

The Oldtimers' Grapevine

February, 2021

30TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Volume 30, Issue 1

NEW DAY ~ NEW SPIRIT



See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

Dear Beloved Grapevine Readers,

Thirty years ago, February 1991, when William K. Fox, Sr. mailed the first issue of The Oldtimers'

Grapevine to 100 Disciples retirees; he was doing a **New Thing**. The Newsletter was unique, a publication with a sole focus on denomination retirees, particularly African Americans, who often did not have a voice in the media.

Through the Newsletter, these retirees could keep in touch with happenings in the denomination, part of their past, a world they were giving up. Moreover, through the Newsletter retirees could keep in touch with one another; part of creating their new life. Indeed, the Grapevine heralded a **New Day - A New Spirit** that reassured retirees: "Let's stay in touch... We can do this... Retirement can be beautiful... The best is yet to come."

As we fast forward to February 2021: with the mailing of this 30th Anniversary Special Edition of the Oldtimer's Grapevine, there are New Things to share with our readers. This Special Edition is a first for us. We see this Edition as a way to celebrate our past and build for a bright future.

Another New Thing to announce in this Special Edition is the **I Love The Grapevine** Fund Drive, another first. In 2006,

Oscar Haynes, Publisher Emeritus had the vision to establish an Endowment Fund with the Christian Church Foundation. On the occasion of our 30th anniversary we are launching a Fund Drive to "grow the endowment" providing additional interest income to modernize and update Grapevine operations. Please read the articles about the Fund Drive, which we hope will motivate our readers to give generously in support of a secure future for the Grapevine.

Another New Thing that is announced in this Special Edition: the Board recently initiated **Eighty Eighty Plus**, a Servant Leader Recognition Program, that provides an opportunity to celebrate and thank living legends, who are 80 years and older. These servant leaders can serve as role models for productive aging. Check out the article about the 2021 Eighty Eighty Plus Class. You will be inspired by their spirit and their continuing record of exceptional service to others.

A wonderful New Thing to share: the Disciples Historical Society recently completed digitizing the The Oldtimers' Grapevine Newsletter collection, starting with the first issue of February 1991 through December 2013.

Many of us, as we read our copy of the Grapevine think of it as reporting news and providing connections to friends. However, if we review multiple past issues, as I have done in conducting my research; we come to learn and appreciate that the Grapevine is also documenting our history.

The Grapevine's historical role explains the more in depth approach we use in

telling stories, than is found in many electronic communication tools. This rich Grapevine history reveals those countless African Americans Disciples who have helped shape the denomination, as it has moved toward wholeness, unity, and racial inclusion. Thanks to the Historical Society, this history will be easily accessible to our readers, scholars, researchers, and members of the denomination for years to come.

A final New Thing that is debuting with this Special Edition is the new **Grapevine Logo**. Hope you like it. We tried to stay true to our past, yet achieve an updated look that shows our connection to the denomination. Many thanks to Dennis Sanders, Pastor of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in St. Paul, Minnesota for his caring and creativity.

On behalf of Grapevine board and staff, it is our sincerest prayer that you, our readers and supporters will have the best year ever. It is a New Year and a New Day for the Grapevine. We also pray that you will catch the Grapevine Spirit of old: "We are doing New Things - Do you not see them?"

Your Sister in Christ,
Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty
Board President



THE GRAPEVINE BOARD OF DIRECTORS LAUNCHES I LOVE THE GRAPEVINE FUND DRIVE

Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty, Board President

We're Counting On You



With the publication of this 30th Anniversary Special Edition of the Old Timers' Grapevine, the Board of Directors announces the **"Fifty Thousand Dollar I Love The Grapevine Fund Drive."**

Readers, volunteers, staff, and board are invited to make a donation to the Fund Drive.

For 30 years, our readers have counted on the Grapevine to be a beacon of hope and inspiration by telling our stories and presenting the "news" through the lens of faith, armed with the gospel of Jesus Christ. For 30 years the Grapevine has called us into

community and provided connections for continuing and new friendships. For 30 years the Grapevine has delivered and the Grapevine would like to continue to deliver for our readers for another 30+ years.

We are now counting on you to catch the spirit of the 30th Anniversary Celebration and to be inspired to give generously; thus enabling the Grapevine to attain its \$50,000 Fund Drive goal. This is not the time to expect someone else to give. This is the time for all Grapevine supporters to step up and reflect the faithfulness and commitment of Isaiah when he said: "Here am I, send me." Isaiah 6: 8 (NIV)

It will take an enthusiastic and generous response from all of our Grapevine stakeholders to attain our \$50,000 Fund Drive goal. We will be celebrating our 30th Anniversary with

each issue of the Newsletter this year, giving our supporters a continuing opportunity to contribute to the Fund Drive.

For those who have already given to the Fund Drive - we extend our heartfelt thanks. For those who have yet to give - we extend our heartfelt thanks to you for being a part of the Grapevine family - we look forward to your generosity, as we come together to ensure a secure future for our beloved Grapevine.

Please refer to the *I Love the Grapevine Fund Drive Information Sheet* to answer questions you might have about the the fund raising effort. Please remember - *We're counting on you to show your love for the Grapevine. Many thanks for your commitment and generosity!!*

I LOVE THE GRAPEVINE FUND DRIVE INFORMATION SHEET

Grapevine Mission:

The Grapevine is a ministry that creates a caring and sharing community of retired Disciple servants of the church, through a Newsletter, The Oldtimers' Grapevine, whose purpose is grounded in Jesus, the Christ and the enhancement of Christ's Church.

How will the Fund Drive proceeds be used?

A successful Fund Drive will enable the Grapevine to accomplish the following:

- * Gradually transition from majority print readership to majority electronic readership.
- * Upgrade technology, including software and systems to efficiently and effectively operate the ministry.
- * Develop and maintain a Grapevine website that could expand readership, as well as enhance the connection and communication between the Newsletter and our readers.

- * Create a *Staff Support Program*, including funds to provide modest stipends, and updated equipment for currently unfunded positions.
- * Create a named Grapevine Scholarship, as funds allow, for an undergraduate Disciples student in journalism, writing, or history.

A successful Fund Drive will "Grow the Endowment," a permanent fund managed by the Christian Church Foundation. Overall a successful Fund Drive will ensure the operational stability and excellence that our faithful supporters deserve and expect.

Are Fund Drive gifts tax deductible?

All contributions to the Fund Drive are tax deductible, as the Oldtimers' Grapevine organization meets the IRS criteria for a 501(c)(3) non profit organization.

How Can You Support The Fund Drive?

For each \$100 contributed, donors can list up to five persons on the **Donor Form**. The donor's name and the person(s) being honored will appear in an upcoming

ing issue of the Grapevine Newsletter, within the *Giving Circle* category their gift falls. (see below)

What Are The Giving Circle Categories?

The following *I Love The Grapevine Giving Circles* were created to honor Grapevine trailblazers, whose contributions can inspire our donors to honor our storied past and give generously.

Under \$500 Ruth Powell Hobbs Circle: Board Member Emerita, founding board member of 27 years at her retirement in February 2020.

\$500-\$999 Sere S. Meyers Circle: Served as the first Grapevine Board President (1993)

\$1000-\$2999 John R. & Marilyn Foulkes Circle: John is the third Grapevine Publisher/Executive Editor, serving from 2013 to the present. Marilyn provides support to John and the ministry as “First Lady.”

\$3000-\$4999 Ernest J. & Janice Newborn Circle: Ernest, over a period of 26 years since the inception of the Grapevine, served as Field Representative, founding Board Member, Board president, and a member of the editorial staff. Janice served as a contributing editor.

\$5000-\$9999 Oscar Haynes & Joan Bell-Haynes Circle: Oscar served for 12 years as the second Grapevine Editor/Manager. Joan provided support to Oscar and the ministry as “First Lady.”

Grapevine Vision: To be a treasured source of enlightenment, hope, social connection, and unity in Christ for an ever expanding number of retired Disciples, and those Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) entities that have an interest in the well-being of these retirees.



I LOVE THE GRAPEVINE DONOR RECOGNITION

Kirby H. Gould Chair of the OTG Development Committee



Two years ago my friend and former colleague Norma Ellington-Twitty called to invite me to join the board of The Oldtimers' Grapevine. I had never

heard of the Newsletter, but when she sent me a copy I was captivated by the content. I realized that I was not just reading news—I was seeing a snapshot of history with each newsletter.

