**Rev. Dr. R. Wayne Calhoun, Sr.**

**Executive for**

**Evangelism and Congregational Transformation**

**And Merger Staff**

**December 8 & 9, 2022**

**Annual Report to the Board of Trustees of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

**Beginning my 20th year in the Office of Evangelism & Congregational Transformation and Merger Staff**

October 1st of this year began my twentieth year of service to DHM and the General Church as the Executive for Evangelism, Congregational Transformation, and Merger Staff of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). I often remember so well the excitement and feeling I had twenty years ago when I arrived at DHM to begin a new season in my life and ministry to this community of faith I have been a part of for sixty-five years. I remember how excited I was to be able to have the opportunity to help this church rediscover one of the core values, which propelled the Stone-Campbell Movement onto the landscape of the American frontier as it was then in 1801 with Barton Warren Stone in Kentucky at Cane Ridge. The excitement Barton Stone created at Cane Ridge is the same excitement I felt in August of 2003 when DHM extended me the offer to be the evangelist of the denomination.

**Brief description of the Office of Evangelism and Congregational Transformation**

This is one of four merger agreement positions between the National Christian Missionary Convention and the United Christian Missionary Society adopted in 1960 for the purpose of providing leadership in evangelism, church growth, church vitality and congregational transformation for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with emphasis to African American congregations. Additionally, this office is responsible for aiding, facilitating, and counseling with regional staffs, historical conventions and/or convocations, congregational leaders and local pastors concerning resources on evangelism, congregational transformation, and transformational leaders.

**Impact of this office on local congregations, regions, and people**

In 2005 the Disciples embarked on a goal of transforming 1,000 existing congregations by the end of 2020. The General Assembly directed this office to lead the charge of congregational transformation, which was the third initiative of our 2020 Vision. Through the combined efforts of DHM, Hope Partnership, Regions and transformational consultants collaborating with individual Disciples congregations we successfully reached our goal of 1,000 established congregations who are either intentionally or actively working on being transforming congregations. As the Executive charged with guiding congregational transformation and tracking the denomination’s progress, it was important that I create at least one transformational process plan and make it available in the marketplace specifically for Disciples congregations. However, the plan may also be adopted to aid in local congregations who have a desire to engage in an intentional process for congregational transformation.

DHM’s CT process continues to work well for congregations that have engaged it. The bottom line is, if Disciples congregations in the 21st century are going to be relevant in their mission and ministry context, they will need to be committed to a transformational process as they move into being transformational bodies in the world. In additional to the efforts above, congregations must also reclaim the work making disciples in a 21st century context. This office continues to strive to aid and guide local congregations to achieve this goal of the church.

**Collaborations with other ministries of DHM and other ministries of the church**

My tenure in this position has been 60 percent collaboration and 35 percent direct consultation with local Pastors, congregational leaders, and congregations. The remaining 5 percent is collaborating ecumenically. Of the 60 percent spent in collaboration, 20 percent is with ministry colleagues within DHM. This collaboration consists of working with DHM Scholarships, working with the planning of the Annual Black Ministers Retreat, DHM Continuing Education Grants, working with the office of Christian Vocation on various assignments, serving on the Black Leadership Projects Grants, working in harmony with the Administrative Secretary of National Convocation as well as with the Convocation itself. My collaborations with other ministries outside of DHM include task completed with Disciples Church Extension and Hope Partnership, Christian Church Foundation, and various projects with the National Benevolent Association.

Further collaborations happen on a yearly basis with regions on various request for leadership on evangelism, congregational transformation, and transformational leadership. Historical conventions and convocations also request the services of this office on the abovementioned services.

The Office of Evangelism and Congregational Transformation has been representing DHM and the denomination at the international table for Evangelism. The OECT is a major partner in Evangelism Connections which is an ecumenical table of evangelism with representatives from denominations both from this county and Canada.

**Challenges for the Office of Evangelism and Congregational Transformation**

About five years ago, I began to reflect on my time in ministry and devoting time thinking critically about how Disciple congregations approach evangelism. In a “nutshell,” I would like to see congregations **“Reclaim the Great Commission.”** I have desire and goal to see the task of doing “evangelism” become a core value for Disciples congregations again. In the fall of 2019, the Office of Evangelism and Congregational Transformation unveiled a “new process” for doing “evangelism” in local congregations in a 21st-century context. In early 2020, this country as well as the entire world witness and experience a pandemic called Corvic 19. Because of this catastophic event, the roll out of that evangelism strategy was stymie and this office has not been able to aid Disciples congregations reclaim some sense of normalcy. Moving forwward, this office would like to aid congregations, congreagtional leaders and pastors in forulating plans of action to help congregations reclaim the Great Commsion in the next five to ten years.

**Hope for the Future**

My hope and prayer are that DHM will continue to anticipate the challenges and obstacles local congregations will encounter as they try to figure out what God is calling them to do as it relates to doing mission and ministry in a 21st century context.

As the Executive for the OECT, I humbly submit this report for your review.

Gracefully submitted,



Rev. Dr. R. Wayne Calhoun, Sr.

Executive for Evangelism and Congregational Transformation

Disciples Home Missions

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