



The Chalice



Linking Congregations in Partnership, Sharing the Life, Hope and Message of Jesus Christ

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Bluebonnet Area/Lower Rio Grande Valley District of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest Region

March 2010

A message from Allen C. Allen, BBA Area Minister . . .

The Golden Eagle

A man found an eagle's egg and put it in the nest of a backyard hen. The eaglet hatched with the brood of chicks and grew up with them.

All his life the eagle did what the backyard chickens did, thinking he was a back yard chicken. He scratched the earth for worms and insects. He clucked and cackled. He thrashed his wings and flew a few feet into the air.

Years past and the eagle grew very old. One day he saw a magnificent bird far above him in the cloudless sky. It glided in graceful majesty among the powerful wind currents, with scarcely a beat of its strong golden wings. The old eagle looked up in awe. "Who is that?" He asked.

"That's the eagle, the king of the birds," said his neighbor. "He belongs to the sky. We belong to the earth, we're chickens." So the eagle lived and died a chicken, for that's what he thought he was.

This ancient tale reminds us that what we believe about ourselves has everything to do with the quality of our life. The elevating dignity and magnificence of being human is often lost in the daily shuffle of life. There is a real risk that we will settle for being less than we were destined to be; the human spirit was made to soar and explore the vast horizons of life. We were made to take joy in the unique expression of simply *being who we are*.

There are those back yard voices that would have us believe that we're just chickens, much less than we truly are. But, there are also voices that remind us that we are, in fact, eagles, something special and unique; voices that remind us that we are made for the heavens and not the back yard.

I am among those who believe that we are created by a loving God to become a soaring, free and powerful child of the Creator. We can scratch with the chickens or soar with the eagles. But, when soaring is our nature, why would scratching be our choice?

Soaring lessons are available each weekend at your church. We call them worship services, but they are really flying lessons; they are about helping one's spirit soar and reclaiming one's true nature. So, if you are out of touch with who you really are, or if you are just tired of scratching, stop by for a soaring lesson or two; you are made for the sky and not the back yard.

Disciple Oaks Retreat Center Is Your Spiritual Growth Center

Even though it's winter, there's lots of news from your BBA/LRGVD camp and retreat center, near Gonzales, Texas. Many great events happen here all year 'round!



The CPA/BBA/LRGVD Annual Men's Retreat was held on February 19-20, at the retreat center. The Theme was "Brothers in Christ," with keynote speaker, Rev. Nelson Torres, Central Christian, San Antonio. The event was a good experience of fellowship, reflection and worship.

The Spring and Summer camps and events are now posted on the camp page of the Bluebonnet Area website: <http://bluebonnetarea.org/pages/camp>. Please consider being an adult leader during one of the camp weeks this year – it's a great experience! And we also need your help preparing our site for camp season on Saturday, May 15. Lunch is on us.

Did you hear that the overall usage of Disciple Oaks Retreat Center went way up last year? More of both disciples and non-disciples groups used our facilities last year than in previous years. Some of the youth camp weeks had notable increases and more groups and larger numbers in returning groups of non-camp season usage contributed to the increase as well. We work hard to make our facility a welcoming place and we're celebrating that we've been able to welcome so many!

Please consider reserving some quality time for your group, meeting, event or just family vacation at Disciple Oaks Retreat Center. We have many options to suit your needs. Check out our web site and/or call Dale Fowler to explore your options regarding exploring our welcoming space: <http://discipleoaksretreat.net> or call 830-437-5736.

We're your camp and retreat center. Thank you for all your prayers and visits – hope to see you soon!



Inman Christian Center Hires New Executive Director

San Antonio – Inman Christian Center announces today that it has hired Ms. Sandra E. Imery to be its new Executive Director, effective January 1, 2010.

Ms. Imery has worked for the past 12 years with United Way, most recently as Children's Issue Council Associate, and previously as Coordinator of Volunteer Services. She has a Masters of Science degree in Guidance and Counseling. Ms. Imery is a San Antonio native and has been active in the Beacon Hill Neighborhood Association in many capacities.

"As Inman Christian Center's Executive Director," Imery stated, "I am delighted with the opportunity to provide quality child care and housing (elderly and handicapped) through a neighborhood-based approach which is rich in heritage and culture."