After being asked to serve as Development Chair and joining the Executive Committee of the Grapevine Board of

Directors, our goal was to help the Old Timers' Grapevine (OTG) advance its mission to a broader audience, and to encourage financial support from both current and future readers. We started a bold venture to raise funds for not only the ongoing operations of OTG, but to secure additional contributions to build up The Oldtimers' Grapevine Endowment Fund which is invested with the Christian Church Foundation.

In December 2020, a special Fund Drive letter was sent to 250 people, including recent contributors, and selected family and friends of members of our board. When the Fund Drive was proposed to the board earlier in 2020, several members made pledges and gifts before the Drive began! We are blessed that 100% of the board has contributed to the Fund Drive. As of January 15, 2021, we are happy to report that we have received

contributions totaling \$7,880. In the listing of donors, you will see many have chosen to honor or memorialize persons special in their lives.

The Drive continues, and now ALL of our readers have the opportunity to contribute! We have moved from the “silent phase” of the campaign, to now opening the “public phase” so that everyone can have the opportunity to contribute. Complete the donor form and return it in the enclosed envelope. With each gift of \$100, you can recognize a loved one or a special event in your life.

Finally: Do you have a friend or colleague who you think would enjoy reading the Newsletter? Please share their name and contact information with us! Let's continue to shout to everyone, “*I Love The Grapevine!*”

oldtimers.grapevine@gmail.com

DONOR RECOGNITION FOR "I LOVE THE GRAPEVINE" FUND DRIVE

DONOR	HONOREE	DONOR	HONOREE
JOHN R. AND MARILYN FOULKES CIRCLE — \$1000 - \$2,999			
Ms. Patricia L. Adams	Norman and Ruth Ellington	Karen S. Vroman	
SERE S. MYERS CIRCLE — \$500-\$999			
Rev. Joan Bell-Haynes	Mr. Oscar Haynes	Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty	Cheryle Dyle-Palmer
Saundra Bryant	Mary Reynolds	Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty	Rev. Dr. William K. Fox, Sr.
Rev. Eugene James, Jr.	Rev. Eugene James, Sr.	Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty	Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hylton, Sr
Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty	Norman S. and Ruth E. Ellington	Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty	Mr. Oscar Haynes
RUTH POWELL HOBBS CIRCLE — Gifts under \$500			
Rev. Dr. Mark D. Anderson		Mrs. Sheryl Hayes Holmes	Eld. Callum and Hildra Hayes
Margaret B. Berry		Jim and Nancy Johnson	
Rev. Dr. Eric H. Brown		Jacquelyn Stockton Kordalewowski	
Rev. Ben Bohren	Rev. Dr. Bill Thomas	Brenda Clark Mikota	Patricia Clark
Mrs. Lenita (Jackie) Compton Bunch	John R. and Lucille A. Compton	Lorel G. Morrison	Palo Stone
Eliza Husser Cave	Rev. Dr. William K. Fox	Jean Muir	
Eliza Husser Cave	Ernest and Janice Newborn	Dr. Ray and Anne Nixon	William and Reubena Fox
Eliza Husser Cave	Oscar Haynes	Joan B. Parham	Norman S. Ellington
Patricia Clark	Ernest and Janice Newborn	Linny Parker	
Shirley D. Compton	Dr. John R. Compton, Sr.	Norman and May Reed	Rev. Dr. John R. Foulkes
Katherine Fox Cunningham		Barry and Patti Robinson	Oscar Haynes
William A. and Linda Lou Curwood	Oscar Haynes	Norweida R. Spencer	Ruth P. Hobbs
Phillip N. Dare		Jennifer Strickland	Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty
Ronald and Deniese Degges		Deborah R. Thompson	
Norman and Marilyn Fiddmont	Oscar and Joan Bell Haynes	Neil and Sandy Topliffe	Norman Ellington
John and Marilyn Foulkes		Elder William A. Vance	Dr. R. H. Peoples
Ms. Ina M. Green	Dr. J. Thomas Johnson	Mary L. Vaughn	
John and Kirby Hughes Gould	Revs. Norman and Marilyn Fiddmont	Rev. Dr. Harold Keith Watkins	Ernest and Janice Newborn
Dick and Mindy Hamm		Rick Lowery and Sharon Watkins	Dr. Robert A. Thomas
Barbara B. Harris	Rev. And Mrs. Fulton T. Barnett, Sr.	Mr. Gary W. White	Rev. Samuel W. Hylton, Jr
Eld. Arnold G. Hayes		Deacon Lillie Wiggins	Elder Annette Jackson
		Deacon Lillie Wiggins	Elder Ernest Baugh, Sr

If we have overlooked your contribution, please contact us so that we may correct the error

THE OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE BOARD ANNOUNCES "EIGHTY EIGHTY PLUS" NEW RECOGNITION PROGRAM TO HONOR SERVANT LEADERS 80 YEARS & OLDER

...let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 5:16 (NIV)

What if the Grapevine would identify denomination retired servant leaders who reflect this scripture: *They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming "The Lord is upright; he is my Rock..."* Psalm 92:14 (NIV)

In anticipation, of the Grapevine's 30th Anniversary, February 2021, the Board of Directors recently approved ***Eighty Eighty Plus***, a new Servant Leader Recognition Program. They also approved induction of three persons into the Programs's first class. The Board thought it would be fitting and proper to thank and honor the following servant leaders who have provided exceptional service to the Grapevine, in addition to their other extraordinary pursuits.

It is with deep gratitude and a spirit of celebration that the Board introduces the inductees of the 2021 Class of ***Eighty Eighty Plus***: Centenarian Ruth Powell Hobbs, Grapevine Board Member Emerita; Reverend Claude Odell Maples, former Grapevine Board Member and Interim Pastor of Warren Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Dallas, Texas; and Rev. Dr. John R. Foulkes, Sr., Publisher/Executive Editor of The Oldtimers' Grapevine Newsletter.

These inductees "still bear fruit" beyond their 80th birthday, as reflected in their resilience in the face of challenges; their practice of habits that promote healthy aging; and their thirst for self-improvement and life-long learning. Above all else, the evidence of the fruit they bear is reflected in their humility and unselfish service to others.

These inductees are generous and joyful in sharing their gifts with others. Their volunteer activities and involvements make a difference in their congregations and the community. They display a spirit and commitment to family and friends that reflect love, support and caring. These inductees inspire and motivate others. They truly "let their light shine;" doing good deeds, not for acclaim or fortune; but as a way to help others and to glorify God.

You might say: "I know older adults, 80 years or older, in the denomination, who are exceptional servant leaders - much like your first class of ***Eighty Eighty Plus*** inductees. If so, the Grapevine Board would encourage you to nominate them for induction into future classes of ***Eighty Eighty Plus***, which is an annual Program of Recognition. In 2022 and beyond, the Board looks forward to sharing the profiles of local servant leaders, from around the country, who continue to serve, who continue to support

others, and who continue to be role models for positive and successful aging.

Eighty Eighty Plus 2021 Class Profiles

Ruth Powell Hobbs



On February 18, 2021 Ruth Powell Hobbs will celebrate her 106th birthday; what many would consider a significant and unlikely milestone to achieve. When asked how she feels about her forthcoming birthday; Ruth dryly replied: "*It's another birthday.*" This sober response does not reflect a lack of appreciation for her many years on this earth; but rather Ruth is telling us that any next birthday is significant - a gift from God, whatever age we are becoming.

"Stay involved" is a key to successful aging, according to Ruth Hobbs. She says our focus should be on "what we can do", and how we can get the most out of each day. There is nothing to be gained by complaining about what we can no longer do or lamenting what we have lost. We must be thankful for what we have and squeeze the most out of every day.

Ruth P. Hobbs, former educator, lives in Jackson, Mississippi with her daughter Falvia, and her son-in-law Charles. Falvia described her mother's influence: "Growing up Mother stressed the importance of "being involved" and never giving up." She credits her mother with inspiring her: "To live as long as you are alive." Her advice to young people: "Read the scriptures. Read the Bible." The Twenty-third Psalm, is one of Ruth's favorite scriptures.

