brandon Addison and Marsha Thornton, Jr.

On January 17, Dr. Jonathan Barnes was installed as Vice-President and Dean of Lexington Theological Seminary. Pictured here are Dr. Barnes and Dr. Charisse Gillett.



On January 18, Central Christian Church hosted the annual Disciples for the Dream service, honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Pictured here are Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, II, Rev. Brandon Gilvin, Rev. Dikiea Elery, Rabbi David Wirschafter, Rev. Josh Snyder, and Rev. Christian Smith.



Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, II worshipped with First Christian Church, Versailles on Christmas Eve.

A New Way

www.weekofcompassion.org/2026

*When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door, and he was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. **And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay.** When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Child, your sins are forgiven.” (Mark 2: 1-5)*



Called to Be Carriers

*By Rev. K.J. Kim, Senior Pastor
Eastwood Christian Church, Nashville, TN*

How many of you have experienced that feeling of being stuck? Not just the inconvenience of traffic on the interstate or a project at work that refuses to move forward. Not just the busyness of a calendar packed so tight that your emotions get squeezed somewhere in between appointments. I mean that deeper sense of being stuck—when we feel trapped, unsure of the next step, wrestling with the unknown, or sitting in the fog of uncertainty.

As a first-generation immigrant, since I moved to the States in 2016, I know what it feels like to walk through doors that are both new and uncertain. More often, I feel as though I am standing in the midst of a dense forest—unsure of the next step, unable to see very far ahead, bound by the limits of a visa and the vulnerability that comes with it. Every step I have taken, every door I have passed through, has been both daunting and hopeful—full of uncertainty, yet alive with possibility. I would not have made it this far without the help of God and God’s people—friends, mentors, congregations, who carried me, encouraged me, and sometimes even cut through barriers on my behalf.

And in many ways, that is not just my story—it is the story of today’s world. We live in a time when so many people feel stuck, pressed up against barriers they did not choose. Families are displaced by natural disasters—earthquakes, typhoons, or floods that swallow homes, churches, and neighborhoods in a single night. Refugees flee war zones—parents clutching children, carrying them through the chaos of violence and gunfire. Even close to home, our neighbors still struggle to rebuild after hurricanes on the coast, wildfires in the West, or tornadoes that rip through Midwestern towns.

These stories are not rare—they are constant reminders that life can change in an instant and that none of us can manage alone. We see communities rallying to raise walls and repair roofs. We see strangers becoming family, offering food, shelter, or simple presence. We see that faith refuses to let unexpected disaster or the bitter fruit of human violence be the final word.

That is why this gospel story in Mark matters so much for us. When Jesus returned to Capernaum, the house was so crowded that there was no room left—not even outside the door (2:1-2). A paralyzed man lay on a mat, carried by four friends who believed that healing was possible (2:3). But when they arrived, every pathway to Jesus was blocked. The doorway was jammed. No one was moving to make space. (2:4a).

Continued next page

WEEK OF COMPASSION SPECIAL OFFERING

Continued from page 4

Imagine the scene. The friends' shoulders ache from the long walk, the rough edges of the mat cutting into their palms. With every step, they have carried not just their friend's paralyzed body, but also the unspoken weight of society's judgment. People whisper that his paralysis is punishment from God, that he or his parents must have sinned. Every glance from the crowd reminded them of the stigma they could never quite set down. (2:5-7) Perhaps, inside their hearts, a battle raged. Weariness pushed against hope. Doubt pressed against determination. They may have silently regretted ever suggesting the journey—"Why did I think this was possible?" Or they might have muttered under their breath—"Maybe the rabbis were right. Maybe he really does deserve this." And the voices of the crowd—the old whispers of blame and shame—echoed in their ears and hearts: "He does not belong here. Healing is not for people like him."

And yet, even as those voices closed in, something deeper stirred within them—quieter than shame, stronger than doubt. A voice that rose from love and faith, from a refusal to surrender—"No, we cannot leave him at the door." Not this time. Not when he has been left outside so many times before. If the usual way is blocked, then we will try another. If the door is shut, we will search for a window. If the ground is too crowded, then we will find the courage to climb to the roof (2:4b). One more time, one more step, more creatively, more courageously, because love and compassion will not stop at a closed door.