The Inman Christian Center, located at 1214 Colima near the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, was founded in 1913 by the Christian Women's Board of Missions of the Christian Church. For 97 years, the Center, named after its first Director Dr. Samuel Guy Inman, has served the children and families of the community with childcare services, infant supplies assistance, after school mentoring and recreation, parenting and family education, being a resource for mission trips and Volunteers in Service/Volunteers Youth Program. Inman Christian Center also owns and manages six adult housing residential units for seniors.

A reception for Ms. Imery was held at Inman on January 14, 2010. Cecille Martinez, Inman's new Board President, stated that the members of the Board are looking forward to working with Ms. Imery as Inman moves into a new decade of service on the city's Westside.

Contact Information:

Inman Christian Center
1214 Colima Street
San Antonio, Texas 78207
210-222-9641
Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

As the Coordinator Coordinates...Disciples Women's Ministries

I hope this finds many of you anticipating the Disciples Women's Vision Event, led by Adonna Bowman, Executive Director of Disciples Women's Ministries, to be held February 26-27 in Richardson, Texas. The same information will be presented in a shortened version for the clusters in the BBA/LRGVD. Please plan to attend your Cluster meeting in the schedule below.

March 6, 2010: Hill Country /Town & Country Cluster Meetings to be held at First Christian Church, Burnet, 10:00 a.m.

March 10, 2010: Capital Cluster Meeting to be held at Central Christian Church in Austin, 10:30 a.m.

March 13, 2010: Coastal Cluster meeting to be held at Central Christian Church, Corpus Christi, 2:00 p.m.

March 14, 2010: Alamo Cluster meeting to be held at Hill Country Christian Church, Spring Branch, 2:00 p.m.

April 24, 2010: LRGVD meeting to be held at Iglesia Cristiana Emmanuel, San Benito, 9:00 a.m.

See you there!

Marilyn Petrick
BBA/LRGVD Coordinator, DWM

Cleaning for a Reason

If you know any woman currently undergoing Chemo, please pass the word to her that there is a cleaning service that provides **FREE** housecleaning—1 time per month for 4 months while she is in treatment.

All she has to do is sign up and have her doctor fax a note confirming the treatment. "Cleaning for a Reason" will have a participating maid service in her zip code area arrange for the service.

Please pass this information on to bless a woman going through treatment. This organization serves the entire USA and currently has 547 partners to help these women. It's our job to pass the word and let them know that there are people out there that care. Be a blessing to someone and pass this information along.

For detailed information visit their website at <http://www.cleaningforareason.org>.

Council on Christian Unity: A Century of Witness

Celebrate A Century of Witness, A Journey of Wholeness: 1910 -- 2010 with the Council on Christian Unity.

The 100th anniversary of the founding of the Council on Christian Unity will be celebrated throughout the coming year around the theme, "**1910-2010: A Century of Witness, A Journey of Wholeness.**" The goals of the celebration are:

- To celebrate the best of our tradition as Disciples of Christ as a people of unity in claiming God's gift of oneness in Jesus Christ for all persons and for all times;
- To look seriously and critically at where the ecumenical movement is today, and to where God is calling us and the ecumenical movement in the years ahead; and,
- To focus upon the education and formation of a new generation of Disciples for service to and leadership in the ecumenical movement in all of its expressions: local, regional, national and global.

In preparing for the 100th Anniversary Celebration, we identified seven initiatives or events in which CCU hopes all expressions of the church will participate.

For more information visit their website at <http://www.disciples.org/ccu/100thAnniversaryResources.html>

Scholarships: Apply now through March 15

Between now and March 15, Disciples of Christ students can apply for Seminarian financial aid grants from DHM, for the 2010/2011 academic year.

Application information and forms available online at
<http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/Scholarships/index.htm>

2010 APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE HELM LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM

The HELM Leadership Fellows Program nurtures college students for transformational leadership in the church and the wider human community. Students beginning at a four-year college this fall can download an application at: [www.helmdisciples.org/aid/2010-11 HELM Leadership Fellows application.pdf](http://www.helmdisciples.org/aid/2010-11_HELM_Leadership_Fellows_application.pdf).

If you know of a student heading to a four-year college this fall whom you believe has leadership potential for the church and the world, contact HELM to have information on applying for the program sent to that student. All application materials must be postmarked by March 15, 2010.

Disciples Volunteering: Where Will You Serve in 2010?