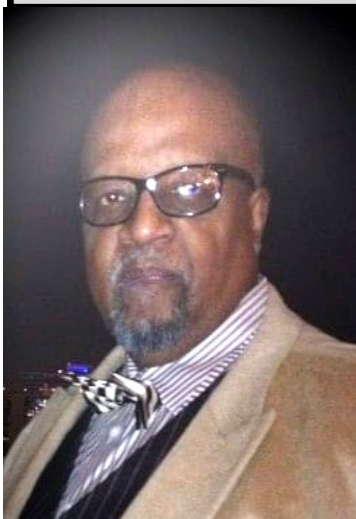
Prior to the pandemic Ruth's level of community involvement was extensive, particularly for a centenarian: member of three Bible Study groups, one of which she founded at her previous retirement community: Worship Leader for the Retired Teachers Association; board member of The Oldtimers' Grapevine; and board member of Southern Christian Services for Children & Youth (SCSCY), an agency she helped found over 27 years ago. Ruth was a regular attendee at her church and she looks forward to church attendance once she is vaccinated and it is safe to do so.

Even with the pandemic, her involvement and service continue. Ruth is now Board Member Emeritus of SCSCY; yet she has continued her annual Christmas Fund Campaign, raising \$2000.00 for SCSCY in December 2020. As Board Member Emerita of The Oldtimer's Grapevine she continues to support the ministry financially and she shares her creativity with Grapevine readers through poems and articles. Her most recent submission is in the September-December 2020 issue of the Newsletter.

"Stay connected" is another key to successful aging for Ruth. During the pandemic, she makes it a point to call family and friends on a daily basis. These exchanges are like a "shot in the arm" that make her feel better and confirm her loving network. She looks forward to family get-togethers in her home once the pandemic is over.

Community Involvement...Social Connection...Service... Ruth Powell Hobbs, a life well-lived. We thank you, and we celebrate you. May you continue to "let your light shine." To God be the Glory!

Reverend Claude Odell Maples



The Reverend Claude Odell Maples epitomizes the saying: "If you love what you do, you never work a day in your life." Prior to and after retirement, his active involvement in ministry at the local, regional and national levels indicate what happens when an obedient servant leader follows God's calling on his life to be a blessing to family and others.

As we take a look at Rev. Maples' rich and distinguished religious career prior to retire-

ment, it is possible only to mention a few of his positions. These positions reflect the breadth and depth of his impact: Chaplain and Religious Professor at Jarvis Christian College; Residential Chaplain in Clinical Pastoral Educational Leadership at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas; Adjunct Professor at Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth; and Senior Pastor of two Disciples of Christ churches - Denley Drive Christian Church and Romine Avenue Christian Church. At his core, Rev. Maples is a Pastor, a shepherd of his flock, as reflected in his current position as Interim Pastor of Warren Ave. Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Rev. Maples is a member of East Dallas Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He lives in Dallas, Texas with his beloved wife and life partner, Patricia Baggett Maples. The Maples are the proud grandparents of Preston Lawrence, 18 years and Tyler Matthew, 16 years. Stephanie, the Maples' daughter and her husband David Russakov are the proud parents of these beloved grandchildren, with

whom the Maples enjoy spending time - along with family pets Kirby and Buddy.

Post retirement Rev. Maples continues in an active and distinguished volunteer role in the church and community. To mention a few involvements: Board Chair of the Greater Dallas Pastoral Committee Community of Churches; Committee Member of Southwestern Regional Committee on the Ministry; Executive Committee Member of the Interdenominational Ministers Alliance of Greater Dallas; Coordinator of the Dallas Affiliate of the Congress of National Black Churches; Mayoral Appointed Task Force Member - 20 Year Goals for Dallas: Subcommittee for the Quality of the Citizenry; and Board Member of the Dallas South Park YMCA ; St. Phillips School & Community Center; and Dallas Black Dance Theatre.

With such a busy lifestyle, Rev. Maples finds encouragement in this scripture: "*All things work together for the good...according to His Purpose.*" To unwind, he turns to opera for rest and renewal. To encourage you, Rev. Maples says: "*Be patient God is not finished with you yet.*"

Pastor...A lifetime of generous and devoted service to church and community...Family Man... Reverend Claude Odell Maples, a life well-lived. We thank you, and we celebrate you. May you continue to "let your light shine." To God be the Glory!

Dr. John Richard Foulkes

Dr. John Richard Foulkes, a native of Chicago, IL, was ordained at the Berean Baptist Church in 1963. He served that church as Associate Pastor before being called to serve the Le-Clair Bible Fellowship as Assistant Pastor. Dr. Foulkes was called to serve as senior minister of the Parkway Garden Christian Church of Chicago and received standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in 1972. Academic preparation for these ministries began with a Moody Bible Institute Diploma followed by an Associate of Arts Degree from the Chicago City Colleges, a Bachelor and Masters of Science degree in Education from Chicago State University followed by a Doctor of Ministry degree from McCormick Theological Seminary. He was called into general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in 1980 by the Division of Homeland Ministries (DHM) in the Department of Evangelism and Membership as the Director of Special Congregational Services and New Congregation Establishment. In 1986, he was called to the position of Associate General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada and Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation. He retired in 2003 and became the Publisher and Senior editor of the Oldtimers' Grapevine in 2014.

The first part of May Reed's interview with Dr. Foulkes is featured in this edition of the Oldtimers' Grapevine.

A CONVERSATION WITH THE PUBLISHER

By May F. Reed



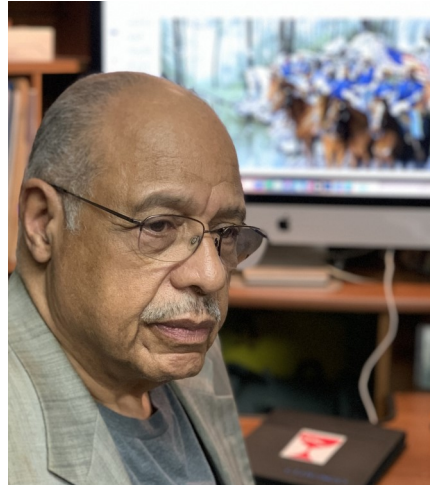
May F. Reed is the gifted poet that has contributed her poetry to the Oldtimers' Grapevine from its beginning and serves on the Grapevine' editorial board. May served as a certified archivist with the Disciples Historical Society, president of the National Convocation's Ministers Wives and Husbands Fellowship and an elder at the New Covenant Christian Church of Nashville

May Reed: Good afternoon Dr. Foulkes. It is my joy and pleasure to be the one who was asked to do this interview with you. Let's begin with your giving us a little history of how the Grapevine came into existence: Whose brainchild was it? When was it, and where was it birthed?

Dr. Foulkes: Many don't know that I am what you might call an intentional disciple. It was when I became the pastor of the Parkway Garden Christian Church in 1972. I had an elder by the name of Sam Dixon, who was a member of Church Extension's Board of Directors and knew all about Disciples. He had been talking about what was going on in our congregation at their board meetings, and all of a sudden I just started seeing people show up that I hadn't seen before and one of those people was Dr. William K. Fox and his wife. They came to worship and he introduced himself to us. When I became active in the Convocation I watched him and saw what he was doing. He was sort of one of those figures that was not aggressive, yet, and still was very pleasant and was causing things to happen. I got a call one day and he asked me, "Would you consider being the director of reconciliation?" I said, "yeah, why don't you send me an application?" But I didn't realize that was the application. So that didn't happen.

I want to begin by saying in this kind of a casual and natural way, Dr. Fox and I formed a relationship, and I identified him as sort of a father figure, so when I was called to the General Staff he was one of those persons that welcomed me in and walked with me. A few years lat-

er he retired and was looking for a person to fill his position. Dr. Wm Hannah filled that position, he had been the one who called me to the General staff. After that I assumed the position. Dr. Fox called me one day and said, "Foulkes, I'm thinking about putting together a newsletter that's directed to the gifts and graces of senior citizens, those of us who are retired, What do you think about that?" I said, "now you can not only do the newsletter, you can do the Convocation newsletter too." He said, "No, I just want to do this newsletter." In that initial conversation I was one of those who talked about the idea before the idea came to fulfillment. Dr. Fox and all he



had done from his work with the committee that analyzed the need for the convention to become part of the entire church – he was always a person of writing. He never just talked about something, he made sure it was written and validated, so it was no secret to me that he would decide in his retirement to begin talking about what was going on in retirement and trying to network together, those persons who were retired. I was really honored for him to ask me what I thought.

May Reed: Where was he living at that time?

