

## Oklahoma Regional Assembly “Festival of Missions” A Celebration of Mission Work and Mission Stories

First Christian Church in downtown Tulsa was the site of Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Regional Assembly the last weekend in April. Although Friday night’s stormy weather prevented a few disciples from attending, 204 adults and 81 youth from across the state participated in the two-day “Festival of Missions” event. The focus of this year’s assembly was on the General Church’s theme of “Mission First”—discovering what God is doing in the world through Disciples.

Friday night’s opening worship commenced in festive style with colorful red, orange and yellow streamers dancing high within the beautifully, ornate stained-glass walls of the church sanctuary while stole-clad ministers processed into a roomful of disciples singing “Gather Us In.”



Friday Evening Opening Worship

The celebration continued throughout worship as many clergy and laypeople shared scripture, prayers and messages of God’s spirit working within each person present. Guest speaker Rev. Dr. Juan Rodriguez, Regional Minister for the Florida Disciples Regional Church, delivered a passionate and uplifting evening worship message about barrier-breaking and bridge-building.

Saturday brought sunny weather, many smiles, arrival of youth, fellowship, food trucks, work at nine mission worksites and the sharing of stories about individual church missions. The real “Festival of Mission” became apparent when, within a few brief hours, Disciples packed thousands of food packs for the hungry, assembled hygiene kits, cleaned and planted gardens, sorted

and stocked donated food, cleaned and painted dog/cat kennels, cleared walking trails, organized children/infant clothes and donated blood. The missions served were:

- Stamp Out Starvation
- Tulsa SPCA
- Oxley Nature Center
- Oklahoma Blood Institute
- Harvard Avenue Christian Church Community Garden
- Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma
- Emergency Infant Services
- Church World Service
- FCC Tulsa Snack Pack Outreach



Stamp Out Starvation Mission



Food Trucks and Fellowship

### Meet Your Area Foundation Board Member Kathy Standridge From Sulphur, Oklahoma

Kathy has been a life-long, active member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She has served in many capacities at her local and regional church as well as been an advocate and dedicated supporter of the Texoma Christian Camp where she has served as summer camp director for seven years. Her faithful service to God and the children and youth she has mentored over the years can be seen in the many smiling faces she brings to such events as Regional Minister Installation, International Affairs Seminar, Regional Youth Programs and Leadership Training.



Kathy Standridge

Kathy was born in Edmond Oklahoma to dairy farmers Bill & Helen Chitwood. After graduation from Edmond Public Schools, Kathy attended Oklahoma State University where she received a Human Nutrition degree. She then attended Purdue University, Indiana, where she received a Master’s degree in Business Restaurant, Hotel and Institutions Hospitality and became a Registered Dietitian in 1980. While at Purdue, Kathy was a teaching assistant for two years. She continued her Doctorate in Training for Business and Industry while teaching one year at Purdue University.

Growing up, Kathy worked on the family dairy farm as well as interned with the Presbyterian Hospital in Oklahoma City and with a local restaurateur. She served four years in management with Motor Hotel Management

in Dallas, TX. Since returning to Oklahoma 30 years ago, Kathy has come full circle serving as Business Manager for the family dairy/beef cattle farm.

Kathy’s first home church was First Christian Church Edmond, OK where she was baptized and served as Jr. Deacon. She also attended Purdue University Church in Lafayette, IN, during her stay in Indianapolis.

Since 1984, Kathy has been a member of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Sulphur, OK, serving in many capacities as Board Member, Secretary, Vice President and President of the Church Board, and adult leader in the youth/children ministries as well chairman of the Worship and Youth committees. In 2007, after 12 years serving as volunteer Youth Director, Kathy joined the staff as Youth Director, where she has since faithfully served. She also works as a substitute teacher in Sulphur Schools.

Kathy served on the search committee for the 2014 Regional Minister and has served eight years as a member of the Regional Commission on Children, Youth and Young Adults. She has also been a member of the ODF Board of Directors since 2014 where she has committed to serving on the Marketing Committee, Matching Fund Implementation Committee and the new Grant Committee.

She and her husband Kirk have one daughter, Hattie.

## Disciple Men Establish Permanent ODF Endowment With Matching Funds Incentive to Support Children/Youth Summer Camp Programs

In 2011, two Disciples laymen from Yukon, Dwight Weber and Wayne Nivin, had a vision to start a program to reduce the cost of summer camps for children and youth at Central Christian Camp in Guthrie, Oklahoma. Today, their vision includes supporting Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, camps throughout the state and establishment of a permanent fund to support such camps for years to come.

As their vision grew, the "Leave No Child Behind" (LNCB) program became a Regional Ministry of the Oklahoma Disciple Men (ODM) in June 2012. The program expanded to benefit Texoma Camp Christian as well as Central Christian Camp in Guthrie. In 2012, through the support of congregations and individuals, the ODM group was able to reduce camp cost for 225 children and youth in Oklahoma by saving each child \$35 in camp fees.

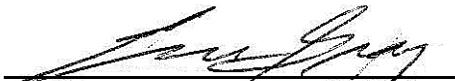
Through the continued support of ODM, the cost of camp this year for 275 children and youth will be reduced by \$50 per child. However, the visionaries of this program hope to eventually fully fund Christian summer camps for all children and youth who wish to attend regional camps.

Recently, ODM and the Oklahoma Disciples Foundation (ODF) teamed up to establish a new endowment fund for Disciple Men to ensure continuation of the "Leave No Child Behind" program. The LNCB program is the partial beneficiary of one of the Foundation's current endowments; however, a permanent endowment specifically for this mission is crucial to the continued and long-term growth of the program.

ODF, through the Howard Million Dollar Matching Fund, will match 50% of what is raised for the endowment. July 1, 2016, is the first matching deadline for the LNCB fund. Congregations, groups and individuals (*you don't have to be a member of the Disciple Men's Group to donate; you just need to love children*) wishing to support this mission for the future of Oklahoma's children are encouraged to send gifts to ODF. Please make checks payable to "ODF" with "LNCB" noted in the memo line and mail to the region office at 301 NW 36th St., OKC, OK, 73118. Or, you may donate via credit card or PayPal on the ODF website at [www.okdfd.org](http://www.okdfd.org). Click on the red "Donate Now" link at the top of the home page (or the large blue "Make a Difference" Donate link at the bottom of the page) and follow the prompts. Under Fund, please be sure to select the "Leave No Child Behind" fund.

*As of mid-April, registrations at two summer camps had already reached full capacity: Discovery Camp has 70 registrations with a waiting list, and CYF Conference has 86 campers registered with a waiting list. Deadline for summer camp registration is May 15. Summer camps for children and youth are a wonderful ministry of the Church and, with your help, the "Leave No Child Behind" endowment will provide a lasting legacy of faith, hope and Christian values to future disciples leaders. Thank you for your consideration and support!*

  
Pam Holt, Regional Minister

  
Eric S. Gray, ODF Executive Director



*"Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." — Mark 10:14-15*