Whether you're planning your first Mission Trip or your 31st, Disciples Volunteering has something for you. Disaster Response Mission Stations are open in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas as Disciples continue to partner with people affected by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Ike. Special projects will take place this year along the Gulf Coast and in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Mission Centers seek volunteers in California, Texas, Kansas, Kentucky, and Washington. Service opportunities range from rebuilding flood damaged homes to building a new sanctuary; from working with refugees to serving alongside the poor; and from inner-cities to small towns, from border towns to rural Appalachia. And if you're interested in a summer-long Intern opportunity (<http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/Volunteer/SpecialProjects/Interns.htm>), we offer that, too!!

With so many opportunities to serve, the only question is, where will you serve in 2010?

For more information, visit Disciples Volunteering (<http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/Volunteers/DisciplesVolunteer.htm>) or call Brenda Tyler at (888) 346-2631.

LILLY ENDOWMENT NATIONAL CLERGY RENEWAL PROGRAM OFFERS SABBATICAL SUPPORT TO CHURCHES

The Lilly Endowment is again offering pastors an opportunity to step away from their responsibilities for a period of renewal and reflection. A primary goal of the 2010 National Clergy Renewal Program is to strengthen congregations by allowing their leaders time for intentional exploration and spiritual contemplation. Christian congregations may apply to the endowment for grants of up to \$50,000.

Up to \$15,000 of the Lilly Endowment grants can be used to pay for worship and pastoral care support while the pastor is away, as well as for renewal activities within the congregation. Pastors who apply for the grants are invited to include their families in the renewal activities. Deadline for submission of proposals is June 21. To find application materials and more information on all aspects the sabbatical program, go to: www.clergyrenewal.org

CLAREMONT WILL HOST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Disciples pastors, lay leaders and theologians who want to better understand new ways of communication will likely want to participate in a two and a half-day conference hosted by Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, Calif. Entitled "Theology After Google," the conference will take place at Claremont March 10-12. Theologians with expertise in the use of traditional media, such as sermons, books, and academic articles will join with those who use new media, including blogging, podcasts and YouTube posts, to present the sessions.

The conference is designed to encourage theologians and church leaders to think about ways to use emerging media to reach today's church and society. One goal will be to teach conference participants how to enhance traditional ways of communicating by the church with emergent new media technologies. To learn more, visit: www.disciples.org/Portals/0/PDF/DNS/2010/20100113-TheologyAfterGoogle.pdf

We Want To Hear From You!

Do you have a special event planned that you would like to share with other congregations across the BBA/LRGVD?

Have you had a special celebration (pastor's birthday, ordination ceremony, graduation, church anniversary, community event, etc.)?

Have you or your members served your community, state, or nation in a special way?

Please let us know! Please send your stories and pictures to Anna in the Area office (bba@ccsw.org) by the 15th of each month to include in the next month's issue.

BBA TODAY

MARCH

- 1 **Clergy Boundaries Training**, Rolling Oaks CC, San Antonio, **\$20**, 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
- 1-4 Black Minister's Retreat, The Church of Christ, Goldsboro, NC
- 5-7 CYF Spring Rally, DORC, Gonzalez
- 6 **Clergy Boundaries Training**, Rolling Oaks CC, San Antonio, **\$20**, 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
- 6 Adonna Bowman meets with Church Women of the Hill Country and Town & Country Clusters
- 10 Adonna Bowman meets with Church Women of the Capital Cluster, Central CC, Austin, 10:30 a.m.
- 13 Adonna Bowman meets with Church Women of the Coastal Cluster, Central CC, Corpus Christi, 2 p.m.
- 14 Adonna Bowman meets with Church Women of the Alamo Cluster, Hill Country CC, Spring Branch, 2 p.m.
- 28 Palm Sunday

APRIL

- 2 Good Friday
- 4 Easter
- 11 Inman's Annual Honors Banquet, Central Christian Church, San Antonio
- 17 Clergy Leadership Institute, Corpus Christi, **\$35**
- 21 *BBA Office Closed in Observance of San Jacinto Day (local holiday)*
- 24 Adonna Bowman meets with Church Women of the LRGVD, IC Emmanuel, San Benito
- 30 **Area Assembly**, Central Christian Church, San Antonio

MAY

- 1 **Area Assembly**, Central Christian Church, San Antonio
- 3 *BBA Office Closed (the Monday after Area Assembly)*
- 31 *BBA Office Closed in Observance of Memorial Day*

JUNE

- 20-26 BBA CYF Conference
- 27-30 BBA/CPA Eighter's Camp

JULY

- 1-3 BBA/CPA Eighter's Camp
- 6-9 BBA/CPA Beginner's Camp
- 11-17 BBA/CPA Chi Rho Camp
- 19-24 BBA/CPA Junior Camp

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