Dr. Foulkes: He was in Kansas City living in the Disciples Senior Citizens

Home, still running, riding his bike and doing other things like that. Because of the relationship we had established years earlier as I was this young pastor in Chicago, it was not unusual to have that kind of conversation. Little did I know that one day I'd be trying to handle that which he started.

May Reed: So you've basically given me his objective, his main purpose for starting the Grapevine, for creating this newsletter. So he went ahead and got started, and what year was that?

Dr. Foulkes: 1991, I believe.

May Reed: When exactly did you discuss your taking the editorship of the Grapevine with the previous editor, Oscar Haynes, and what was your response at that time?

Dr. Foulkes: I don't know if "discuss" will properly describe what had happened. Dr. Norma Ellington Twitty called me and said, "We've been talking about asking you to be the publisher/ editor of the Oldtimers Grapevine." So it wasn't a discussion and I recognized when she identified that the other part of the "we" was Oscar Haynes; you see, because Oscar had always been back in the woods someplace or back in the shadows someplace, making sure that I was well, that I was on point; just one of those Uncle figures that you identify. So it wasn't a discussion, it was a matter of Norma, in her elegant way, saying in essence, "Oscar and I sat down and talked about this. We think you'd do well to follow him." And so I didn't have any other option because I'd been doing everything else Oscar asked me to do so I went ahead and jumped into the water, and it's been deep water.

May Reed: And that was what year?

Dr. Foulkes: This was 2013.

May Reed: So, as editor what are some of the things you have wanted to do and want to see happen yet with the Grapevine?

Dr. Foulkes: First of all, I know, as a pastor, if you don't have a regular, constant, and effective way of talking to the people that you care for, you can't effectively care for them. And the reality of the situation is, you don't have a community that you don't talk to. One of my early challenges as Administrative Secretary of the Convocation was that. I think, the first couple of years, I wrote so many newsletters that they had to have some conversation with me about the extent to which I was exhausting the budget. I just know that if there's not regular communication, if you don't talk, if you don't feel, you don't have a community and you really don't have a job. I've got this radical understanding that I've come to realize that the church is God's mystery that He's kept revealed throughout ages through which He's reclaiming His creation unto Himself. And the instruments through which He's doing that have been persons who've come to faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore have been made righteous by that faith. He's given to those, gifts, and through the operation of those gifts the church begins to function and so out of a functioning church his grace should come into being. So as you, quote/unquote, give leadership to, as you serve, so whatever you do with the church you are really functioning with God's mystery. You're really handling God's creation. You're really using the gifts that you have that causes that to happen. Every Christian ought to be just standing back in amazement to see how God uses all of us when we come to church. That does not happen if Christians are not aware of the gifts and the graces trusted in each other - that does not happen. If in some kind of way those gifts and graces can't be identified and talked about, that doesn't happen. If whatever the leadership becomes doesn't grow out of an understanding of those gifts, and those graces therefore it's got to be that lack of

communication. And because of that lack of communication, newsletters such as the Oldtimers' Grapevine are critical to establishing and maintaining that community.

May Reed: I have found the Grapevine to be very informing because so often I'm reading about someone I never met. I never saw them when they were living and didn't know anything about them but now all this information - I have in my hands, and I like that. There have been many personalities and events shared in the pages of the Grapevine throughout the years. Here, recently we have a new stationery that's been specifically designed, the treasurer now sends an official letter to each of our contributors to express our thanks, and a capital campaign has recently been launched and is well underway. Are there any additional things of this nature that you would like to see implemented?

Dr. Foulkes: Well I think the greatest challenge is for the Grapevine to be the Grapevine. We're getting very little information from the grapes on the grapevine. Those persons are in retirement who are witnessing and seeing things in the life of the church. And we're getting very little information from them. A concern of mine is that we are living now, and I think we've always lived, in a society where those persons who are charged with causing society to do well are so invested in what they're doing that they are spending all their energies trying to be effective and trying to do things in an excellent way. Often-times in that attempt to be excellent, person or persons become dependent upon what they see, what they think. Sometimes they don't realize that persons have walked this road before them. In our present society there is quote/unquote, senior saints that are sort of put off to the side, when throughout the biblical record there is this concept of eldership, this concept of wisdom that has been gained by virtue of having walked these paths. Respect for that eldership and therefore conversation with that eldership about what the future is going to

be is critical. So we find ourselves in very stressful environments, working as hard as we can to be effective in those environments, and not feeling comfortable with talking to those who have lived through those environments. And those who have walked that environment, not feeling quite confident in being able to say to younger persons that have followed them that are trying to cause things to happen - "Have you thought about this? What do you think about this?" or as Bill Fox did with me. He didn't come into this environment of studying disciples and necessarily tell me what this meant or what that meant. He didn't say to me - do this, or do that or do the other. He just sort of came along and would say "Well Foulkes, What do you think about so-and-so? And in that conversation where his wisdom was put together with my need of knowledge and lack of experience, I gained so much. My concern for the Grapevine is that there's all of this wisdom that is literally untapped. If there is any way, whatever the barriers are, to make that wisdom available, my concern would be to enable that. We celebrate in "For Whom the Bell Tolls" the life of our brothers and sisters who have gone on to be with the Lord. But even in that, we don't get the opportunity to uncover the wisdom that was present with that person or that continued to live on by virtue of the strength of what they'd come to understand in their journey. And that's a real challenging issue. I continue to pray about it.



[TO BE CONTINUED]

BEGINNING A NEW YEAR FROM THE GMP

Dear Disciples:

Here at the beginning of a new year, there is no doubt that our church – as much of the rest of the world – is in a wilderness season. We find ourselves wandering, longing for the comfort of what we once knew and wondering what the future holds.

I believe that this moment, like all wilderness moments, holds great opportunity for us, if we are brave enough to imagine what might be. I want to invite you to imagine with me.

Several intertwining crises present themselves in this moment, each with a particular opportunity: The pandemic, which has caused the cancellation of our General Assembly and forced so many churches out of their buildings, provides an opportunity to re-envision what church looks like in all expressions and to explore what it means to be a church sent out.

The racial justice reckoning happening across the United States gives us an opportunity to revisit our commitment to be a pro-reconciling/anti-racist church; that is, to be the church we say we are.

The economic crisis, in which the wealth gap is widening and leaving many without access to resources, gives us an opportunity to discern how we will love and serve our neighbors, even as we work toward a more just economy for all.

The political unrest in the context of American democracy gives us an opportunity to explore what it means to be witnesses to the story of Jesus in a time of such division and change.

And the ever-present crisis of climate change provides an opportunity to reaffirm our call to care for God's good creation, even as we confess and repent our participation in its destruction.

In this moment, then, our calling is clear. As a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world, we are called to imagine a church that bears witness to God's limitless love. We will need to act with courage. We will need to give ourselves permission to change, to let go of processes and structures and practices that don't serve us well any longer. We will need to let go of fear – the fear of what might happen if we do change, and the fear of the unknown future.

I'd like to share with you some ways we can live into this calling this year by focusing on four key areas: covenant, story, tools, and practice.

Covenant: The Governance Committee of the General Board is doing some important work exploring what it means to live in covenant. They've been reflecting on the theological foundations of our governing documents, reviewing possible revisions to the Design, and reexamining how we make decisions and how we speak as a church. As we prepare to hear more about this work later this year, **I hope you will pray for those who are discerning a way forward, and for your congregation as it lives in covenant with the whole church.**

Story: It is time for us to shape a new narrative for ourselves, particularly in terms of what we see when we imagine ourselves an anti-racist church. Establishing common values and practices lived out in individual contexts will help us shape a vision of a shared future. Every day we must tell our story, share the good news, and make decisions that hold us accountable to be the church we say we are. In the coming months, I will be sharing ideas and inviting others into conversation with me, as together we imagine our new story. **Please make sure you're signed up for my *Dear Disciples* newsletter and follow Disciples social media so you won't miss these opportunities to imagine with me.**



Tools: There are some new tools already in the works that will help us do ministry together. I hope you have heard about Alex, a new Disciples database that will eventually replace the yearbook. It will provide a *real-time* directory and help us track churchwide data trends and help our regional and general expressions support congregations more effectively. New communication tools are being developed as well; you can now sign up for email newsletters that bring you the news you want, whether that's updates on justice efforts, messages from me, news from the whole church, or resources particularly for pastors. In addition, increased collaboration among regional and general ministries are helping us work in covenant with one another. Building relationships across the church, across laity and clergy, and across generations will be key to infusing our church with new energy as we all share our gifts in ministry. **You can learn more about Alex at disciples.org where you can also sign up for newsletters and connect with ministries across the church.**

Finally, practice: Grounded in spiritual growth and development, we begin with love, letting love lead us into action testifying to the church we say we are. Our faith practices help us understand that love: We share communion at the Lord's Table as an expression of God's expansive welcome. We practice baptism and proclaim that we walk in new life. We study and share the ancient sto-

ries that point to a new world. We pray together, a practice that reminds us that we are not alone, that we are created and loved by God. We serve our neighbors, acknowledging that we are connected to each other and that we are called to live not for ourselves but for the sake of the world. **I hope, as we move into this new year, that you will stay connected to your local congregation, and that you will embrace the practices of our faith that give you life.**

Church, we are called to imagine a new world. We are called to imagine God's reign fully come, and to discern how we can participate in making it so. We call ourselves Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a frag-

mented world. **It is time for us to be the church we say we are: to seize the opportunity of this wilderness moment and to move forward with courage, permission to change, and freedom from fear, to imagine a church that bears witness to God's limitless love.**

I'm glad to be in ministry with you.