Somewhere between being stuck on the ground and breaking through the roof, we realize this story is no longer ancient—it's happening right now. Because this is not just a story about one man on a mat and four friends on a roof, it's about all of us—how we choose to respond when someone near us cannot move on their own. It's about what faith looks like when every path forward feels blocked, when the usual doors of compassion, justice, and community seem jammed shut. In that in-between tension, our faith begins to move again.

In my own immigrant and faith journey, I could never have made it this far without the people who carried me—families, friends, mentors, and congregations who refused to leave me at the door when life seemed closed or uncertain in this foreign land. Every step of grace in my story bears the fingerprints of those carriers—people whose faith made a new way when I could not see one. And that's not just my story. It's our story—told again and again through the ministry of Week of Compassion. We are all called to join those four friends on the roof, carrying one another through the storms and the paralyzing seasons of life. When the world says, "impossible," faith replies, "We'll find A NEW WAY, together." When doors are closed, we climb roofs—courageously and creatively. When pathways are blocked, we dig through—patiently and persistently. Every time we shoulder someone else's burden, rebuild what has been torn down, or make space where there was no room before, we live this gospel all over again.



Lahaina (photo LCLT)



Texas flood relief 2025 (photo Grace Christian, San Angelo TX)

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WEEK OF COMPASSION SPECIAL OFFERING

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In the midst of the storms and paralyzing moments of life today—here in our neighborhoods and across the world—we are all called to move forward and upward, to keep finding a new way when the way seems gone or blocked. Because the paralysis we see today is not only physical; it's social, spiritual, and systemic. Today's paralysis can be seen in the deep fractures of our nation, where neighbors struggle to speak across political lines and where public trust and common sense feel painfully thin. It appears in the persistent wounds of every kind of -phobia and -ism that continues to divide and dehumanize. It shows up in the anxiety of economic instability, as ordinary families face impossible choices between healthcare, housing, and hope. And it lingers in the weariness of congregations trying to do ministry in a world that often seems too divided or distracted to notice the hopeful tomorrow.



Ecuador (photo Week of Compassion)

The paralysis extends beyond our borders—to a world trembling under the weight of climate change, to regions scarred by war and displacement, to communities recovering from earthquakes, typhoons, and floods. These, too, are places where people long for someone to carry them to God's love—to remind them that healing and wholeness are still possible.

I'm not sure how you see today's world or how you read today's story. But wherever you find yourself, the call is the same: to move, to carry, to find A NEW WAY to healing and hope. Because there are still crowded rooms and closed doors all around us—people waiting to be lifted, places where love needs to break through. Through and with the ministry of Week of Compassion, we continue to see faith and love in motion: roofs opened, lives rebuilt, strangers welcomed, futures restored. So, let's keep rising, keep risking, and keep finding A NEW WAY – together.

Thanks be to God.

Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. Week of Compassion's mission remains the same: working with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world, toward the vision of a world where God's people transform suffering into hope.

The Week of Compassion Special Offering will be accepted in many congregations February 15 and 22, 2026, or you can give online anytime at www.weekofcompassion.org/2026.



Video still courtesy of Week of Compassion



Video still courtesy of Week of Compassion

What's Going On Around the Region of Kentucky?

Disciples for the Dream

On January 18, 2026, Central Christian Church in Lexington hosted the 36th Annual Disciples for the Dream community worship service, honoring the life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership of this service came from many local religious communities of varied faiths. This year's service featured guest preacher, Rev. Dikiea J. Elery, a special community choir, the Uniting Voices Lexington singers, and liturgical dancer, Harlina Trumbo. Thank you to everyone who took part in making this blessed night of worship happen.

“The hope and vision of the Disciples for the Dream and the annual community worship service are to participate and champion the journey within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to truly become an ‘anti-racist/pro-reconciliation church.’ This work includes not only honoring the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and those who worked alongside him in the Civil Rights movement; it also includes addressing the impact of historical injustices against African Americans, their congregations, and communities today. Disciples for the Dream strive to make this event each year a statement of the justice we work toward—for the religious community, for the Black community, for the white community, for the Lexington community at-large, and for the nation. We gather to remember, as Dr. King realized – the goal is reconciliation; the goal is redemption; the goal is the Beloved Community.” (This statement has been adapted from the address of Rev. Raymond Brown, January 2025.)



This year's Disciples for the Dream service featured guest preacher, Rev. Dikiea J. Elery. Rev. Elery is the Senior Pastor at East Second Street Christian Church in Lexington.



Regional Minister, Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett, II represented the Region at the Disciples for the Dream service on January 18.

Let us use this Black History Month and beyond to prayerfully reflect on the richness of Black History, to uplift Black voices in our churches and communities, and to continue to strive to be an anti-racist/pro-reconciliation church.



We are so grateful to all who planned, presented, and attended this special event.

Continued next page

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2026 Women's Spring Conferences

We are elated to fellowship with you at one or all Spring Conferences!

- West Area Spring Conference – March 7, 2026, at Dawson Springs Christian Church (Last day to register is February 28, 2026)
- Eastern Kentucky Spring Conference – March 28, 2026, at First Christian Church, Ashland (Last day to register is March 21, 2026)
- Central Kentucky Spring Conference – April 18, 2026, at First Christian Church, Paris (Last day to register is April 11, 2026)

Registration is \$35. To learn more and register, please visit cinky.net/disciples-women/.

Save the dates for the other 2026 Women's Conferences:

- Quilt/Knit/Craft Retreat – June 29-July 2, Berea
- Fall Retreat – October 23-25, Barren River Resort Park
- Silent Retreat – November 13-15, Loretto

ALEX Annual Yearbook Reporting

ALEX is the denominational database containing records for Disciples congregations including annual data reported by congregations. Yearbook reporting for 2025 is open in ALEX. Congregations can now enter their Yearbook statistics for 2025 at alex.disciples.org until March 31st.



Congregations can download a Yearbook data worksheet for 2025 in English or Spanish from the ALEX Help Center. A link to the Help Center as well as other ALEX information is available at www.disciples.org/alex. The Help Center also provides instructions for church staff to create an ALEX account for Yearbook reporting.

For help with ALEX and Yearbook reporting, send an email request to alex@disciples.org.

Save the Date for the CCK Regional Assembly 2026

Join us September 17-19, 2026 at First Christian Church, Bardstown for Pour: Regional Assembly 2026! Registration will open on March 31. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months.



Director of Women's Ministries, Marsha Thornton, Jr., is hard at work with the Women's Ministry Cabinet to bring the Region several outstanding events in 2026. Photo courtesy of Sterling Staggs.



The Central Kentucky Spring Conference was well attended in 2025. We cannot wait to fellowship together again this Spring. Photo courtesy of Sterling Staggs.





Preparing for the West Area Workshop

*Rev. Rachel Nance Woehler
West Area Regional Minister*

In the first century, Ephesians 4:16 captured a crucial characteristic about unity in the body of us Christians:

From whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

And one of the founders of our Christian Church movement, Barton W. Stone sounded an alarm rooted in this same notion, in one of his articles for *The Christian Messenger* in the 19th century:

Until every member of the body be engaged in the work, it must fail—all can do something, however little—all are hired into the vineyard—all must labor or lose the reward.

Point taken. This passage from Ephesians is the scripture that the West Area Leadership Development Team—Stacy Castlen, Cathy Midkiff and Rev. Chris Michael of First Christian Church, Owensboro, as well as Rev. Larry Baker, Melissa Cheek, Rev. David Clifford, Sheri Lancaster, and Dedra Wynn—has been exploring as they plan the next West Area Workshops, scheduled for March 28 at [First Christian Church, Owensboro](#).

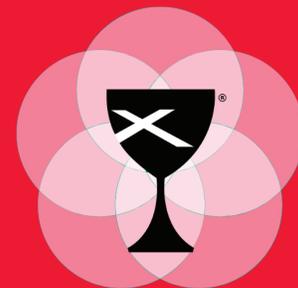
What are our churches needing now? How do we spiritually grow congregations? How do we establish, maintain or regain connection, given today's hybrid, in-person and remote environments? What fears are holding us back? How do we make room for younger generations to lead and make the church their own?