Rev. Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens

General Minister and President

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada

PRACTICE WELLNESS: GIVING GRATITUDE AND THANKS AS A DAILY PRACTICE



Rejoice in the Lord always; I will say it again: Rejoice! Philippians 4:4 NIV

As Christians we have been taught that giving thanks and being grateful are given and unquestionable practices that we all should follow. As I write this message, I am reminded that we should be giving thanks for all the blessings we have received throughout the year.

Numerous reminders come across my computer screen on the internet and by email. Other reminders come by way of television, radio, people around me, even when I go out to the store. Although it is not really a problem for me, the avalanche of reminders sometimes annoying.

This year instead of making resolutions, I decided to focus on making it a habit of giving gratitude and thanks as a daily habit. I had come across some research that promoted and touted the health benefits on giving gratitude and thanks. After reading this my curiosity peaked, so I begun a new tradition.

Now with constant reminders all around me I thought it was worth looking into the health benefits of gratitude and gratefulness a little more. Many of us tend to follow traditions or status quo just because that is the way we have always done it. Unfortunately, when we do this the tradition does not become special and begins to lose its value.

I looked up the definition and here is what I found. According to Wikipedia: Gratitude, thankfulness, or grateful₁₀

ness comes from the Latin word "Gratus" which is expressed when something is "pleasing or thankful. It is a positive response given by a recipient of gifts, help favors or other expressions of generosity."

The healthy benefits of being grateful are enormous according to scientific studies (happierhuman.com). This site outlines the benefits that touched our lives in many areas including our, social, emotional, physical, personal, and even professional life. When we give gratitude, we are happier, less self-centered, less materialistic, and are more resilient. We are even friendly, more relaxed, make better decisions, and are more productive. If you are still not convinced, to put the icing on the cake we become spiritual. Many religions are based on gratitude.

Why not make gratitude a daily practice? Start now today, in 365 days you will be a better person. Be an example to your children and grandchildren. It will reinforce, model, and encourage pro-social behaviors, and discourage disruptive behavior for all the people around you.

GOD WANTS YOU HEALED;

GOD WANTS YOU WHOLE.

Be Well! God's Be-Love!

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God." Philippians 4:6 NIV

Rev. Dr. Betty M. Green
Associate Minister,
Woodland Christian Church,
Columbus Ohio

POET'S CORNER by May F. Reed

I never really liked the lullaby 'Rock-A-Bye Baby' for I imagines the little babe falling and being hurt, so I decided to write this rendition:

ROCK-A-BYE BABY NOW

Rock-a-bye baby in mama's lap
Of warmth and comfort
There's never a lack.
When mama rises to lay baby down,
Babe safely sleeping – makes nary a sound.
Rock-a-bye, oh, rock-a-bye baby
Rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye now.
Rock-a-bye, oh rock-a-bye baby
Rock-a-bye, oh, rock-a-bye now.
Rock-a-bye baby now.

May Reed -January 13, 2021



DID YOU EVER HAVE A D.I.D. DAY

<Down In the Dumps>

To begin with, you didn't get to finish something you really needed to do; you forgot about an event that was supposed to happen that you wanted to be a part of; you ran out of eggs and had to bake a cake for the church dinner so now you needed to go to the

store again; you meant to wash your hair but something came up unexpectedly and now you'll have to wash it tomorrow or the day after; Sister Bloom called last night to ask you to take the minutes at the Board meeting Saturday because her folks are coming and she won't be able to come to the meeting. For a moment you feel "Down In the Dumps." OR, you may not have ever had a D.I.D. Day. Maybe you are one who is prone to keep in mind about who-and-whose you are, which causes you to stay aglow and lighted up like a luster gem. Somehow you manage to keep going, working, singing and smiling. Your countenance seems to brighten up those around you -- they see how you radiate warmth and calm, much like a precious, lively stone. It has been said that a Saint is someone whom the light shines through. We all can try a little harder to show a conciliatory, reconciling nature to others. So what if you didn't get to finish something you needed to do; so you forgot about an event you wanted to attend; and you probably had to get something else besides eggs at the store; one more day without washing your hair shouldn't matter too

much; and Sister Bloom has always faithfully attended the Board meetings. So, keep smiling, shining. Sometimes others are depending on you for the inspiration they need which you can always exude to help folk. Try being a human Light House for others.

LIFE IS A CLASS ROOM

There is life in the Word but many fail to consult The Book, and we muddle about in a dilemma over a thing until it begins to tear at our soul. We keep letting a happening that we can't change to absorb our thoughts. We trouble our souls – putting our spirit in turmoil and calamity about a thing. We don't have to do this, be this way, but we often just want to hold on to a thing that we ought let go. We nurse and cradle an affliction till it begins to weigh us down, and some become bitter, resentful and mean. It stunts our spiritual growth; debilitates our ability to perceive and receive spiritual instruction, spiritual understanding. When we starve our souls of Godly nourishment and fail to nurture our mind we begin to build up an inability to hear "God's still, small voice" trying to speak to our souls. Every where we see the eroding, deteriorating conditions of the world; why is that? Like the Pharisees, they prided themselves in KEEPING THE LAW -YET they REJECTED JESUS. New laws are written everyday and when one doesn't work for the powers that be, then another law is written to supersede it, change it, and the beat goes on. We must not let anything or anyone distract or take away God's benevolent presence in our lives. AMEN



A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NIGHT

by Cynthia Hibbler



May,
Christmas is coming.
Have you been nice?
Someone is checking
your blessing lists
more than twice.
That someone is Jesus Christ.

“Want to hear a Special Christmas Story?”

“Long ago a little girl prayed for Jesus’ Star to guide Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Santa to her house. It was next to a dusty alley with loud men on lumbering garbage trucks and loud clanging garbage cans. The two-bedroom ranch house was once a long shed that was converted into a cozy home with a father, mother and their three children. She noticed her friends and family lived on the main streets like Belmont and Sheffield. Fear and dismay surrounded her. Was her address on Santa’s list of houses to visit? Would he fly over her to Pershing Street?

On Christmas Eve when she was almost asleep, she heard bells ringing in the swirling winter air. She gently got out of her bed to follow the tinkling sound. Small fingers slightly move a sheet covering the doorway to the bedroom. Her drooping eyes saw Santa outside looking in the front room window. He watched the mother and smiled as she put a chatty doll wrapped in bright shiny paper under a white glistening twelve-inch Christmas tree. It was covered with beautiful colors of twinkling bulbs. “Santa found me!!” Her lips absent of sound, mouthed the words with heavy eye lids and a wide stretched mute yawn. She tumbled into the bed with her warm sister. Santa knew the mother had worked extralong hours after her husband died to give her children something special for Christmas.

Santa, the Jolly Fellow with a stomach that jiggled like a bowl full of red homemade jelly had a real name. It was Saint Nicholas. His white fur trimmed clothes began to melt away in the frigid cold to reveal his true identity. He was a priest, a man called by God to extend kindness, gifts and love to all people especially His beloved children. Saint Nick told the people God loved them. During his daily walk in his neighborhood, he spoke to little ones of a majestic Star and the Three Wise Men bearing precious gifts for a babe born in a manger. As he preached on the street corners, he told his listeners the babe’s name was Jesus. The child born of the Virgin Mary would grow up to become a carpenter, the King of kings and Savior of the world.