These are some of the questions that the development team has been considering in its meetings to plan sessions, lunch conversation, and worship at the West Area Workshops.

Each spring, this day-long event is an opportunity to explore what God is doing through our churches, to share ministry successes and challenges, to discover new ideas, and to be inspired by Disciples and other congregations. Laity and clergy collaborate on advancing ministries via cross-pollination, defining tangible steps forward and breathing life into visions and callings.

The first West Area Workshops took place at First Christian Church, Hopkinsville in 2020, and it was one of the last things many of us did in person together as a church before the global COVID-19 pandemic suspended so much church life. I was thrilled when the event returned in 2023, at First Christian Church, Madisonville, and now that it has become a spring staple, as Cadiz Christian Church and First Christian Church, Henderson have subsequently hosted West Area Workshops. Between 100 and 130 people from across and beyond western Kentucky typically attend.

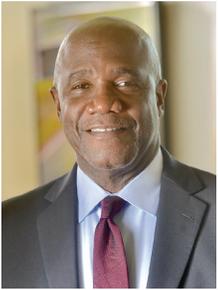
More details on the 2026 event at First Christian in Owensboro are available at www.westareadisciples.org and in [The Coordinator](#) newsletter. I love the West Area Workshops, and I think you will, too. Please come. Everyone is welcome.



West Area Workshops

First Christian Church, Owensboro

March 28, 2026



The Compassion of Christ

Rev. Dr. D. Anthony Everett

Staff Consultant to New Church Ministry

Happy (late) Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day/Black History Month! I am Anthony Everett, the new Staff Consultant to New Church Ministry with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Kentucky Region. My role is to connect new, emerging, and affiliating churches/ministries/communities to each other, the region, and the general church.

In Matthew 9:36 (NRSVUE), it states that “[w]hen [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” So often in life, ordinary people like you and me are victims of harassment and helplessness, “like sheep without a shepherd (Mt 9.36).” Yet the scripture reminds us that when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them.

In following Jesus as a leader during the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. King spoke to the crowds with the same compassion that Jesus has. His compassion resonated as a love for humanity transcending our beautiful diversity and focused on the Imago Dei (Image of God) in each of us. When we celebrate the King Holiday and Black History Month, we lift up our compassion for others. Some see the holiday as a time of service, while others see it as a time of rejuvenation to address social ills.

Our New Church Ministry Team has a focus on helping the congregations and faith communities in our region to live out their calling with the Compassion of Christ. Giving to the Week of Compassion Special Offering can help support our Church’s efforts to pass on Jesus’ compassion to congregations that face new and difficult circumstances; circumstances that often feel like harassment and helplessness. Your offering provides hope for many congregations that feel harassed and helpless at times, and the communities in which they live and serve. The impact of your generosity exponentially multiplies the compassion of the church.

I invite you to call me, schedule a Zoom meeting with me, and email me (anthony@ccinky.net) so that we can get to know each other. I plan to visit all of our new church communities.

I welcome everyone with the call to New Church work, whether pastoring a new church start or serving as a laborer, all are welcome to join us in the work of sharing the Compassion of Christ. If this is your calling, hesitate no more and join us. Even if it is not your calling, you can join us in sharing the Compassion of Christ through your giving.

I look forward to getting to know you better as we share the Compassion of Christ through the New Church Ministry!

Peace and Blessings.





Preparing for 2026

*Rev. Steven Straub
Camp Wakon' Da-Ho Executive Director
and Rev. Rachel Nance Woehler
West Area Regional Minister*

With a new year upon us, both Camp Kum-Ba-Ya and Camp Wakon' Da-Ho are actively preparing for another wonderful year of faith formation and camp memories.

Spring Events

Camp Wakon' Da-Ho will host a Spring Youth Retreat April 17-19 for youth in grades 6-12. Arrival is on Friday evening after supper, and departure is Sunday morning following closing worship. Registration information will soon be available on the regional website at ccinky.net/camp/wakon-da-ho/. For more information, contact Rev. Steven Straub (steven@ccinky.net).