Hi In his heart, Saint Nick saw the little girl was fast asleep with a smile in her bed. Slices of sweet pie were dancing around her head. He wanted a delicious slice too. Walking back to his reindeers, Father Christmas decided to take a detour and walk along the streets in her community Haughville. He admired the festive lights in the windows and blessed every house and every soul living in the house. Father Christmas knew the greatest gift of all has been given, the Lord Jesus Christ. “JOY to the World the Lord has Come” he sung briskly with the heavenly cherubs singing in his hand-held red radio.

When Father Christmas finished his prayers and blessings he returned to the girl’s yard where he parked Rudolf and the other reindeers near the cherry tree. The man of God with a long white beard jumped into his empty sleigh. He lifted his weathered strong arms to the Holy One, Our Redeemer, Our Savior Jesus Christ in grateful praise.

“Ho, Ho, Holy” he shouted with the leather rein in his hands. “Ho, Ho, Holy, Holy, Holy and wonderful is the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY” he belted with joy. With the wink of an eye, the reindeers whisked Saint Nicholas up into the dark icy sky. He swung around all of the houses, churches and schools in her quaint neighborhood to pray one more prayer for God’s protection, peace and goodwill toward men. Rudolf’s red nose beamed as he led Santa and his sleigh above the clouds. A waiting Star will guide them safely home.

May, did you like my childhood Christmas story?

Christmas is coming,
I have tried to be nice,
Daily seek to do what is right,
but sometimes I miss
the mark by a big, gigantic mite.
Someone is checking
our needs list
much more than twice.
The wonderful someone is
Emmanuel
The King of kings
The Lord of lords
Mighty Prince of Peace
The Lamb of God
The Mighty Everlasting Father
Our Friend to the End
Jesus Christ.

May F. Reed is the Poet in Residence at the *The Oldtimer’s Grapevine* Newsletter D.O.C 2020



Poor People's Campaign

A NATIONAL CALL for MORAL REVIVAL

If America does not address what's happening with visionary social and economic policy, the health and well-being of the nation is at stake....What we need is long-term economic policy that establishes justice, promotes the general welfare, rejects decades of austerity and builds strong social programs that lift society from below."

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis, Shailly Gupta Barnes and Josh Bivens,

"Moral Policy = Good Economics"

On behalf of the 140 million poor and low-income people in the country, the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival – and our 45 state coordinating committees, thousands of religious leaders, scholars, economists, advocates and hundreds of supporting organizations – insists that the following policies from the Poor People's Jubilee Platform take precedence during the first 50-100 days of the new administration and 117th Congress.

Our 14 Policy Priorities:

1. Enact comprehensive, free and just COVID-19 relief:

This relief must prioritize the needs of essential workers, people of color and poor and low-income people who have been hit hardest in this pandemic, including:

- Mandate the collection, monitoring and reporting of the impact of the pandemic by race, ethnicity, income, occupation and geography and in high risk congregate settings;
- Equitable and free COVID-19 testing, treatment and quality care, including mental health care and safely tested vaccines, regardless of income, age, ability, documentation status, insured status or any other factor; first access to the vaccines must be guaranteed to low-wage frontline workers, as well as health workers, the elderly and most vulnerable;

- A targeted plan to guarantee access and education around the safety and efficacy of vaccines, especially for poor and low-income communities;
- A guaranteed and adequate income, including rapid and direct payments to all low-wage and temporary workers for the duration of the crisis;
- A national rent freeze and mortgage moratorium, as well as a national moratorium on utilities' shut offs, without credit penalties;
- Increase the impact of food and economic security programs like SNAP, WIC, CTC and EITC by raising the minimum allocations and expanding eligibility;
- Resources to keep all rural hospitals and community health centers open, with an infusion of resources to Indian Health Services;
- Permanent protections for Social Security, SSI, SSDI, Medicare and Medicaid;
- Emergency OSHA standards for health workers, first responders and anyone else in frontline positions;
- Protections for people in mental health facilities, prisons, detention centers, juvenile detention centers and other congregate settings;
- Suspension of all CBP and ICE enforcement and ensuring all emergency provisions are made available to immigrants, including undocumented people;
- Increased support for public schools to provide continuous, equitable and quality remote learning access for the duration of any school closures, including for children with disabilities, and for schools to continue to provide social services for qualifying children and families;
- Student debt relief

These measures must remain in place until the economy recovers from the bottom up

and we are guaranteed health care, housing, and adequate incomes for all.

2. **Guarantee quality health care for all, regardless of any pre-existing conditions**
3. **Raise the minimum wage to \$15 / hour immediately:**
4. **Update the poverty measure:**
5. **Guarantee quality housing for all:**
6. **Enact a federal jobs program to build up investments, infrastructure, public institutions, climate resilience, energy efficiency and socially beneficial industries and jobs in poor and low-income communities:**
7. **Protect and expand voting rights and civil rights:**
8. **Guarantee safe, quality and equitable public education, with supports for protection against re-segregation:**
9. **Comprehensive and just immigration reform:**
10. **Ensure all of the rights of indigenous peoples:**
11. **Enact fair taxes:**
12. **Use the power of executive orders:**
13. **Redirect the bloated Pentagon budget towards these priorities as matters of national security:**
14. **Work with the Poor People's Campaign to establish a permanent Presidential Council to advocate for this bold agenda:**

We are encouraged by the commitment of President-elect Biden to take these issues seriously. When he joined the Moral Monday Mass Assembly on the voting power of the poor on September 14 in front of over 1 million viewers, Biden said that under his presidency, "ending poverty will not just be an aspiration, it will be a theory of change — to build a new economy that includes everyone, where we reward hard work, we care for the most vulnerable among us, we release the potential of all our children, and protect the planet."

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

ROBERT BATES



Robert Bates died on December 8, 2020, in Indianapolis, IN.

Robert was born on September 22, 1928, in Shanghai, China to M.S. Bates and Lilliath (Robbins) Bates.

Robert (Bob) attended high school in Connecticut and Pennsylvania. He completed his undergraduate studies at Hiram College in Hiram, Ohio in 1950 and then continued his studies at the University of Chicago

where he would complete his B.D., M.A., and Ph. D. degrees. His Ph.D. degree, completed in 1974, focused on Sri Lanka and the Sinhalese-Tamil conflict. While studying in Chicago, Bob also spent a year working in urban ministry and was ordained in June of 1953 at University Church in Chicago.

In 1957 Bob married Margaret Sue Gillespie (Sue) and the two were appointed by the United Christian Missionary Society, a predecessor mission body to what is today Global Ministries, to serve in India as Mission Co-workers. From 1957 until 1960, Bob and Sue worked alongside the Student Christian Movement of India and the World Student Christian Federation in Sri Lanka. From 1966 until 1970 Bob taught at Leonard Theological College in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, India.

When the Bates returned to the United States, Bob completed work on his dissertation at the University of Chicago and took a faculty position at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana. Bob served as an assistant professor of Church and Urban Community from 1972 to 1976. From 1977 to 1978, he directed the *Survey of Undergraduate Religious Studies in Colleges and Universities of Indiana*.

In 1978, Bob began work as the Executive Secretary for the Department of Interpretation and Personnel of the Division of Overseas Ministries. He served in this role until 1983 when he became the Executive Secretary of the Department of East Asia and the Pacific of the Division of Overseas Ministries, a role he served in until 1993 when

he retired.

In retirement, the Bates served in the first group of Regional Elders for the Christian Church in Indiana. Bob and Sue were active also in the Greater Indianapolis Disciple Area ministers' group. Later, they would become members at Allisonville Christian Church after University Park Christian Church ended its visible ministry.

THE REV DR. JULIA BROGDON

Dr. Julia M Brogdon, 82, of Cleveland Heights, Ohio departed this life Sunday, January 17, 2021 at her residence.

She was born September 27, 1938 in Warren, Ohio, the daughter of Laura Williams-Lawson and Curry Brogdon. She was reared in a loving home with her mother and stepfather, Richard Lawson; two sisters, Ann Gueringer and Gladys Dotson who preceded her in death.



She graduated from Warren G. Harding High School and received her graduate degrees from Wilberforce University (BA), Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary (MA Christian Education) and her doctorate from Chicago Theological Seminary (Pastoral Care and Counseling). She also did coursework at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Case Western Reserve University.

Dr. Julia was licensed and ordained in the gospel ministry, pastoring a loving congregation at Freedom Christian Church in East Cleveland, Ohio for over 20 years, until retiring. She later joined and served at All Nations Deliverance Ministry under the pastorate of Gwendolyn McCurry. She also served as a principal in the Cleveland School District and was Dean and Facilitator for the International School of Ministry which was later organized under the name of International Theological World Center.

She loved her family and adored her sisters and would always talk about her nieces and nephews and their accomplishments. Family was important to her and she always held them in her heart and in prayer. Over the years she went on mission trips to Africa, Jamaica, Haiti and

more. She was rich in social and cultural history and remained an activist at heart, championing for civil rights and social justice.

MELVIN DEAN BUFFINGTON



Dean Buffington was born November 3, 1940 in Custer, South Dakota and passed away on December 21, 2020 at St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise, just seven weeks after celebrating his 80th birthday.

During his high school and college days, Dean worked for the Albertson's poultry plant. He loved working for Joe Albertson and appreciated

the opportunity to have a job that could fit his school and baseball schedules. After graduating from the College of Idaho in 1963 with BAs in Accounting and Economics, he enrolled in law school at Willamette University and earned his Doctor of Jurisprudence in 1966.

While working at the bank in Boise, Dean met the love of his life, Judy Irving, who had recently transferred from Emmett to the Boise Main Branch. Dean and Judy had so much in common, they were married a few months after meeting and maintained their union for fifty three years. They had two daughters, Julene (Julie) and Denise.

Dean's professional activities included membership in The Idaho State Bar Association, The Boise Estate Planning Council, The American Bankers Association, The Idaho Bankers Association, Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce, and The Associated Taxpayers of Idaho, Inc. He chaired or held leadership roles in most of these organizations.

Dean and Judy were members of Red Rock Christian Church. Dean served as Elder, Deacon and treasurer and on numerous committees. He also served on the Christian Church Foundation Board based in Indianapolis as well as the Pension Fund of the Christian Church. Dean was a person of strong faith and character. He carried his values with him every day. Dean always treated others with respect and took the time to let others know how much he cared.

THE REV. DR. PAUL A. CROW, JR

The Rev. Dr. Paul A. Crow, Jr., a distinguished leader in the worldwide Ecumenical movement, passed away on January 23, 2021 at the age of 89. Dr. Crow was born in Birmingham, AL on November 17, 1931 to parents, Beulah (Parker) and Paul A. Crow, Sr. He graduated from Lanett High School (AL) and went on to earn a B.S. in

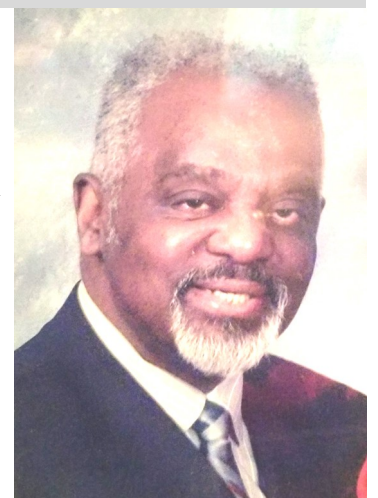
Chemistry from the University of Alabama, a BD from the Lexington Theological Seminary and a S.T.M and Ph.D. from the Hartford Seminary. Post-Doctoral study took him to Oxford University, the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey and the University of Geneva. Dr. Crow was an ordained minister of the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ and had a career that included congregational ministry; Professor of Church History; General Secretary, Consultation on Church Union and President, Council on Christian unity. His literary life included six books and over 300 articles and chapters.

For thirty years, he served in various aspects of the World Council of Churches: as a member of the Faith and Order Commission, The Central Committee and Moderator of the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey. Among renowned church leaders, he gave broad, distinguished and passionate leadership to the Ecumenical movement. The unity of Christ's Church was his "polar star" and tradition.



THE REV. DR. GERALD CUNNINGHAM

Gerald Cunningham was born in St. Louis, Missouri to parents, Coy Cunningham and Caroline Moffett Cunningham on January 4, 1936. In October of 1936, Gerald and his twin brother, James (Jimmy) lost their mother and at age two went into foster care with the Curley family. By age 8, Jerry and his brother lost a second mother with the death of Ms. Curley. Gerald Cunningham 2.jpg



However, they continued to be raised by the Curley family until graduation from Washington Technical High School. Mentored by Rev. Dr. William K. Fox and Norman Ellington at Centennial Christian Church, Jerry began to consider a life in ministry.

Living in St. Louis, Jerry cultivated those things which would influence the rest of his life, his religious and social views and his love for the arts, all types of music, classical and jazz being his favorites and all types of art and litera-

ture. At age 17, Jerry and Jimmy met their biological family, the Cunningham family and learned about his older sister and two older brothers. Although never living in the same household, amazingly all of the Cunningham siblings had a love of the arts, three of them making a career of jazz music, writing and art. After high school completing high school, Jerry worked in St. Louis and then left for Indianapolis, IN to study religion at Butler University. While in college, Jerry became an active member of Second Christian Church and after graduation in 1960, he served as Youth Director and worked as worked at Broadway Center, an inner-city mission for the Christian Church.

In December 1961, Jerry moved to Lexington, KY to begin his first pastorate at Chandler Memorial Congregational Church. He also began studies for his Master's Degree in Divinity at the College of the Bible, now Lexington Theological Seminary. While in Lexington, Jerry got heavily involved in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the NAACP and participated in the lunch counter sit-ins (Phoenix Hotel.) and social action activities. After Martin Luther King's call to clergy after Bloody Sunday. On March 21, 1965, Jerry and 600 others marched successfully from Selma to Montgomery, in a 54 mile, 4-day March to gain voting rights for Alabama's minority citizens. These events were the beginning of his desire to become an activist. He continued his work as Chairman of the Lexington Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) and with the NAAP.

Jerry completed his Divinity degree realizing that he was being led to use his ministry gifts not as a church pastor but as an activist, he sought to fulfill that ministry. In September of 1964, Jerry was ordained as a minister of the Christian Church at Second Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, where Rev. R.H. Peoples served as pastor. Given an opportunity to work in the ministry of Church and Society (now Homeland Ministries) for the National Office of the Christian Church, Jerry moved back to Indianapolis to pursue his social activism ministry in 1964. His responsibility included activities surrounding response of the Christian church to justice ministries including civil rights, gender rights, gun rights, policing, criminal justice and social action.

In September of 1968, in Indianapolis, Jerry married Mary Caudle Hurt and became a father to her three children, Roderick, James Michael and Kimberly. From this union the couple's son Malcolm Coy Cunningham was born. At the time Jerry was Director of Racial Justice Ministries in the Disciples' national headquarters. The centerpiece of the work was his Church Action for Just Communities (CASJC) Network. The network grew out of the activism of the 1960s, when many mainline congregations joined civil rights leaders to protest the inequities of the criminal justice system and advocate for reform.

Jerry was appointed to the City of Indianapolis, Board of Public Safety for a several years where he advocated for the minorities, later being fired by the Mayor for his advocacy. In recognition of his work in criminal justice and social action, Jerry received an honorary Doctoral Degree from Martin University, presented by President Boniface Hardin. During his career, Jerry facilitated many events including Senator Robert Kennedy visit to Indianapolis to speak on April 4, 1968, coinciding with the death of Dr. Martin Luther King's. His work with many advocacy groups both secular and non-secular is known both locally and nationally. His work with others is chronicled in his book, "Having My Say - Gerald Cunningham Reflections on Justice Ministries - 1969 -1999".

In 1992, Jerry married Katherine Fox Tourner at Light of the World Christian Church. During sixty years in Indianapolis, Jerry held membership in several churches including Witherspoon Presbyterian, Light of the World and Covenant Community Church, where he was a founding member

DORIS MARIE LEWIS

Doris Marie Franklin was born on November 5, 1930, in Ypsilanti, Michigan. She was the sixth child and first daughter born to Anna and Charles Arthur Franklin. Doris attended Ypsilanti Public schools.

In her senior year of high school, Doris married her childhood sweetheart, William Cur-



tis Leonard (Milford) on July 31, 1948. To this covenant union, eleven children were born. In 1956, Doris accepted Christ as her Lord and Savior at Mt. Olive Church of God in Christ in Ypsilanti, Michigan under the pastoral leadership of Elder Charles Barksdale.