Join Camp Kum-Ba-Ya for their Spring Work Day on Saturday, April 25. The campground will open at 7:30 a.m., and the work day fun will begin at 8:00 a.m. Central. Camp Kum-Ba-Ya is located at 4943 Barge Island Road, Benton. If you have work gloves, a weed eater, leaf blower, a toolbox, a truck, and/or friends and family who would love to join you in this fun and meaningful work, please bring them with you. No registration is necessary.

Camp WKDH Receives Major Grant

In late 2025, Camp Wakon' Da-Ho received a grant through an outreach program at Crestwood Christian Church (Lexington). The grant will help provide some much-needed refurbishments and improvements to the dining hall. The dining hall serves as the main building at camp, and ensuring its viability will help sustain the overall facility for years to come. Planned upgrades to the dining hall include new exterior siding, new gutters, new windows, a new stove, porch expansions, a retaining wall to prevent water from entering the kitchen, and more!

Camp KBY Receives Memorial Gifts

Joyce Johnston, Camp Grandma of Camp Kum-Ba-Ya, died on Tuesday, December 30. For years, "Grandma Joyce" served on the KBY Advisory Team and taught crafts, impacting multiple generations of campers.

Joyce demonstrated that the true value of crafting was not in the objects created but in the relationships and conversations that blossomed around the craft room tables. She could turn a sticky, gooey campfire craft of graham crackers, pretzels, and marshmallows into a meaningful conversation about the light of Christ that we must pass on to others. Her passion for teaching others to create was evident, as she believed that everyone possessed a spark of God's creativity.

When health concerns prevented her from serving as a counselor, Joyce remained deeply involved in the camp's activities. She reviewed each year's curriculum and eagerly contributed craft ideas to directors. Even in the off-season, she made birthday postcards for campers and painted prayer rocks for ministers across the West Area.



Continued next page

OUTDOOR MINISTRIES

Continued from page 11

In recognition of her contributions, the KBY Advisory Team honored Joyce by renaming the camp's craft room the "Joyce Johnston Craft Room." Furthermore, memorial gifts in Joyce's honor were designated to Camp Kum-Ba-Ya, in addition to First Christian Church, Madisonville.

Grandma Joyce was a true gift to us all.

Summer Camp Registration

By the end of February, registration forms for our summer programs at both Camp Kum-Ba-Ya and Camp Wakon' Da-Ho will be available. Please consult the graphics below for specific camp dates. Please note that grades refer to grades completed in 2026.

Churches are encouraged to have a Camp Sunday to promote outdoor ministry opportunities as well as encourage camper registration. The official Camp Sunday for the region will be Sunday, March 22, but congregations are welcome to select an alternative date that works for them. Resources for Camp Sunday are available on the regional website, at ccinky.net/camp/.

Counselors are needed at both outdoor ministry sites. Please consider volunteering this summer to help our vital outdoor ministry happen! If you are interested in serving as a counselor at Camp Wakon' Da-Ho, please contact Rev. Steven Straub (steven@ccinky.net). If you are interested in serving as a counselor at Camp KBY, please contact Becca Teckenbrock (campkby.westarea@gmail.com).



• CAMP SUNDAY •

MARCH 22

REGISTER TODAY FOR CAMP!

IN THE WILDERNESS

WWW.CCINKY.NET/CAMP/WAKON-DA-HO/ WWW.CAMPKUMBAYA.ORG

We cannot wait to see you this summer!

CAMP KBY

SUMMER 2026

WWW.CAMPKUMBAYA.ORG

JUNE 1-5	JUNIOR (3-5)
JUNE 5-7	DISCOVERY (K-2)
JUNE 8-12	SPIRIT SAILING (6-12)
JUNE 22-27	CHI RHO (6-8)
JUNE 29-JULY 4	CYF (9-12)

CAMP WAKON'DA-HO

2026 DATES

YOSEMITE, KY | CCINKY.NET

SPRING WORK WEEKEND	APRIL 17-19
MINI CAMP (2-3)	JUNE 5-7
CYF 1 (9-12)	JUNE 8-13
EIGHTER'S CAMP (8)	JUNE 14-20
JUNIOR CAMP (4-5)	JUNE 22-26
CAMP 101A (K-2*)	JUNE 26-28
CYF 2 (9-12)	JUNE 29-JULY 4
CHI RHO 1 (6-8)	JULY 6-11
CHI RHO 2 (6-8)	JULY 13-18
CAMP 101B (K-2*)	JULY 25
Y'ALL CAMP (ALL AGES*)	SEPT 4-6

*FIND DETAILS REGARDING AGE RESTRICTIONS, CHAPERONE REQUIREMENTS, AND PRICING AT CCINKY.NET/MINISTRIES/CAMP/WAKONDA-HO



More than a Week

Rev. Josh Snyder
Associate Regional Minister

The author of Matthew loves the word ‘compassion.’ That word is used several times throughout the gospel, and its use lets us know what compassion means: “sympathetic consciousness of others’ distress together with a desire to alleviate it.” That is the official definition, which makes it sound a little dry. Here is how Matthew uses the word compassion:

- When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. —14: 14
- Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way.”—15: 32
- Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him. —20: 34

Jesus’ compassion is what moved him to help the people around him. To be honest, as a society, we have lost that part of our identity. Paul tells us in Ephesians 4: 32 to “Be kind and compassionate to one another...” Jesus set the example, and Paul gave the command. As Christians, compassion is supposed to be our polar star; what defines us as Jesus’ disciples, and as followers of The Way.

Instead, too often, we blame others for their mistakes, offer empty advice on how those who suffer can improve their situation(s), or simply look the other way. None of those responses fit very well with the biblical mandate to be compassionate.

What would Jesus do if he were here? What would Jesus say if he were here? I think Jesus would read from Matthew’s gospel:

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me....whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ —25: 34-36, 40

The mission of the Week of Compassion is “to alleviate suffering throughout the world.” This ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) serves the most vulnerable people and communities. While they have partners, they need more. Supporting this organization is a step in the direction of compassion. By partnering with Week of Compassion, we can all be more Christ-like by living out the example Jesus set to help those in need.

But as their website says, “Week of compassion is more than a week.” As we dedicate time and financial resources to this ministry, I invite you all to be active in this ministry throughout 2026 and beyond. Compassion is not a one-time act, but a life-long, faithful response to the love, grace, and help Jesus has given to each of us.

*Live in peace; love and care for one another in Christ’s name,
And may God bless you with every gift needful for His work,
May the Spirit grant you the willingness
To risk yourself completely for the sake of the gospel,
And may the love and the compassion and the hope and the faith
Of Jesus dwell richly within you till the time of his coming.
Both now and forevermore. Amen.*

God bless you.

Kentucky Regional Ministry Team

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2024-2026

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Moderator

ROB SHRADER

1st Vice Moderator

DEBORAH GARR

2nd Vice Moderator

a publication of The Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ) In Kentucky
1125 Red Mile Road

Lexington, KY 40504

Return Service Requested

Regional Ministerial Changes

- Retired minister **Rev. Keith Tilford** served as an extended supply minister through December at **First Christian Church, Benton**, while Rev. Kristi Stuckel is on medical leave. In January, **Rev. Cliff Jones** followed Keith as a Bridge Minister.
- **Rev. Erin Phelps** began as Associate Minister at **Beargrass Christian Church** on January 5.
- **Rev. Chloe Peacock Specht** completed their service as CCK's Staff Consultant to New Church Ministry, having relocated to North Carolina. **Rev. Dr. D. Anthony Everett** began serving in this position on January 6.
- **Rev. Diana Hodges-Batzka** concluded her ministry at **Florence Christian Church** and began her ministry as the Special Assistant to the General Minister and President in January.
- **Rev. Sherri Jackson** began as Interim Associate Minister at **Florence Christian Church** in January.
- **Rev. Lynn Smith** retired from **Flour Creek Christian Church**.
- **Rev. Jessica Adcock** began as Interim Minister at **Waddy Christian Church** in January.
- **Rev. Linnea Blakemore** began as Associate Minister at **First Christian Church, Bowling Green** on January 18.
- **Rev. Dr. Micah Spicer** began as Minister at **First Christian Church, Mayfield** on January 18.
- **Rev. Leah Eubanks** was officially called to serve as the settled pastor at **First Christian Church, Dawson Springs** in January. An installation will be planned for a later date.