Both Doris and William encouraged their children to study and dinnertime was set aside as a place for discussion of school and politics. Doris always made certain that her children studied and memorized their Bible verses for their Saturday Sunshine Band classes. Doris was a well-studied and dedicated Bible student and would later become one of the Wednesday evening Bible Band teachers at Mt. Olive Church of God in Christ, Ypsilanti, Michigan. She faithfully served on the usher board, the place where she could watch her children during Sunday morning worship service. In 1978, Doris' beloved husband passed away after an extensive cardiac illness. She decided to do something different and took a job at Gilbert Convalescent Home. Later she would meet and marry Guy Lewis, a deacon at New Bethel Church of God in Christ, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

EVELYN M. LOWERY



Evelyn Maggie Lowery, 93. Beloved mother passed away on November 30, 2020. Sister Lowery was the mother of The Rev. Brenda Cardwel, went to be with the Lord in Nov. 2020.

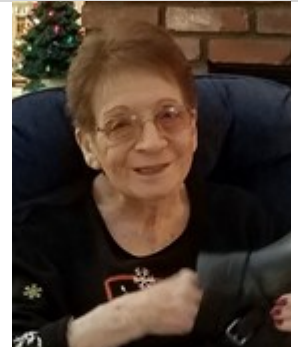
ETHEL ELAINE MACE



Ethel Elaine Mace, 91, passed peacefully at home on December 1, 2020 after a brief illness. Ethel was born to George and Esther (Lowe) Mace on April 22, 1929 in Learned, MS. Education was important to the Mace family and became Ethel's passion and life's work. The youngest daughter of twelve siblings, all of whom preceded her in death, Ethel graduated from Jarvis Christian College, in Hawkins, TX and earned a Master's Degree from Ball State University in Muncie, IN.

Beginning her teaching career at Flanner House, Ethel retired after over 60 years of teaching excellence from the Indianapolis Public Schools. Ethel became a member of Chi Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. in 1958. During 70 years in Indianapolis, Ethel was a member of several church congregations: Central Christian, Faith United Christian, Light of the World (Second) Christian and Witherspoon United Presbyterian. "Life for me has been no crystal stair... but all the time, I've been climbing, and reaching landings and turning corners and sometimes going on in the dark where there is no light."

MARTHA MARTIN



Martha Marie Martin, 89, of Indianapolis, IN, passed away on December 23, 2020. She was born on August 22, 1931 in Savannah, Georgia to Reverend R.L. and Willie Grace Owen, who founded the Morningside Baptist Church of Savannah. She was raised in Savannah and in 1954 married Louis Martin, who served in the US Air Force for 26 years. She retired from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Overseas Ministries in Indianapolis and volunteered at Community Hospital East for 25 years. She was a long-time member of the Post Road Christian Church, where she also volunteered for many years.

She enjoyed her church family, her volunteer work, reading and watching the Dr. Phil Show. She was also skilled at baking cakes, crocheting, making clothes.

MARY E. MITCHELL



Mary Elizabeth Mitchell, 90, of Indianapolis, passed away October 21, 2020. She was born on April 10, 1930, in Huntington, West Virginia to the late George O. and Nelle E. Strachan.

After high school, she went to work in retail, married Don Mitchell, was a wife and mother. She returned to work in accounting as Vice President and Treasurer of Church Finance Council for the Disciples of Christ Christian Church for over 14 years. She also volunteered for Community East Hospital for over 15 years. As a charter member of Eastgate Christian Church she was involved in church social activities, led CWF functions and was an active and loved member of the congregation.

MARGARET RUBICK



Margaret Eleanore Clark was born May 6, 1935 in Hawarden, Iowa to the Reverend J. Clyde and Mary Clark.

Margy attended Sioux Falls College and graduated in 1957 before moving to Hills, Minnesota where she taught high school English for four years. Thereafter she returned to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, taking an administrative job at First

Baptist Church. She worked briefly with the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. on his visit to Sioux Falls in 1961, a quiet honor she carried throughout her life.

In 1964 she moved to Indianapolis to marry Wade Drew Rubick and remained by his side for nearly fifty years until his death in 2014. The couple had two sons, Mark and Steven, and Margy proudly described herself as a homemaker, devoted to raising her boys.

In her 85 years she was a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother and a grandmother. And a teacher. Always a teacher. She taught her sons, she taught her grandchildren, she tried to teach her husband. And her goal was always the same, to make life a little bit easier for her loved ones. Margaret Eleanore Rubick died December 23, 2020

MILDRED SINA (DAILEY) THORNTON



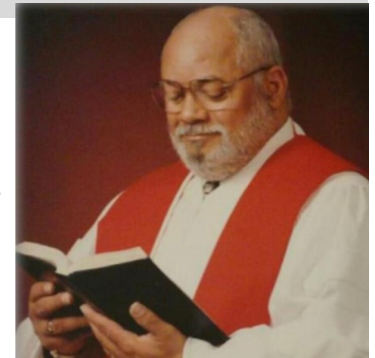
Mildred Sina (Dailey) Thornton was born in Chicago, Illinois on July 29, 1947, to John Porter Dailey and Clara (Dixon) Dailey. Mildred's older sister Bettie, and younger brothers Larry and Milton, moved to Indianapolis during 1952. In 1953 her younger sister Blenda (Olivia) was born. Mildred's youngest brother Leon was born in 1958 and Flesia

(Dutchess) in 1960. Mildred attended Shortridge High School where she met her future husband Lloyd Elliott Thornton whom she married on October 3, 1964. Lloyd enlisted in the Navy after graduation and the couple moved to the Philippines, Germany and to San Diego, and eventually Indiana.

Mildred and Lloyd were blessed with two daughters, Jaquana Yivette Thornton (b. March 25, 1971) and Watonda (Tondy) Sharice Thornton born on Christmas Eve 1972. Mildred worked at Whitco Richardson for 16 years as a

key punch operator, while attending school at IUPUI where she obtained her Bachelor's Degree in computer science. She eventually left Whitco Richardson around 1993 and pursued a better career opportunity in the IT department of Simon Property Group where she became a prominent fixture receiving her 25 Year Pin in 2018. She continued there until her illness began in 2019. Mildred devoted time to many activities at her church The Light of the World where she sang in the Mass Choir and the Golden Light Senior Choir. She was a devoted and active Christian for the remainder of her life. Some of her activities included teaching in the Children's Church, being a Deaconess, participating in the Youth Ministry on Tuesday nights, and in the Christian Women's Fellowship. She also regularly attended meetings of the AIIIGG (an ancestry group devoted to genealogy).

THE REV. DR. EDGAR A. WALLACE



Dr. Edgar A. Wallace transitioned from his earthly life to his heavenly home on December 2, 2020, at the age of 76. Dr. Wallace was born November 5, 1944, in Hartwell, West Virginia to Bishop Dr. Theodore C. Wallace and Mrs. Bonnie Goddard Wallace.

He was the esteemed pastor of, First United Christian Church, educator, counselor, and entrepreneur who would always greet you with a kind word, a loving spirit, and a song in his heart. Dr. Wallace leaves behind a wonderful legacy of accomplishments and an unparalleled body of work. Dr. Wallace was a compassionate man who valued character over pedigree. He was a man who looked for the good in each person and usually found it. His legacy confirmed that his public service is noble, and one can serve their community with integrity. He was true to important values like faith and family.

Dr. Edgar A. Wallace, was serving as vice president of Xenia City Council. "Dr. Edgar Wallace's service to the City of Xenia will be greatly missed," said Xenia City Council President Wesley Smith. "His passion for our community and our residents was appreciated. His leadership will be missed and my prayers to his family and his church congregation. I am blessed to have served the last five years with him on our city council."

Dr. Wallace made contributions throughout the Xenia area. In addition to serving the city and First United Christian Church he was a social work professor at nearby Wilberforce University.

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OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE is a free print and electronic ministry published three times a year through tax exempt donations. The ministry networks Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) seasoned pilgrims by: 1) enhancement of communication and sharing of mutual experiences; 2) conveying a holistic view of aging and health; 3) being an advocate for seniors to become a supportive, loving and caring community; 4) giving honor and dignity to the lives of those included in "For Whom The Bell Tolls"; and 5) highlighting opportunities for the maintenance of a high quality life style and service in retirement. We are enabled by the vision of our founder and publisher/executive editor emeritus; and servants ordered as Board of Directors, administration and editorial staff.

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